The Consolation of Philosophy

BOETHIUS

c. 477–524

The Consolation of Philosophy

De consolatione philosophiae

Translated from the Latin with AI (Claude) and edited

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The Consolation of Philosophy · Boethius (c. 477–524)

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INTRODUCTION

Boethius was a Roman senator, a scholar who translated Aristotle into Latin, and chief minister to Theodoric, the Gothic king of Italy. Around 524 he was accused of treason, imprisoned at Pavia and put to death. In prison, awaiting execution, he wrote the *Consolation of Philosophy*.

It opens with the prisoner writing sad verses, when a woman of great age and majesty appears at his bedside: Philosophy herself. She drives off the Muses of poetry and sets about curing him. Over five books she argues that Fortune's gifts were never his to keep, that wealth, office, power and fame cannot give happiness, that true happiness is God, that the wicked are never really powerful, and that God's foreknowledge leaves human beings free.

Prose and poetry alternate throughout: each prose section (*prosa*) is followed by a poem (*metrum*) that sums up or lifts the argument. The book was read, copied and translated throughout the Middle Ages — by King Alfred, Chaucer and Queen Elizabeth I among others.

Book I

The prisoner's lament
Lady Philosophy appears, hears his grievances, and diagnoses his sickness.

POEM 1: THE PRISONER'S LAMENT

In prison, Boethius writes mournful verses about his sudden fall and longs for death.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.M1	Carmina qui quondam studio florente peregi, Flebilis heu maestos cogor inire modos. Ecce mihi lacerae dictant scribenda Camenae Et ueris elegi fletibus ora rigant Has saltem nullus potuit peruincere terror, Ne nostrum comites prosequerentur iter. Gloria felicis olim uiridisque iuuentae Solantur maesti nunc mea fata senis. Venit enim properata malis inopina senectus Et dolor aetatem iussit inesse suam. Intempestiui funduntur uertice cani Et tremit effeto corpore laxa cutis. Mors hominum felix quae se nec dulcibus annis Inserit et maestis saepe uocata uenit. Eheu quam surda miseros auertitur aure Et flentes oculos claudere saeua negat. Dum leuibus male fida bonis fortuna faueret, Paene caput tristis merserat hora meum.	I who once composed songs with flourishing zeal am forced, alas, in tears, to take up mournful measures. See: the torn Muses dictate what I must write, and elegies wet my face with tears that are real. These at least no terror could overpower or stop from going with me on my road. Once the glory of a happy, green youth, they now console the fate of a sad old man. For old age has come unlooked-for, hurried on by troubles, and grief has ordered its own years to settle in me. White hairs pour untimely from my head, and loose skin trembles on a worn-out body. Happy the death that does not thrust itself on people in their sweet years but comes when the sorrowful often call it. Alas, how deaf the ear with which it turns from the wretched; how cruelly it refuses to close weeping eyes. While faithless Fortune favored me with fickle goods, one sad hour had almost drowned my head.
	/ Nunc quia fallacem mutauit nubila uultum, Protrahit ingratas impia uita moras. Quid me felicem totiens iactastis amici? Qui cecidit, stabili non erat ille gradu.	/ Now, because she has clouded and changed her deceitful face, my unholy life drags out its unwelcome delays. Why, my friends, did you so often boast that I was happy? One who has fallen never stood on steady feet.

PROSE 1: PHILOSOPHY APPEARS

A majestic woman appears at his bedside and drives away the Muses of poetry.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.P1	Haec dum mecum tacitus ipse reputarem querimoniamque lacrimabilem stili officio signarem, adstitisse mihi supra uerticem uisa est mulier reuerendi	While I was silently turning these things over by myself and setting down my tearful complaint with the service of my pen, there seemed to stand

LATIN	ENGLISH
admodum uultus, oculis ardentibus et ultra communem hominum ualentiam perspicacibus colore uiuido atque inexhausti uigoris, quamuis ita aeui plena foret ut nullo modo nostrae crederetur aetatis, statura discretionis ambiguae. Nam nunc quidem ad communem sese hominum mensuram cohibebat, nunc uero pulsare caelum summi uerticis cacumine uidebatur; quae cum altius caput extulisset, ipsum etiam caelum penetrabat respicientiumque hominum frustrabatur intuitum. Vestes erant tenuissimis filis subtili artificio, indissolubili materia perfectae quas, uti post eadem prodente cognoui, suis manibus ipsa texuerat. Quarum speciem, ueluti fumosas imagines solet, caligo quaedam neglectae uetustatis obduxerat. Harum in extrema margine Π Graecum, in supremo uero θ, legebatur intextum.	above my head a woman of a most venerable face. Her eyes burned, and saw deeper than the common power of human beings; her color was vivid, with a vigor never exhausted, although she was so full of years that no one could believe she belonged to our age. Her height was hard to judge. At one moment she held herself to the common measure of human beings; at another she seemed to strike the sky with the crown of her head; and when she raised her head higher still, she pierced the very sky and baffled the gaze of those who looked at her. Her robes were made of the finest threads, with delicate craftsmanship, from an indestructible material; she had woven them with her own hands, as I later learned when she told me. A kind of dimness of neglected age had clouded their appearance, as it tends to cloud smoky portraits. On their lowest border was woven the Greek letter Π [pi], and on the highest, θ [theta].[1]
Atque inter utrasque litteras in scalarum modum gradus quidam insigniti uidebantur quibus ab inferiore ad superius elementum esset ascensus. Eandem tamen uestem uiolentorum quorundam sciderant manus et particulas quas quisque potuit abstulerant. Et dextera quidem eius libellos, sceptrum uero sinistra gestabat.	And between the two letters, marked out like the rungs of a ladder, certain steps could be seen, by which one might climb from the lower letter to the higher. Yet the hands of certain violent men had torn this same robe and carried off whatever scraps each could. In her right hand she carried books, and in her left a scepter.
Quae ubi poeticas Musas uidit nostro adsistentes toro fletibusque meis uerba dictantes, commota paulisper ac toruis inflammata luminibus: “Quis,” inquit, “has scenicas meretriculas ad hunc aegrum permisit accedere quae dolores eius non modo nullis remediis fouerent, uerum dulcibus insuper alerent uenenis? Hae sunt enim quae infructuosis affectuum spinis uberem fructibus rationis segetem necant hominumque mentes assuefaciunt morbo, non liberant. At si quem profanum, uti uulgo solitum uobis, blanditiae uestrae detraherent, minus moleste ferendum putarem, nihil quippe in eo nostrae operae laederentur. Hunc uero Eleaticis atque Academicis studiis innutritum? Sed abite potius Sirenes usque in exitium dulces meisque eum Musis curandum sanandumque relinquite.”	When she saw the Muses of poetry standing by my bed and dictating words to my weeping, she was disturbed for a moment, and her eyes blazed fiercely. “Who,” she said, “let these showgirls of the stage come near this sick man? They would not only give his sorrows no remedies but would feed them with sweet poisons besides. These are the ones who choke the rich harvest of reason’s fruits with the barren thorns of the passions; they accustom people’s minds to their sickness instead of freeing them. If your blandishments were leading away some uninitiated man, as you usually do, I would think it less of a hardship, since no work of mine would be harmed in him. But this man, nourished on Eleatic and Academic studies? No—be off with you, Sirens, sweet all the way to destruction, and leave him to my Muses to be cared for and healed.”[2]

1 The two letters are usually taken to stand for practical and theoretical (contemplative) philosophy.
2 The Eleatics (Parmenides, Zeno of Elea) and Plato’s Academy: the two schools stand for the best of Greek philosophy.

LATIN	ENGLISH
His ille chorus increpitus deiecit humi maestior uultum confessusque rubore uerecundiam limen tristis excessit. At ego cuius acies lacrimis mersa caligaret nec dinoscere possem, quaenam haec esset mulier tam imperiosae auctoritatis, obstipui uisuque in terram defixo quidnam deinceps esset actura, exspectare tacitus coepi. Tum illa propius accedens in extrema lectuli mei parte consedit meumque intuens uultum luctu grauem atque in humum maerore deiectum his uersibus de nostrae mentis perturbatione conquesta est.	Rebuked by these words, that company cast its face to the ground more sorrowfully, confessed its shame with a blush, and passed sadly over the threshold. But my sight was drowned in tears and dimmed, so that I could not make out who this woman of such commanding authority was. I was stunned, and with my eyes fixed on the ground I began to wait in silence for what she would do next. Then she came nearer and sat down at the foot of my bed, and looking at my face, heavy with grief and cast down to the ground by sorrow, she lamented the disturbance of my mind in these verses.

POEM 2: A MIND SUNK IN DARKNESS

Philosophy laments that the man who once studied the heavens now stares at the ground.

LATIN	ENGLISH
1.M2 Heu quam praecipiti mersa profundo Mens hebet et propria luce relicta Tendit in externas ire tenebras, Terrenis quotiens flatibus aucta Crescit in inmensum noxia cura. Hic quondam caelo liber aperto Suetus in Aetherios ire meatus Cernebat rosei lumina solis, Visebat gelidae sidera lunae Et quaecumque uagos stella recursus Exercet uarios flexa per orbes, Comprensam numeris uictor habebat.	Alas, how the mind, sunk in the headlong depths, grows dull, and, leaving behind its own light, sets out for the darkness outside, whenever, swollen by earthly winds, harmful anxiety grows beyond measure. This man, once free under the open sky, used to walk the paths of heaven; he would gaze at the light of the rosy sun, look upon the stars of the cold moon, and any star that makes its wandering returns, bending through its various orbits, he had conquered and grasped in numbers.
/ Quin etiam causas unde sonora Flamina sollicitent aequora ponti, Quis uoluat stabilem spiritus orbem Vel cur hesperias sidus in undas Casurum rutilo surgat ab ortu, Quid ueris placidas temperet horas, Vt terram roseis floribus ornet, Quis dedit ut pleno fertilis anno Autumnus grauidis influat uuis Rimari solitus atque latentis Naturae uarias reddere causas. Nunc iacet effeto lumine mentis Et pressus grauibus colla catenis Decliuemque gerens pondere uultum Cogitur, heu, stolidam cernere terram.	/ What is more, the causes why roaring winds disturb the surface of the sea, what spirit turns the steady globe, or why the star that will set in the western waves rises from the reddening east, what tempers the calm hours of spring so that it decks the earth with rosy flowers, who granted that fertile autumn, when the year is full, should flow with heavy grapes— these he used to probe, and to set out the various causes of hidden nature. Now he lies, the light of his mind worn out, his neck weighed down with heavy chains, his face bowed low by the weight, forced, alas, to gaze at the dull earth.

PROSE 2: THE DIAGNOSIS

She finds him stunned into silence, calls it a passing lethargy, and dries his eyes.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.P2	"Sed medicinae," inquit, "tempus est quam querelae." Tum uero totis in me intenta luminibus: "Tune ille es," ait, "qui nostro quondam lacte nutritus nostris educatus alimentis in uirilis animi robur euaseras? Atqui talia contuleramus arma quae nisi prior abiecisses, inuicta te firmitate tuerentur. Agnoscisne me? Quid taces? Pudore an stupore siluisti? Mallem pudore, sed te, ut uideo, stupor oppressit." Cumque me non modo tacitum sed elinguem prorsus mutumque uidisset, admouit pectori meo leniter manum et: "Nihil," inquit, "pericli est; lethargum patitur communem inlusarum mentium morbum. Sui paulisper oblitus est; recordabitur facile, si quidem nos ante cognouerit. Quod ut possit, paulisper lumina eius mortalium rerum nube caligantia tergamus." Haec dixit oculosque meos fletibus undantes contracta in rugam ueste siccauit.	"But it is time," she said, "for medicine rather than lament." Then, fixing her eyes on me intently, she said: "Are you the man who was once nourished on my milk, brought up on my food, and grew into the strength of a manly spirit? Yet I had given you such arms as would have protected you with unconquerable firmness, had you not thrown them away first. Do you recognize me? Why are you silent? Is it shame or stupor that has made you speechless? I would rather it were shame; but stupor, I see, has overwhelmed you." And when she saw that I was not only silent but altogether tongueless and mute, she gently laid her hand on my breast and said: "There is no danger. He is suffering from lethargy, the common illness of deluded minds. He has forgotten himself for a little while; he will easily remember, if indeed he has known me before. So that he can, let me wipe his eyes for a moment, clouded as they are by the fog of mortal things." So saying, she gathered her robe into a fold and dried my eyes, which were swimming with tears.

POEM 3: THE CLOUDS DISPERSE

His sight clears, like the sun breaking through after a storm.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.M3	Tunc me discussa liquerunt nocte tenebrae Luminibusque prior rediit uigor, Vt, cum praecipiti glomerantur sidera Coro Nimbosisque polus stetit imbribus. Sol latet ac nondum caelo uenientibus astris, Desuper in terram nox funditur; Hanc si Threicio Boreas emissus ab antro Verberet et clausam reseret diem, Emicat ac subito uibratus lumine Phoebus Mirantes oculos radiis ferit.	Then the night was scattered and the darkness left me, and my eyes regained their former strength— as when the stars are massed in cloud by the headlong northwest wind and the sky stands still under rain-filled storms; the sun hides, and before the stars have come into the sky night is poured down upon the earth; if the north wind, sent out from his Thracian cave, should lash this night and unlock the imprisoned day, the sun flashes out, quivering with sudden light, and strikes our wondering eyes with his rays.[3]

3 The Latin names the winds Corus (northwest) and Boreas (north), and the sun Phoebus (Apollo).

PROSE 3: PHILOSOPHY'S OLD BATTLES

He recognizes his nurse, Philosophy, who recalls the sages persecuted before him.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.P3	Haud aliter tristitiae nebulis dissolutis hausi caelum et ad cognoscendam medicantis faciem mentem recepi. Itaque ubi in eam deduxi oculos intuitumque defixi, respicio nutricem meam cuius ab adulescentia laribus obuersatus fueram Philosophiam. "Et quid," inquam, "tu in has exilii nostri solitudines o omnium magistra uirtutum supero cardine delapsa uenisti? An ut tu quoque mecum rea falsis criminationibus agiteris?"	In just the same way the clouds of sadness dissolved; I drank in the sky and recovered my mind enough to recognize the face of my healer. So when I turned my eyes on her and fixed my gaze, I saw that it was my nurse, in whose house I had lived from my youth: Philosophy. "Why," I said, "teacher of all the virtues, have you come down from the height of heaven into the solitude of my exile? Is it so that you too may be harried along with me, a defendant on false charges?"
	"An," inquit illa, "te alumne desererem nec sarcinam quam mei nominis inuidia sustulisti, communicato tecum labore partirer? Atqui Philosophiae fas non erat incomitatum relinquere iter innocentis; meam scilicet criminationem uererer et quasi nouum aliquid acciderit, perhorrescerem? Nunc enim primum censes apud inprobos mores lacessitam periculis esse sapientiam? Nonne apud ueteres quoque ante nostri Platonis aetatem magnum saepe certamen cum stultitiae temeritate certauimus eodemque superstite praeceptor eius Socrates iniustae uictoriam mortis me adstante promeruit? Cuius hereditatem cum deinceps Epicureum uulgus ac Stoicum ceterique pro sua quisque parte raptum ire molirentur meque reclamantem renitentemque uelut in partem praedae traherent, uestem quam meis texueram manibus, disciderunt abreptisque ab ea panniculis totam me sibi cessisse credentes abiere.	She replied: Should I desert you, my pupil, and not share the burden you have shouldered through hatred of my name, taking part in the labor with you? It was never right for Philosophy to leave an innocent man to go his way alone. Should I, of all people, fear accusations against myself, and shudder as if something new had happened? Do you think this is the first time that wisdom has been attacked and endangered among the wicked? Did I not often, among the ancients too, before the age of my Plato, fight a great battle against the recklessness of folly? And while Plato was still alive, did not his teacher Socrates, with me standing beside him, win the victory of an unjust death? After that, the Epicurean mob and the Stoic and the rest each tried to seize his inheritance, every one for his own share; and as I cried out and resisted, they dragged me about as if I were part of the spoils. They tore the robe that I had woven with my own hands, and, snatching scraps from it, went off believing that I had yielded to them entirely.
	In quibus quoniam quaedam nostri habitus uestigia uidebantur, meos esse familiares inprudentia rata nonnullos eorum profanae multitudinis errore peruertit. Quod si nec Anaxagorae fugam nec Socratis uenenum nec Zenonis tormenta quoniam sunt peregrina nouisti, at Canios, at Senecas, at Soranos quorum nec peruetusta nec incelebris memoria est, scire potuisti. Quos nihil aliud in cladem detraxit nisi quod nostris moribus instituti studiis improborum dissimillimi uidebantur. Itaque nihil est quod admirere, si in hoc uitae salo circumflantibus agitemur procellis, quibus hoc maxime propositum est pessimis displicere. Quorum quidem tametsi est numerosus exercitus, spernendus tamen est,	Because some traces of my dress could be seen on them, ignorance supposed them to be my intimates, and through the error of the uninitiated crowd it brought some of them to ruin. You may not know of the flight of Anaxagoras, the poison of Socrates, or the torture of Zeno, because they are foreign; but you could at least have known of men like Canius, Seneca and Soranus, whose memory is neither very old nor obscure. Nothing brought them to disaster except that, trained in my ways, they seemed utterly unlike the wicked in their pursuits. So there is nothing for you to wonder at if, on this sea of life, we are tossed by storms blow-

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	quoniam nullo duce regitur, sed errore tantum temere ac passim lymphante raptatur.	ing all around us, since our chief aim is to displease the worst. Their army, though large, is to be despised, since it is led by no general but is swept along at random, in all directions, by frenzied error.[4]
	Qui si quando contra nos aciem struens ualentior incubuerit, nostra quidem dux copias suas in arcem contrahit, illi uero circa diripiendas inutiles sarcinulas occupantur. At nos desuper inridemus uilissima rerum quaeque rapientes securi totius furiosi tumultus eoque uallo muniti quo grassanti stultitiae adspirare fas non sit."	If ever it draws up its battle line against us and presses on in greater strength, our general withdraws her forces into the citadel, while they busy themselves plundering useless baggage. And we, from above, laugh at them as they grab the cheapest of things, safe from all their furious uproar and protected by a rampart that raging folly may not hope to scale.

POEM 4: THE CALM MIND

Whoever has mastered hope and fear cannot be shaken by tyrants or disasters.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.M4	Quisquis composito serenus aeuo Fatum sub pedibus egit superbum Fortunamque tuens utramque rectus Inuictum potuit tenere uultum, Non illum rabies minaeque ponti Versum funditus exagitantis aestum Nec ruptis quotiens uagus caminis Torquet fumificos Vesaeuus ignes Aut celsas soliti ferire turres Ardentis uia fulminis mouebit. Quid tantum miseri saeuos tyrannos Mirantur sine uiribus furentes? Nec speres aliquid nec extimescas, Exarmaueris impotentis iram. At quisquis trepidus pauet uel optat, Quod non sit stabilis suique iuris, Abiecit clipeum locoque motus Nectit qua ualeat trahi catenam.	Whoever, calm, with his life set in order, has put proud fate beneath his feet, and, looking straight at either fortune, has kept his face unconquered, will not be moved by the rage and threats of the sea churning its swell up from the bottom, nor by restless Vesuvius, whenever it bursts its furnaces and hurls out its smoking fires, nor by the course of the blazing thunderbolt that so often strikes high towers. Why are the wretched so amazed at savage tyrants who rage without real strength? Hope for nothing and fear nothing, and you will disarm the anger of the powerless. But whoever trembles in fear or desire, being unsteady and not his own master, has thrown away his shield, and, driven from his post, fastens the chain by which he can be dragged.

PROSE 4: BOETHIUS'S DEFENSE

Boethius recounts his public service, the false charges against him, and his condemnation.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.P4	"Sentisne," inquit, "haec atque animo inlabuntur tuo, an ὄνος λύρας? Quid fles, quid lacrimis manas? / ἐξαύδα, μὴ	"Do you take this in," she said, "and does it sink into your mind? Or are you ὄνος λύρας [an ass at

4 Anaxagoras was driven from Athens and Zeno of Elea tortured by a tyrant; Julius Canius was executed by Caligula, Seneca forced to suicide by Nero, and Barea Soranus condemned under Nero.

LATIN

κεῦθε νόῳ. Si operam medicantis exspectas, oportet uulnus detegas."

Tum ego collecto in uires animo: "Anne adhuc eget admonitione nec per se satis eminet fortunae in nos saeuientis asperitas? Nihilne te ipsa loci facies mouet? Haecine est bibliotheca, quam certissimam tibi sedem nostris in laribus ipsa delegeras? In qua mecum saepe residens de humanarum diuinarumque rerum scientia disserebas? Talis habitus talisque uultus erat, cum tecum naturae secreta rimarer, cum mihi siderum uias radio describeres, cum mores nostros totiusque uitae rationem ad caelestis ordinis exempla formares? Haecine praemia referimus tibi obsequentes? Atqui tu hanc sententiam Platonis ore sanxisti: beatas fore res publicas, si eas uel studiosi sapientiae regerent uel earum rectores studere sapientiae, contigisset.

Tu eiusdem uiri ore hanc sapientibus capessendae rei publicae necessariam causam esse monuisti, ne improbis flagitiosisque ciuibus urbium relicta gubernacula pestem bonis ac perniciem ferrent. Hanc igitur auctoritatem secutus quod a te inter secreta otia didiceram transferre in actum publicae administrationis optaui. Tu mihi et qui te sapientium mentibus inseruit deus conscii nullum me ad magistratum nisi commune bonorum omnium studium detulisse. Inde cum inprobis graues inexorabilesque discordiae et quod conscientiae libertas habet, pro tuendo iure spreta potentiorum semper offensio. Quotiens ego Conigastum in inbecilli cuiusque fortunas impetum facientem obuius excepi, quotiens Trigguillam regiae praepositum domus ab incepta, perpetrata iam prorsus iniuria deieci, quotiens miseros quos infinitis calumniis inpunita barbarorum semper auaritia uexabat, obiecta periculis auctoritate protexi! Numquam me ab iure ad iniuriam quisquam detraxit.

ENGLISH

the lyre]? Why do you weep, why do you stream with tears? / ἐξαύδα, μὴ κεῦθε νόῳ [speak out, do not hide it in your mind]. If you expect the physician's help, you must uncover the wound."[5]

Then, gathering my strength, I said: Does it still need pointing out? Is the harshness of Fortune raging against me not plain enough on its own? Does the very look of this place not move you? Is this the library that you yourself had chosen as your surest seat in my house? Where you often sat with me and discoursed on the knowledge of things human and divine? Did I look like this, was my face like this, when I explored the secrets of nature with you, when you traced the paths of the stars for me with your rod, when you shaped my character and the whole plan of my life on the pattern of the heavenly order? Are these the rewards we get for obeying you? Yet it was you who laid down this principle through Plato's mouth: that commonwealths would be happy if lovers of wisdom ruled them, or if their rulers happened to love wisdom.[6]

Through the mouth of the same man you taught that this is why the wise must take part in public affairs: so that the helm of cities should not be left to wicked and criminal citizens, bringing plague and ruin to the good. Following this authority, then, I wished to put into practice in public administration what I had learned from you in private leisure. You know, and so does the God who planted you in the minds of the wise, that nothing brought me to any office but the shared concern of all good men. That is the source of my grave and implacable quarrels with the wicked; and, as freedom of conscience will, in defending justice I always disregarded giving offense to the powerful. How often have I stood in the way of Conigastus as he attacked the fortunes of some weak person! How often have I thrown down Trigguilla, steward of the royal household, from an injustice he had begun, and even from one already fully carried out! How often have I put my authority in the way of danger to protect the wretched, whom the unpunished greed of the Goths was forever harassing with endless false charges! No one ever drew me from justice to injustice.[7]

5 "An ass at the lyre" is a Greek proverb for someone deaf to what is offered; the second phrase is Homer, *Iliad* 1.363.
6 Plato, *Republic* 473c–d; the "rod" is the pointer used to draw geometrical and astronomical figures.

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Prouincialium fortunas tum priuatis rapinis tum publicis uectigalibus pessumdari non aliter quam qui patiebantur indolui. Cum acerbae famis tempore grauis atque inexplicabilis indicta coemptio profligatura inopia Campaniam prouinciam uideretur, certamen aduersum praefectum praetorii communis commodi ratione suscepi, rege cognoscente contendi et ne coemptio exigeretur, euici. Paulinum consularem uirum cuius opes Palatinae canes iam spe atque ambitione deuorassent, ab ipsis hiantium faucibus traxi. Ne Albinum consularem uirum praeiudicatae accusationis poena corriperet, odiis me Cypriani delatoris opposui. Satisne in me magnas uideor exaceruasse discordias? Sed esse apud ceteros tutior debui qui mihi amore iustitiae nihil apud aulicos quo magis essem tutior reseruaui. Quibus autem deferentibus perculsi sumus? Quorum Basilius olim regio ministerio depulsus in delationem nostri nominis alieni aeris necessitate compulsus est.

Opilionem uero atque Gaudentium cum ob innumeras multiplicesque fraudes ire in exilium regia censura decreuisset cumque illi parere nolentes sacrarum sese aedium defensione tuerentur compertumque id regi foret, edixit: uti ni intra praescriptum diem Rauenna urbe cederent, notas insigniti frontibus pellerentur. Quid huic seueritati posse astrui uidetur? Atqui in eo die deferentibus eisdem nominis nostri delatio suscepta est. Quid igitur? Nostraene artes ita meruerunt? An illos accusatores iustos fecit praemissa damnatio? Itane nihil fortunam puduit si minus accusatae innocentiae, at accusantium uilitatis? At cuius criminis arguimur summam quaeris? Senatum dicimur saluum esse uoluisse. Modum desideras? Delatorem ne documenta deferret quibus senatum maiestatis reum faceret impedisse criminamur. Quid igitur o magistra censes? Infitiabimur crimen, ne tibi pudor simus? At uolui nec umquam uelle desistam. Fatebimur?

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I grieved no less than those who suffered it that the fortunes of the provincials were being ruined, now by private plunder, now by public taxes. When, at a time of bitter famine, a harsh and indefensible compulsory purchase was imposed that seemed likely to devastate the province of Campania with want, I took up the fight against the praetorian prefect for the sake of the common good; I argued the case with the king looking on, and I won, so that the purchase was not enforced. Paulinus, a man of consular rank, whose wealth the palace dogs had already devoured in their hopes and ambition, I dragged from their very gaping jaws. To keep Albinus, a man of consular rank, from being seized by the penalty of a prejudged accusation, I set myself against the hatred of Cyprian the informer. Do I seem to have stirred up great enough quarrels against myself? But I ought to have been all the safer among the rest, since out of love of justice I kept nothing in reserve among the courtiers to make myself safer. And by whose accusations was I struck down? One of them, Basilius, once dismissed from the king's service, was driven by the pressure of his debts to inform against me.[8]

As for Opilio and Gaudentius: the king's judgment had decreed that they go into exile for countless frauds of every kind; they refused to obey and took refuge in the sanctuary of holy buildings; and when the king learned of this, he decreed that unless they left the city of Ravenna by a set day, they would be driven out branded on their foreheads. What could be added to such severity? Yet on that very day the accusation against me was accepted, with these same men as informers. What then? Did my conduct deserve this? Or did their prior condemnation make them just accusers? Was Fortune not ashamed—if not of innocence accused, then at least of the baseness of the accusers? But do you ask what, in sum, the charge against me is? I am said to have wished the Senate to be safe. You want to know how? I am charged with having prevented an informer from delivering documents by which he would make the Senate guilty of treason. What then do you think, my teacher? Shall I deny the charge, so as not to be a disgrace to you? But I

7 Plato, *Republic* 347c. Conigastus and Trigguilla were Gothic officials at the court of Theodoric, the Ostrogothic king of Italy. The Latin says "the barbarians"; Boethius means Theodoric's Goths.

8 A compulsory purchase (coemptio) forced provincials to sell grain to the state at a fixed price.

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did wish it, and I will never stop wishing it. Shall I confess it?

Sed impediendi delatoris opera cessauit. An optasse illius ordinis salutem nefas uocabo? Ille quidem suis de me decretis, uti hoc nefas esset, effecerat. Sed sibi semper mentiens inprudentia rerum merita non potest inmutare nec mihi Socratico decreto fas esse arbitror uel occuluisse ueritatem uel concessisse mendacium. Verum id quoquo modo sit, tuo sapientiumque iudicio aestimandum relinquo. Cuius rei seriem atque ueritatem, ne latere posteros queat, stilo etiam memoriaeque mandaui. Nam de compositis falso litteris quibus libertatem arguor sperasse Romanam quid attinet dicere? Quarum fraus aperta patuisset, si nobis ipsorum confessione delatorum, quod in omnibus negotiis maximas uires habet, uti licuisset. Nam quae sperari reliqua libertas potest? Atque utinam posset ulla!

But the work of stopping the informer has come to an end. Shall I call it a crime to have wished for the safety of that order? The Senate itself, by its decrees about me, had made it one. But folly, always lying to itself, cannot change the merits of things; nor, by the rule of Socrates, do I think it right either to hide the truth or to grant a lie. However that may be, I leave it to be weighed by your judgment and that of the wise. So that posterity may not be ignorant of the course and truth of the matter, I have also committed it to writing and to memory. As for the forged letters by which I am accused of having hoped for Roman liberty, what point is there in speaking of them? Their fraud would have been exposed if I had been allowed to use the confession of the informers themselves, which carries the greatest weight in all such business. For what liberty is left to hope for? If only there were any!

Respondissem Canii uerbo, qui cum a Gaio Caesare Germanici filio conscius contra se factae coniurationis fuisse diceretur: ' Si ego,' inquit, ' scissem, tu nescisses. Qua in re non ita sensus nostros maeror hebetauit ut impios scelerata contra uirtutem querar molitos, sed quae sperauerint effecisse uehementer admiror. Nam deteriora uelle nostri fuerit fortasse defectus, posse contra innocentiam, quae sceleratus quisque conceperit inspectante deo, monstri simile est. Vnde haud iniuria tuorum quidam familiarium quaesiuit: 'Si quidem deus, inquit, 'est, unde mala? Bona uero unde, si non est?' Sed fas fuerit nefarios homines qui bonorum omnium totiusque senatus sanguinem petunt, nos etiam quos propugnare bonis senatuique uiderant, perditum ire uoluisse. Sed num idem de patribus quoque merebamur?

I would have answered in the words of Canius. When Gaius Caesar, son of Germanicus, said that he had known of a conspiracy against him, he replied: “If I had known, you would not have known.” In this matter grief has not so dulled my senses that I complain that wicked men have plotted crimes against virtue; what utterly amazes me is that they have accomplished what they hoped. To want to do worse things may perhaps be our own failing; but that every criminal should be able to carry out against the innocent whatever he has conceived, while God looks on—that is monstrous. Hence one of your intimates asked, not without reason: “If there is a God, where does evil come from? And where does good come from, if there is not?” But granted it was only to be expected that wicked men, who seek the blood of all good men and of the whole Senate, should have wanted to destroy me too, whom they had seen fighting for the good and for the Senate. Surely I did not deserve the same from the senators as well?[9]

Meministi, ut opinor, quoniam me dicturum quid facturumue praesens semper ipsa dirigebas, meministi, inquam, Veronae cum rex auidus exitii communis

You remember, I think—since you were always present and directed what I should say or do—you remember, I say, how at Verona, when the king,

9 Gaius Caesar is the emperor Caligula (reigned AD 37–41). The question about God and evil was traditionally attributed to Epicurus.

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maiestatis crimen in Albinum delatae ad cunctum senatus ordinem transferre moliretur, uniuersi innocentiam senatus quanta mei periculi securitate defenderim. Scis me haec et uera proferre et in nulla umquam mei laude iactasse. Minuit enim quodam modo se probantis conscientiae secretum, quotiens ostentando quis factum recipit famae pretium. Sed innocentiam nostram quis exceperit euentus uides; pro uerae uirtutis praemiis falsi sceleris poenas subimus. Et cuius umquam facinoris manifesta confessio ita iudices habuit in seueritate concordes ut non aliquos uel ipse ingenii error humani uel fortunae condicio cunctis mortalibus incerta submitteret?

Si inflammare sacras aedes uoluisse, si sacerdotes impio iugulare gladio, si bonis omnibus necem struxisse diceremur, praesentem tamen sententia, confessum tamen conuictumue punisset. Nunc quingentis fere passuum milibus procul muti atque indefensi ob studium propensius in senatum morti proscriptionique damnamur. O meritos de simili crimine neminem posse conuinci! Cuius dignitatem reatus ipsi etiam qui detulere uiderunt, quam uti alicuius sceleris admixtione fuscarent, ob ambitum dignitatis sacrilegio me conscientiam polluisse mentiti sunt. Atqui et tu insita nobis omnem rerum mortalium cupidinem de nostri animi sede pellebas et sub tuis oculis sacrilegio locum esse fas non erat. Instillabas enim auribus cogitationibusque cotidie meis Pythagoricum illud ἕπου θεῷ. Nec conueniebat uilissimorum me spirituum praesidia captare quem tu in hanc excellentiam componebas ut consimilem deo faceres.

Praeterea penetral innocens domus, honestissimorum coetus amicorum, socer etiam sanctus et aeque ac tu ipsa reuerendus ab omni nos huius criminis suspitione defendunt. Sed, o nefas, illi uero de te tanti criminis fidem capiunt atque hoc ipso uidebimur affines fuisse maleficio, quod tuis inbuti disciplinis, tuis instituti moribus sumus. Ita non est satis nihil mihi tuam profuisse reuerentiam, nisi ultro tu mea potius offensione lacereris. At uero hic etiam nostris malis cumulus accedit, quod existimatio plurimorum non

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eager for the ruin of everyone, was trying to extend to the whole senatorial order the charge of treason laid against Albinus, I defended the innocence of the entire Senate with complete disregard for my own danger. You know that what I say is true, and that I have never boasted of it in any self-praise. For the secret of a conscience that approves itself is somehow diminished whenever someone, by showing off a deed, takes the reward of fame for it. But you see what outcome has met my innocence: instead of the rewards of true virtue I suffer the penalties of a false crime. Was there ever a confession of any crime so plain that it made the judges so unanimous in their severity that neither the error of human judgment nor the condition of fortune, uncertain for all mortals, would make some of them relent?

If I had been said to have wanted to burn down temples, to slaughter priests with an impious sword, to have plotted death for all good men, the sentence would still have punished me in person, after I had confessed or been convicted. As it is, some five hundred miles away, mute and undefended, I am condemned to death and proscription for too great a zeal for the Senate. How well they deserve that no one should ever be convicted of a crime like mine! Even my accusers saw how honorable the charge was; to darken it by mixing in some real crime, they lied that I had defiled my conscience with sacrilege out of ambition for office. Yet you, planted within me, were driving every desire for mortal things from the seat of my mind, and under your eyes there could be no place for sacrilege. For every day you dropped into my ears and thoughts that saying of Pythagoras, ἕπου θεῷ [follow God]. Nor was it fitting for me to seek the protection of the vilest spirits, when you were shaping me to such excellence as to make me like God.

Besides, the innocent inner sanctum of my home, the company of my most honorable friends, and my father-in-law too, a holy man as worthy of reverence as you yourself, defend me from all suspicion of this crime. But—oh, the wickedness of it!—they actually take you as their proof of so great a crime, and I will seem to have been involved in wrongdoing for this very reason, that I was steeped in your teachings and trained in your ways. So it is not enough that my reverence for

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rerum merita sed fortunae spectat euentum eaque tantum iudicat esse prouisa quae felicitas commendauerit. Quo fit ut existimatio bona prima omnium deserat infelices. Qui nunc populi rumores, quam dissonae multiplicesque sententiae, piget reminisci.	you has done me no good; you must also be torn to pieces because of the offense against me. And now comes the crowning touch to my misfortunes: the judgment of most people looks not at the merits of things but at the outcome of fortune, and considers only those things to have been wisely planned that success has commended. So it happens that a good reputation is the first thing of all to desert the unfortunate. What the talk of the people is now, how discordant and various their opinions, I hate to recall.
Hoc tantum dixerim ultimam esse aduersae fortunae sarcinam, quod dum miseris aliquod crimen affingitur, quae perferunt meruisse creduntur. Et ego quidem bonis omnibus pulsus, dignitatibus exutus, existimatione foedatus ob beneficium supplicium tuli. Videre autem uideor nefarias sceleratorum officinas gaudio laetitiaque fluitantes, perditissimum quemque nouis delationum fraudibus imminentem, iacere bonos nostri discriminis terrore prostratos, flagitiosum quemque ad audendum quidem facinus impunitate, ad efficiendum uero praemiis incitari, insontes autem non modo securitate, uerum ipsa etiam defensione priuatos. Itaque libet exclamare:"	This much only would I say: the final burden of adverse fortune is that, when some charge is invented against the wretched, they are believed to have deserved what they suffer. And I, stripped of all my goods, deprived of my offices, befouled in reputation, have suffered punishment for doing good. I seem to see the wicked workshops of criminals awash with joy and gladness; every most abandoned man threatening new frauds of informing; the good lying prostrate in terror at my peril; every scoundrel spurred on by impunity to dare crime, and by rewards to accomplish it; and the innocent deprived not only of security but even of any defense. And so I want to cry out:

POEM 5: O MAKER OF THE STAR-BEARING SPHERE

He asks why God rules the heavens by law but leaves human affairs to Fortune.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.M5	O stelliferi conditor orbis Qui perpetuo nixus solio Rapido caelum turbine uersas Legemque pati sidera cogis, Vt nunc pleno lucida cornu Totis fratris obuia flammis Condat stellas luna minores, Nunc obscuro pallida cornu Phoebo propior lumina perdat, Et qui primae tempore noctis Agit algentes Hesperos ortus, Solitas iterum mutet habenas Phoebi pallens Lucifer ortu. Tu frondifluae frigore brumae Stringis lucem breuiore mora: Tu, cum feruida uenerit aestas, Agiles nocti diuidis horas. Tua uis uarium temperat annum Vt quas Boreae spiritus aufert	O maker of the star-bearing sphere, who, resting on your everlasting throne, spin the heavens in a rushing whirl and force the stars to submit to law, so that now, shining with full horn, facing all her brother's flames, the moon hides the lesser stars, now, pale with darkened horn, nearer the sun, she loses her light; and the one who, at the first hour of night, as Hesperus leads out the chill risings of the stars, changes again his accustomed reins as Lucifer, pale at the sun's rising. You, in the cold of leaf-shedding winter, cut short the daylight to a briefer stay; you, when blazing summer comes, give the night swift hours. Your power tempers the changing year, so that the leaves the north wind's breath carries

LATIN	ENGLISH
Reuehat mites Zephyrus frondes Quaeque Arcturus semina uidit Sirius altas urat segetes.	off the gentle west wind brings back, and the seeds that Arcturus saw sown Sirius scorches as tall crops.[10]
/ Nihil antiqua lege solutum Linquit propriae stationis opus, Omnia certo fine gubernans Hominum solos respuis actus Merito rector cohibere modo. Nam cur tantas lubrica uersat Fortuna uices? Premit insontes Debita sceleri noxia poena, At peruersi resident celso Mores solio sanctaque calcant Iniusta uice colla nocentes. Latet obscuris condita uirtus Clara tenebris iustusque tulit Crimen iniqui. Nil periuria, nil nocet ipsis Fraus mendaci compta colore. Sed cum libuit uiribus uti, Quos innumeri metuunt populi Summos gaudent subdere reges, O iam miseras respice terras Quisquis rerum foedera nectis. Operis tanti pars non uilis Homines quatimur fortunae salo.	/ Nothing, freed from the ancient law, abandons the work of its own station. Governing all things to a fixed end, you refuse to restrain the acts of men alone, as their ruler, in due measure. For why does slippery Fortune bring such great reversals? The innocent are crushed by the punishment owed to crime, while wicked ways sit on the lofty throne, and the guilty trample the necks of the holy by an unjust turn. Bright virtue lies hidden, buried in dark shadows, and the just man bears the charge of the unjust. Perjuries do them no harm, nor fraud dressed up in lying colors. But when they please to use their strength, those whom countless peoples fear, the highest kings, they gladly bring under. O look now upon the wretched earth, whoever you are who bind the compacts of the world! No worthless part of so great a work, we human beings are tossed on the sea of Fortune.
/ Rapidos rector comprime fluctus Et quo caelum regis immensum Firma stabiles foedere terras.	/ Ruler, restrain the rushing waves, and with the compact by which you rule the boundless heaven make firm and steady the lands.

PROSE 5: EXILE FROM THE TRUE HOMELAND

Philosophy says he has wandered from his true homeland and needs gentle remedies first.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.P5	Haec ubi continuato dolore delatraui, illa uultu placido nihilque meis questibus mota: “Cum te,” inquit, “maestum lacrimantemque uidissem, ilico miserum exsulemque cognoui. Sed quam id longinquum esset exilium, nisi tua prodidisset oratio, nesciebam. Sed tu quam procul a patria non quidem pulsus es sed aberrasti; ac si te pulsum existimari mauis, te potius ipse pepulisti. Nam id quidem de te numquam cuiquam fas fuisset. Si enim cuius oriundo sis patriae reminiscare, non uti	When I had barked out these things in unbroken grief, she, with a calm face and not at all moved by my complaints, said: When I saw you sad and in tears, I knew at once that you were wretched and an exile. But how distant that exile was I did not know until your speech betrayed it. You have not been driven so far from your homeland; you have wandered away. Or if you would rather be thought driven out, you have driven yourself out. For no

10 Hesperus and Lucifer are the evening and morning star, both the planet Venus. Arcturus rises at the autumn sowing, Sirius at the height of summer.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Atheniensium quondam multitudinis imperio regitur, sed εἷς κοίρανός ἐστιν, εἷς βασιλεύς qui frequentia ciuium non depulsione laetetur; cuius agi frenis atque obtemperare iustitiae summa libertas est. An ignoras illam tuae ciuitatis antiquissimam legem, qua sanctum est ei ius exulare non esse quisquis in ea sedem fundare maluerit?	one else could ever have had the right to do that to you. If you remember what homeland you were born in, it is not ruled, as Athens once was, by the command of the many; rather, εἷς κοίρανός ἐστιν, εἷς βασιλεύς [there is one lord, one king], who rejoices in the number of his citizens, not in their banishment. To be guided by his reins and to obey his justice is the highest freedom. Or do you not know that most ancient law of your city, which decrees that anyone who has chosen to found his home there may not be exiled?[11]
Nam qui uallo eius ac munimine continetur, nullus metus est ne exul esse mereatur. At quisquis eam inhabitare uelle desierit, pariter desinit etiam mereri. Itaque non tam me loci huius quam tua facies mouet nec bibliothecae potius comptos ebore ac uitro parietes quam tuae mentis sedem requiro, in qua non libros sed id quod libris pretium facit, librorum quondam meorum sententias, collocaui. Et tu quidem de tuis in commune bonum meritis uera quidem, sed pro multitudine gestorum tibi pauca dixisti. De obiectorum tibi uel honestate uel falsitate cunctis nota memorasti. De sceleribus fraudibusque delatorum recte tu quidem strictim attingendum putasti, quod ea melius uberiusque recognoscentis omnia uulgi ore celebrentur. Increpuisti etiam uehementer iniusti factum senatus. De nostra etiam criminatione doluisti, laesae quoque opinionis damna fleuisti.	For whoever is enclosed within its rampart and defenses has no fear of deserving exile; but whoever ceases to wish to dwell there ceases equally to deserve it. So it is not so much the look of this place that moves me as your look; and I do not miss the library walls adorned with ivory and glass so much as the seat of your mind, in which I once placed not books but what gives books their value—the thoughts of my books of old. As for your services to the common good, what you said was true, but little, given the great number of your deeds. Of the charges against you, whether honorable or false, you mentioned what everyone knows. You rightly thought the crimes and frauds of the informers should be touched on only briefly, since they are better and more fully celebrated on the lips of the crowd, which knows all about them. You also sharply rebuked the deed of the unjust Senate. You grieved too over the accusation against me, and wept for the loss of your damaged reputation.
Postremus aduersum fortunam dolor incanduit conquestusque non aequa meritis praemia pensari. In extremo Musae saeuientis, uti quae caelum terras quoque pax regeret, uota posuisti. Sed quoniam plurimus tibi affectuum tumultus incubuit diuersumque te dolor, ira, maeror distrahunt, uti nunc mentis es, nondum te ualidiora remedia contingunt. Itaque lenioribus paulisper utemur, ut quae in tumorem perturbationibus influentibus induruerunt, ad acrioris uim medicaminis recipiendum tactu blandiore mollescant.”	Last, your grief blazed up against Fortune, and you complained that rewards are not weighed out fairly according to merit. At the end of your raging Muse you prayed that the peace that rules heaven might rule the earth too. But since a great tumult of passions has fallen upon you, and grief, anger and sorrow pull you in different directions, stronger remedies cannot yet reach you in your present state of mind. So for a little while we will use gentler ones, so that what has hardened into a swelling under the inflow of disturbances may be softened by a gentler touch, ready to receive the force of a sharper medicine.

11 Homer, *Iliad* 2.204–205. The “homeland” and “city” are the realm of reason and of God.

POEM 6: EVERYTHING IN ITS SEASON

Nature keeps a fixed order, and whatever breaks it comes to a bad end.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.M6	Cum Phoebi radiis graue Cancri sidus inaestuat, Tum qui larga negantibus Sulcis semina credidit, Elusus Cereris fide Quernas pergat ad arbores. Numquam purpureum nemus Lecturus uiolas petas Cum saeuis aquilonibus Stridens campus inhorruit. Nec quaeras auida manu Vernos stringere palmites, Vuis si libeat frui; Autumno potius sua Bacchus munera contulit. Signat tempora propriis Aptans officiis deus Nec quas ipse coercuit Misceri patitur uices. Sic quod praecipiti uia Certum deserit ordinem Laetos non habet exitus.	When the constellation of the Crab swelters, heavy with the rays of the sun, then whoever has entrusted generous seed to furrows that refuse it, cheated of Ceres' good faith, let him go off to the oak trees. Never go to the purple grove to gather violets when, under savage north winds, the field bristles, shrieking. Do not seek with greedy hand to strip the vine shoots in spring if you would enjoy grapes; it is rather in autumn that Bacchus has bestowed his gifts. God marks out the seasons, fitting each to its own duties, and does not allow the turns he himself has bounded to be mixed together. So whatever abandons the fixed order by a headlong path has no happy outcome.[12]

PROSE 6: FORGETTING WHAT HE IS

Her questions show he believes God rules the world but has forgotten what a human being is.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.P6	Primum igitur paterisne me pauculis rogationibus statum tuae mentis attingere atque temptare, ut qui modus sit tuae curationis intellegam? "Tu uero arbitratu," inquam, "tuo quae uoles ut responsurum rogato." Tum illa: "Huncine," inquit, "mundum temerariis agi fortuitisque casibus putas, an ullum credis ei regimen inesse rationis?" "Atqui," inquam, "nullo existimauerim modo ut fortuita temeritate tam certa moueantur, uerum operi suo conditorem praesidere deum scio nec umquam fuerit dies qui me ab hac sententiae ueritate depellat." "Ita est," inquit. "Nam id etiam paulo ante cecinisti, hominesque tantum diuinae exortes curae esse deplorasti. Nam de ceteris quin ratione regerentur, nihil mouebare. Papae autem! Vehementer admiror cur in tam salubri sententia	"First, then, will you let me touch on and test the state of your mind with a few little questions, so that I may understand what method of cure to use?" "Ask whatever you like," I said, "as you judge best, and I will answer." Then she said: "Do you think this world is driven by random and chance events, or do you believe there is some rational governance in it?" "I could never suppose," I said, "that things so regular are moved by random chance. I know that God the creator presides over his work, and there will never be a day that drives me from the truth of this opinion." "That is so," she said. "You sang as much just a little while ago, lamenting that human beings alone had no share

12 Seed sown in midsummer, when the sun is in Cancer, fails, and the farmer must live on acorns. Ceres is the goddess of grain, Bacchus of wine.

LATIN

locatus aegrotes. Verum altius perscrutemur; nescio quid abesse coniecto.

Sed dic mihi, quoniam deo mundum regi non ambigis, quibus etiam gubernaculis regatur aduertis?" "Vix," inquam, "rogationis tuae sententiam nosco, nedum ad inquisita respondere queam." "Num me," inquit, "fefellit abesse aliquid, per quod, uelut hiante ualli robore, in animum tuum perturbationum morbus inrepserit? Sed dic mihi, meministine, quis sit rerum finis, quoue totius naturae tendat intentio?" "Audieram," inquam, "sed memoriam maeror hebetauit." "Atqui scis unde cuncta processerint?" "Noui," inquam, deumque esse respondi. "Et qui fieri potest, ut principio cognito quis sit rerum finis ignores? Verum hi perturbationum mores, ea ualentia est, ut mouere quidem loco hominem possint, conuellere autem sibique totum exstirpare non possint. Sed hoc quoque respondeas uelim, hominemne te esse meministi?" "Quidni," inquam, "meminerim?" "Quid igitur homo sit, poterisne proferre?"

"Hocine interrogas an esse me sciam rationale animal atque mortale? Scio et id me esse confiteor." Et illa: "Nihilne aliud te esse nouisti? "Nihil. "Iam scio," inquit, "morbi tui aliam uel maximam causam; quid ipse sis, nosse desisti. Quare plenissime uel aegritudinis tuae rationem uel aditum reconciliandae sospitatis inueni. Nam quoniam tui obliuione confunderis, et exsulem te et exspoliatum propriis bonis esse doluisti. Quoniam uero quis sit rerum finis ignoras, nequam homines atque nefarios potentes felicesque arbitraris. Quoniam uero quibus gubernaculis mundus regatur oblitus es, has fortunarum uices aestimas sine rectore fluitare — magnae non ad morbum modo uerum ad interitum quoque causae. Sed sospitatis auctori grates, quod te nondum totum natura destituit.

Habemus maximum tuae fomitem salutis ueram de mundi gubernatione sententiam, quod eam non casuum

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in divine care. As for the rest, you were not at all troubled that they were ruled by reason. Well, well! I am greatly surprised that you should be sick when you hold so healthy an opinion. But let us probe deeper; I suspect something is missing.

"But tell me: since you do not doubt that the world is ruled by God, do you also see by what means of government it is ruled?" "I hardly understand the meaning of your question," I said, "much less can I answer what you ask." "Was I not right," she said, "that something was missing, through which, as through a breach in a rampart, the sickness of the passions has crept into your mind? But tell me, do you remember what the end of things is, or what the aim of all nature is directed toward?" "I had heard it," I said, "but grief has dulled my memory." "Yet you know where all things have come from?" "I know," I said, and I answered that it was God. "Then how can it be that, knowing the beginning, you do not know what the end of things is? But such are the ways of the passions, such is their power, that they can move a man from his place, but cannot uproot him and tear him wholly out of himself. But I would like you to answer this too: do you remember that you are a human being?" "Why would I not remember?" I said. "Then can you tell me what a human being is?"

"Are you asking whether I know that I am a rational and mortal animal? I know it, and I confess that I am that." And she said: "Do you know that you are anything else?" "Nothing." "Now I know," she said, "another cause of your sickness, and the greatest: you have ceased to know what you yourself are. So I have found out most fully both the reason for your illness and the way to restore your health. Because you are confused by forgetting yourself, you have grieved that you are an exile and stripped of your own goods. Because you do not know what the end of things is, you think that worthless and wicked men are powerful and happy. And because you have forgotten by what means of government the world is ruled, you suppose that these turns of fortune drift about without a helmsman—great causes not only of sickness but of death itself. But thanks be to the author of health that nature has not yet wholly abandoned you.

"We have the best tinder for your recovery: your true opinion about the governing of the world,

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	temeritati sed diuinae rationi subditam credis. Nihil igitur pertimescas; iam tibi ex hac minima scintillula uitalis calor inluxerit. Sed quoniam firmioribus remediis nondum tempus est et eam mentium constat esse naturam, ut quotiens abiecerint ueras falsis opinionibus induantur ex quibus orta perturbationum caligo uerum illum confundit intuitum, hanc paulisper lenibus mediocribusque fomentis attenuare temptabo, ut dimotis fallacium affectionum tenebris splendorem uerae lucis possis agnoscere."	that you believe it is subject not to the randomness of chance but to divine reason. So you have nothing to fear; from this tiniest spark the warmth of life will soon shine upon you. But it is not yet time for stronger remedies; and it is well known that the nature of minds is such that whenever they cast off true opinions they put on false ones, and from these arises a fog of disturbances that confuses their true vision. So I will try to thin this fog a little with gentle and moderate soothing remedies, so that once the darkness of deceptive passions is dispelled, you may be able to recognize the splendor of the true light."

POEM 7: CLOUDED MINDS

Joy, fear, hope and grief cloud the mind, as clouds and mud hide light.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
1.M7	Nubibus atris Condita nullum Fundere possunt Sidera lumen. Si mare uoluens Turbidus Auster Misceat aestum, Vitrea dudum Parque serenis Vnda diebus Mox resoluto Sordida caeno Visibus obstat. Quique uagatur Montibus altis Defluus amnis, Saepe resistit Rupe soluti Obice saxi. Tu quoque si uis Lumine claro Cernere uerum, Tramite recto Carpere callem, Gaudia pelle, Pelle timorem Spemque fugato Nec dolor adsit. Nubila mens est Vinctaque frenis, Haec ubi regnant.	Hidden in black clouds, the stars can shed no light. If the stormy south wind, rolling the sea, churns up the surge, the water, glassy before and like the calm of cloudless days, soon, with the mud stirred up, turns foul and blocks the sight. And the stream that wanders from high mountains, flowing down, is often stopped by a rock broken loose, a boulder in its way. You too, if you wish in clear light to see the truth, on a straight path to take your way, drive out joys, drive out fear, put hope to flight, and let grief be absent. The mind is clouded and bound with reins where these hold sway.

Book II

The gifts of Fortune
Philosophy speaks for Fortune: her gifts were never his to keep.

PROSE 1: FORTUNE'S NATURE

Fortune has not changed toward him; changeableness is her nature.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P1	Post haec paulisper obticuit atque ubi attentionem meam modesta taciturnitate collegit, sic exorsa est: "Si penitus aegritudinis tuae causas habitumque cognovi, fortunae prioris affectu desiderioque tabescis. Ea tantum animi tui sicuti tu tibi fingis mutata peruertit. Intellego multiformes illius prodigii fucos et eo usque cum his quos eludere nititur blandissimam familiaritatem, dum intolerabili dolore confundat quos insperata reliquerit. Cuius si naturam mores ac meritum reminiscare, nec habuisse te in ea pulchrum aliquid nec amisisse cognosces, sed ut arbitror haud multum tibi haec in memoriam reuocare laborauerim. Solebas enim praesentem quoque blandientemque uirilibus incessere uerbis eamque de nostro adyto prolatis insectabare sententiis. Verum omnis subita mutatio rerum non sine quodam quasi fluctu contingit animorum; sic factum est ut tu quoque paulisper a tua tranquillitate descisceres.	After this she was silent for a while, and when her modest silence had caught my attention, she began thus: If I have fully grasped the causes and nature of your illness, you are wasting away with longing and desire for your former fortune. It is her change, as you imagine it, that has so overturned your mind. I understand the many disguises of that monster, and how she keeps up the most flattering intimacy with those she is trying to cheat, right up to the moment when she overwhelms with unbearable pain those she abandons without warning. If you recall her nature, her ways and her deserts, you will realize that you neither had anything beautiful in her nor have lost anything. But I do not think I will need to work hard to remind you of this. For you used to attack her with manly words even when she was present and flattering you, and you pursued her with sayings brought out of my sanctuary. But every sudden change in circumstances brings a kind of surge in the mind; and so it has happened that you too have fallen away a little from your tranquility.
	Sed tempus est haurire te aliquid ac degustare molle atque iucundum quod ad interiora transmissum ualidioribus haustibus uiam fecerit. Adsit igitur Rhetoricae suadela dulcedinis quae tum tantum recto calle procedit, cum nostra instituta non deserit cumque hac Musica laris nostri uernacula nunc leuiores nunc grauiores modos succinat. Quid est igitur o homo quod te in maestitiam luctumque deiecit? Nouum, credo, aliquid inusitatumque uidisti. Tu fortunam putas erga te esse mutatam; erras. Hi semper eius mores sunt ista natura. Seruauit circa te propriam potius in ipsa sui mutabilitate constantiam. Talis erat cum blandiebatur, cum tibi falsae inlecebris felicitatis alluderet. Deprehendisti caeci numinis ambiguos uultus. Quae sese adhuc uelat aliis,	But it is time for you to take and taste something mild and pleasant, which, once it has passed inside, will open the way for stronger draughts. So let the persuasion of Rhetoric's sweetness assist us, which goes on the right path only when it does not abandon my teachings; and with her let Music, a servant born in my house, sing now lighter, now heavier measures. What is it, then, O man, that has cast you down into grief and mourning? You have seen something new, I suppose, something unusual. You think Fortune has changed toward you; you are wrong. These are always her ways; this is her nature. Toward you she has kept, rather, the constancy that is proper to her, in her very

LATIN	ENGLISH
tota tibi prorsus innotuit. Si probas, utere moribus; ne queraris.	changeableness. She was the same when she was flattering you, when she was toying with you with the lures of a false happiness. You have caught out the two-faced looks of the blind goddess. She who still veils herself from others has made herself wholly known to you. If you approve of her, accept her ways; do not complain.
Si perfidiam perhorrescis, sperne atque abice perniciosa ludentem. Nam quae nunc tibi est tanti causa maeroris, haec eadem tranquillitatis esse debuisset. Reliquit enim te quam non relicturam nemo umquam poterit esse securus. An uero tu pretiosam aestimas abituram felicitatem? Et cara tibi est fortuna praesens nec manendi fida et cum discesserit adlatura maerorem. Quod si nec ex arbitrio retineri potest et calamitosos fugiens facit, quid est aliud fugax quam futurae quoddam calamitatis indicium? Neque enim quod ante oculos situm est, suffecerit intueri; rerum exitus prudentia metitur eademque in alterutro mutabilitas nec formidandas fortunae minas nec exoptandas facit esse blanditias. Postremo aequo animo toleres oportet quidquid intra fortunae aream geritur, cum semel iugo eius colla submiseris.	If you shudder at her treachery, scorn her and cast her off, since her games are ruinous. For what is now the cause of such great grief for you ought to have been the cause of your tranquility. She has left you—she whom no one can ever be sure will not leave. Or do you really think a happiness that is going to depart is precious? And is present fortune dear to you, though it cannot be trusted to stay, and will bring grief when it leaves? But if it can neither be kept at will and it makes people wretched when it flees, what is its fleetingness but a kind of sign of coming disaster? It is not enough to look at what lies before our eyes; prudence measures the outcome of things; and this same changeableness, in either direction, makes Fortune's threats nothing to be feared and her flatteries nothing to be desired. Finally, you must bear with an even mind whatever happens within Fortune's arena, once you have put your neck beneath her yoke.
Quod si manendi abeundique scribere legem uelis ei quam tu tibi dominam sponte legisti, nonne iniurius fueris et inpatientia sortem exacerbes quam permutare non possis? Si uentis uela committeres, non quo uoluntas peteret sed quo flatus impellerent, promoueres; si aruis semina crederes, feraces inter se annos sterilesque pensares. Fortunae te regendum dedisti; dominae moribus oportet obtemperes. Tu uero uoluentis rotae impetum retinere conaris? At, omnium mortalium stolidissime, si manere incipit, fors esse desistit."	But if you want to prescribe a law of staying and going to the one you freely chose as your mistress, would you not be unjust, and would you not by impatience make worse a lot you cannot change? If you committed your sails to the winds, you would move forward not where your will aimed but where the gusts drove you; if you entrusted seeds to the fields, you would balance the fruitful years against the barren. You have given yourself over to Fortune's rule; you must obey your mistress's ways. Are you really trying to hold back the force of the turning wheel? But, most foolish of all mortals, if she begins to stay, she ceases to be Fortune.

POEM 1: FORTUNE'S PROUD HAND

Fortune casts down kings and raises the humble for sport.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.M1	Haec cum superba uerterit uices dextra Et aestuantis more fertur Euripi, Dudum tremendos saeua proterit reges	When she has turned the changes with her proud right hand and is swept along like the seething Euripus,

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	Humilemque uicti subleuat fallax uultum. Non illa miseros audit aut curat fletus Vltroque gemitus dura quos fecit ridet. Sic illa ludit, sic suas probat uires Magnumque suis demonstrat ostentum, si quis Visatur una stratus ac felix hora.	cruel, she tramples on kings once feared, and, deceitful, lifts up the humble face of the conquered. She does not hear or heed the tears of the wretched, and, hard as she is, even laughs at the groans she has caused. So she plays, so she proves her strength, and shows her followers a great marvel, if someone is seen both happy and laid low within a single hour.[1]

PROSE 2: FORTUNE'S WHEEL

Speaking as Fortune, Philosophy says her gifts were only lent, and describes her turning wheel.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P2	Vellem autem pauca tecum fortunae ipsius uerbis agitare. Tu igitur an ius postulet, animaduerte. 'Quid tu homo ream me cotidianis agis querelis? Quam tibi fecimus iniuriam? Quae tua tibi detraximus bona? Quouis iudice de opum dignitatumque mecum possessione contende. Et si cuiusquam mortalium proprium quid horum esse monstraueris, ego iam tua fuisse quae repetis, sponte concedam. Cum te matris utero natura produxit, nudum rebus omnibus inopemque suscepi, meis opibus foui et quod te nunc inpatientem nostri facit, fauore prona indulgentius educaui, omnium quae mei iuris sunt affluentia et splendore circumdedi. Nunc mihi retrahere manum libet. Habes gratiam uelut usus alienis, non habes ius querelae tamquam prorsus tua perdideris. Quid igitur ingemiscis? Nulla tibi a nobis est allata uiolentia. Opes honores ceteraque talium mei sunt iuris.	I would like to discuss a few things with you in Fortune's own words. So consider whether her claim is just: Why, O man, do you charge me with your daily complaints? What wrong have I done you? What goods of yours have I taken from you? Contend with me before any judge you like about the possession of wealth and honors. And if you show that any of these belongs as property to any mortal, I will freely grant at once that what you are claiming back was yours. When nature brought you forth from your mother's womb, I took you up naked and destitute of everything, cherished you with my riches, and—this is what now makes you impatient with me—inclined to favor you, brought you up too indulgently, and surrounded you with the abundance and splendor of everything in my power. Now I am pleased to withdraw my hand. You owe thanks, like one who has had the use of what belonged to another; you have no right to complain as though you had lost what was wholly yours. Why then do you groan? I have done you no violence. Wealth, honors and all such things are under my authority.
	Dominam famulae cognoscunt; mecum ueniunt, me abeunte discedunt. Audacter adfirmem, si tua forent quae amissa conquereris nullo modo perdidisses. An ego sola meum ius exercere prohibebor? Licet caelo proferre lucidos dies eosdemque tenebrosis noctibus condere. Licet anno terrae uultum nunc floribus frugibusque redimire, nunc nimbis frigoribusque confundere. Ius est	Handmaids recognize their mistress: they come with me, and when I go they leave. I would boldly assert that if the things whose loss you lament were yours, you would never have lost them. Am I alone to be forbidden to exercise my rights? The sky may bring forth bright days and bury them again in dark nights. The year may crown the face

1 The Euripus, the strait between Euboea and mainland Greece, was famous for its sudden changes of current.

LATIN	ENGLISH
mari nunc strato aequore blandiri, nunc procellis ac fluctibus inhorrescere. Nos ad constantiam nostris moribus alienam inexpleta hominum cupiditas alligabit? Haec nostra uis est, hunc continuum ludum ludimus; rotam uolubili orbe uersamus, infima summis summa infimis mutare gaudemus. Ascende si placet, sed ea lege ne utique cum ludicri mei ratio poscet, descendere iniuriam putes. An tu mores ignorabas meos?	of the earth now with flowers and fruits, now confound it with clouds and cold. The sea has the right now to caress with a smooth surface, now to bristle with storms and waves. Shall the insatiable greed of human beings bind me to a constancy foreign to my ways? This is my power, this is the game I play without end: I turn the wheel in its spinning circle, and I delight in bringing the lowest to the top and the top to the lowest. Climb up, if you like, but on this condition: that you do not think it an injustice to come down when the rules of my game demand it. Or did you not know my ways?
Nesciebas Croesum regem Lydorum Cyro paulo ante formidabilem mox deinde miserandum rogi flammis traditum misso caelitus imbre defensum? Num te praeterit Paulum Persi regis a se capti calamitatibus pias inpendisse lacrimas? Quid tragoediarum clamor aliud deflet nisi indiscreto ictu fortunam felicia regna uertentem? Nonne adulescentulus δοιοὺς πίθους τὸν μὲν ἕνα κακῶν τὸν δ' ἕτερον ἐάων in Iouis limine iacere didicisti? Quid si uberius de bonorum parte sumpsisti? Quid si a te non tota discessi? Quid si haec ipsa mei mutabilitas iusta tibi causa est sperandi meliora? tamen ne animo contabescas et intra commune omnibus regnum locatus proprio uiuere iure desideres.	Did you not know that Croesus, king of the Lydians, a little earlier a terror to Cyrus, soon became pitiable, was handed over to the flames of the pyre, and was saved by a shower sent from heaven? Has it escaped you that Paullus shed pious tears for the calamities of King Perseus, whom he had captured? What else does the clamor of tragedy bewail but Fortune overturning happy kingdoms with an indiscriminate blow? Did you not learn as a youth that δοιοὺς πίθους τὸν μὲν ἕνα κακῶν τὸν δ' ἕτερον ἐάων [two jars, the one of evils and the other of goods] lie on the threshold of Jupiter? What if you have taken more generously from the share of goods? What if I have not departed from you entirely? What if this very changeableness of mine is a just reason for you to hope for better things? All the same, do not waste away in spirit, and, placed within a kingdom common to all, do not wish to live by a law of your own.[2]

POEM 2: THE THIRST FOR MORE

No abundance of wealth or honors ever satisfies human greed.

LATIN	ENGLISH
2.M2 Si quantas rapidis flatibus incitus Pontus uersat harenas Aut quot stelliferis edita noctibus Caelo sidera fulgent Tantas fundat opes nec retrahat manum Pleno copia cornu. Humanum miseras haud ideo genus Cesset flere querellas. Quamuis uota libens excipiat deus	If as many grains of sand as the sea, whipped by rushing winds, churns up, or as many stars as shine in the sky, brought out on starry nights— if so much wealth Plenty were to pour out, and never draw back her hand from her full horn, the human race would not for that reason

2 Croesus, defeated by Cyrus of Persia, was saved from the pyre by rain (Herodotus 1.86–87); Aemilius Paullus defeated Perseus of Macedon in 168 BC. The jars are from Homer, *Iliad* 24.527–528.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	Multi prodigus auri Et claris auidos ornet honoribus, Nil iam parta uidentur, Sed quaesita uorans saeua rapacitas Altos pandit hiatus. Quae iam praecipitem frena cupidinem Certo fine retentent, Largis cum potius muneribus fluens Sitis ardescit habendi? Numquam diues agit qui trepidus gemens Sese credit egentem.	stop weeping its wretched complaints. Though God, gladly granting prayers, lavish with much gold, should adorn the greedy with glittering honors, what they have gained seems nothing now; savage rapacity, devouring what it sought, opens wide new jaws. What reins could now hold back headlong desire within fixed bounds, when, flowing with generous gifts, the thirst for having burns all the more? He is never rich who, anxious and groaning, believes himself in need.

PROSE 3: COUNTING HIS BLESSINGS

Philosophy reminds him of his past good fortune, above all his sons' joint consulship.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P3	"His igitur si pro se tecum fortuna loqueretur, quid profecto contra hisceres non haberes, aut si quid est quo querelam tuam iure tuearis, proferas oportet. Dabimus dicendi locum." Tum ego: "Speciosa quidem ista sunt, inquam, oblitaque Rhetoricae ac Musicae melle dulcedinis; tum tantum, cum audiuntur, oblectant. Sed miseris malorum altior sensus est. Itaque cum haec auribus insonare desierint, insitus animum maeror praegrauat." Et illa: "Ita est," inquit. "Haec enim nondum morbi tui remedia sed adhuc contumacis aduersum curationem doloris fomenta quaedam sunt. Nam quae in profundum sese penetrent, cum tempestiuum fuerit admouebo. Verumtamen ne te existimari miserum uelis, an numerum modumque tuae felicitatis oblitus es?	"If Fortune spoke to you in her own defense in these words, you would surely have nothing to mutter in reply. Or if there is anything by which you can rightly defend your complaint, you must bring it forward. I will give you room to speak." Then I said: "These things are fine-sounding and smeared with the honey of Rhetoric's and Music's sweetness; they delight only while they are being heard. But the wretched have a deeper sense of their ills. So when these words stop ringing in the ears, the grief rooted within weighs down the mind." And she said: That is so. For these are not yet remedies for your illness, only soothing applications for a grief still stubborn against cure. The remedies that penetrate deep I will apply when the time is right. But so that you will not want to think yourself wretched: have you forgotten the number and measure of your happiness?
	Taceo quod desolatum parente summorum te uirorum cura suscepit delectusque in affinitatem principum ciuitatis, quod pretiosissimum propinquitatis genus est, prius carus quam proximus esse coepisti. Quis non te felicissimum cum tanto splendore socerorum, cum coniugis pudore, cum masculae quoque prolis opportunitate praedicauit? Praetereo, libet enim praeterire communia, sumptas in adulescentia negatas senibus dignitates; ad singularem felicitatis tuae cumulum uenire delectat. Si quis rerum mortalium fructus ullum beatitudinis pondus habet, poteritne illius memoria lucis quantalibet ingruentium malorum mole deleri, cum duos pariter consules liberos tuos domo	I say nothing of how, when you were left without a father, men of the highest rank took you into their care; how, chosen for alliance by marriage with the leading men of the city, you began to be dear to them before you became their kin—which is the most precious kind of relationship. Who did not proclaim you most fortunate, with such distinguished in-laws, with so chaste a wife, and with the blessing of sons too? I pass over—for I prefer to pass over what is common—the honors you took up in youth that are denied to old men; I am glad to come to the singular crowning point of your happiness. If any enjoyment of mortal things car-

LATIN	ENGLISH
prouehi sub frequentia patrum, sub plebis alacritate uidisti, cum eisdem in curia curules insidentibus tu regiae laudis orator ingenii gloriam facundiaeque meruisti, cum in circo duorum medius consulum circumfusae multitudinis expectationem triumphali largitione satiasti?	ries any weight of happiness, can the memory of that light be blotted out by any mass of evils bearing down on you, however great? I mean the day you saw your two sons made consuls together, and carried from your house amid a throng of senators and the eager rejoicing of the people; when, as they sat in their curule chairs in the Senate house, you, as the speaker of the king's praises, earned the glory of talent and eloquence; when in the circus, standing between the two consuls, you satisfied the expectations of the crowd pouring round you with a triumphal largess.[3]
Dedisti ut opinor uerba fortunae, dum te illa demulcet, dum te ut delicias suas fouet. Munus quod nulli umquam priuato commodauerat abstulisti. Visne igitur cum fortuna calculum ponere? Nunc te primum liuenti oculo praestrinxit. Si numerum modumque laetorum tristiumue consideres, adhuc te felicem negare non possis. Quod si idcirco te fortunatum esse non aestimas, quoniam quae tunc laeta uidebantur abierunt, non est quod te miserum putes, quoniam quae nunc creduntur maesta praetereunt. An tu in hanc uitae scaenam nunc primum subitus hospesque uenisti? Iamne humanis rebus inesse constantiam reris, cum ipsum saepe hominem uelox hora dissoluat? Nam etsi rara est fortuitis manendi fides, ultimus tamen uitae dies mors quaedam fortunae est etiam manentis.	You outwitted Fortune, I think, while she caressed you, while she cherished you as her darling. You carried off a gift she had never granted to any private citizen. Do you want, then, to settle accounts with Fortune? This is the first time she has turned a jealous eye upon you. If you consider the number and measure of your joys and sorrows, you cannot yet deny that you are fortunate. But if you do not think yourself fortunate because the things that seemed joyful then have gone, there is no reason to think yourself wretched, since the things now believed to be sad are passing. Or have you come onto this stage of life only now, a sudden stranger? Do you think there is any constancy in human affairs, when a swift hour often dissolves a human being himself? For even if things of chance rarely keep faith in staying, yet the last day of life is a kind of death even for fortune that stays.
Quid igitur referre putas, tune illam moriendo deseras an te illa fugiendo?"	What difference, then, do you think it makes whether you leave her by dying or she leaves you by fleeing?

POEM 3: NOTHING BORN STANDS FIRM

Sun, flowers and sea all change, so human fortunes cannot last.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.M3	Cum polo Phoebus roseis quadrigis Lucem spargere coeperit, Pallet albentes hebetata uultus Flammis stella prementibus. Cum nemus flatu Zephyri tepentis Vernis inrubuit rosis, Spiret insanum nebulosus Auster Iam spinis abeat decus. Saepe tranquillo radiat sereno	When the sun in his rosy chariot begins to scatter light across the sky, the star grows pale, its white face dimmed by the flames that bear down on it. When the grove, in the breath of the warm west wind, has blushed with spring roses, let the cloudy south wind blow its madness, and their beauty is gone from the thorns.

3 Boethius's two sons were consuls together in AD 522.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	Immotis mare fluctibus, Saepe feruentes Aquilo procellas Verso concitat aequore. Rara si constat sua forma mundo, Si tantas uariat uices, Crede fortunis hominum caducis, Bonis crede fugacibus. Constat aeterna positumque lege est Vt constet genitum nihil.	Often the sea shines in calm serenity with motionless waves; often the north wind stirs up raging storms and churns the water. If the world's form rarely stands the same, if it varies with such great changes, trust, then, in the falling fortunes of men, trust in fleeting goods! It stands decreed, set down by eternal law, that nothing born should stand.

PROSE 4: HAPPINESS WITHIN

Much remains to him, and true happiness lies within, beyond Fortune's reach.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P4	Tum ego: "Vera," inquam, "commemoras, o uirtutum omnium nutrix, nec infitiari possum prosperitatis meae uelocissimum cursum. Sed hoc est quod recolentem uehementius coquit. Nam in omni aduersitate fortunae infelicissimum est genus infortunii fuisse felicem," "Sed quod tu," inquit, "falsae opinionis supplicium luas, id rebus iure imputare non possis. Nam si te hoc inane nomen fortuitae felicitatis mouet, quam pluribus maximisque abundes mecum reputes licet. Igitur si quod in omni fortunae tuae censu pretiosissimum possidebas, id tibi diuinitus inlaesum adhuc inuiolatumque seruatur, poterisne meliora quaeque retinens de infortunio iure causari? Atqui uiget incolumis illud pretiosissimum generis humani decus Symmachus socer et quod uitae pretio non segnis emeres, uir totus ex sapientia uirtutibusque factus suarum securus tuis ingemiscit iniuriis.	Then I said: "What you recall is true, O nurse of all the virtues, and I cannot deny the very swift course of my prosperity. But it is this that torments me more fiercely when I think back on it. For in every adversity of fortune the unhappiest kind of misfortune is to have been happy." "But," she said, "you cannot rightly blame things for the penalty you pay for a false opinion. For if this empty name of chance happiness moves you, you may reckon with me how many very great things you still have in abundance. So if what was most precious in the whole census of your fortune is still preserved for you, by God's gift, unharmed and inviolate, can you rightly complain of misfortune while you keep all the better things? Yet your father-in-law Symmachus, that most precious ornament of the human race, lives unharmed; and—what you would not hesitate to buy at the price of your life—a man wholly made of wisdom and virtues, untroubled about his own injuries, he grieves over yours.[4]
	Viuit uxor ingenio modesta, pudicitia pudore praecellens et, ut omnes eius dotes breuiter includam, patri similis. Viuit inquam tibique tantum uitae huius exosa spiritum seruat quoque uno felicitatem minui tuam uel ipsa concesserim, tui desiderio lacrimis ac dolore tabescit. Quid dicam liberos consulares quorum iam, ut in id aetatis pueris, uel paterni uel auiti specimen elucet ingenii? Cum igitur praecipua sit mortalibus uitae cura retinendae, o te si tua bona cognoscas felicem, cui suppetunt etiam nunc quae uita nemo dubitat esse cariora! Quare sicca iam lacrimas. Nondum est ad unum	"Your wife lives, gentle in temper, outstanding in chastity and modesty, and—to sum up all her gifts in brief—like her father. She lives, I say, and, weary of this life, she keeps her breath for you alone; and in this one thing I would myself concede that your happiness is diminished: she wastes away in tears and grief with longing for you. What shall I say of your sons, the consuls, in whom, as far as boys of that age can show it, a likeness of their father's or grandfather's character already shines out? Since, then, mortals' chief

4 Quintus Aurelius Memmius Symmachus, senator and scholar; he was executed soon after Boethius.

LATIN

omnes exosa fortuna nec tibi nimium ualida tempestas incubuit, quando tenaces haerent ancorae quae nec praesentis solamen nec futuri spem temporis abesse patiantur."

"Et haereant," inquam, "precor; illis namque manentibus, utcumque se res habeant, enatabimus. Sed quantum ornamentis nostris decesserit, uides." Et illa. "Promouimus," inquit, "aliquantum, si te nondum totius tuae sortis piget. Sed delicias tuas ferre non possum qui abesse aliquid tuae beatitudini tam luctuosus atque anxius conqueraris. Quis est enim tam conpositae felicitatis ut non aliqua ex parte cum status sui qualitate rixetur? Anxia enim res est humanorum condicio bonorum et quae uel numquam tota proueniat uel numquam perpetua subsistat. Huic census exuberat, sed est pudori degener sanguis; hunc nobilitas notum facit, sed angustia rei familiaris inclusus esse mallet ignotus. Ille utroque circumfluus uitam caelibem deflet; ille nuptiis felix orbus liberis alieno censum nutrit heredi. Alius prole laetatus filii filiaeue delictis maestus inlacrimat.

Idcirco nemo facile cum fortunae suae condicione concordat; inest enim singulis quod inexpertus ignoret, expertus exhorreat. Adde quod felicissimi cuiusque delicatissimus sensus est et nisi ad nutum cuncta suppetant, omnis aduersitatis insolens minimis quibusque prosternitur; adeo perexigua sunt quae fortunatissimis beatitudinis summam detrahunt. Quam multos esse coniectas qui sese caelo proximos arbitrentur, si de fortunae tuae reliquiis pars eis minima contingat? Hic ipse locus quem tu exilium uocas, incolentibus patria est; adeo nihil est miserum nisi cum putes contraque beata sors omnis est aequanimitate tolerantis. Quis est ille tam felix qui cum dederit inpatientiae manus, statum suum mutare non optet? Quam multis amaritudinibus humanae felicitatis dulcedo respersa est! Quae si etiam fruenti iucunda esse uideatur, tamen quo minus cum uelit abeat retineri non possit.

ENGLISH

care is to keep their lives, O how happy you are, if you recognize your goods, you who still have what no one doubts is dearer than life! So dry your tears now. Fortune does not yet hate every one of you, nor has too strong a storm fallen upon you, since your anchors hold firm, and they do not allow either the comfort of the present or the hope of the future to be lacking."

"And may they hold," I said, "I pray; for while they remain, however things may stand, I will swim out of this. But you see how much of my distinction has fallen away." And she said: We have made some progress, if you are not yet disgusted with your whole lot. But I cannot bear your fastidiousness, when you complain so mournfully and anxiously that something is lacking to your happiness. For whose happiness is so well composed that he does not quarrel with the condition of his state in some respect? The condition of human goods is an anxious thing: either it never comes in full, or it never lasts forever. One man has wealth overflowing, but is ashamed of his low birth; another is known for his noble birth, but, hemmed in by narrow means at home, would rather be unknown. One, abounding in both, mourns an unmarried life; another, happy in marriage but childless, is building up a fortune for a stranger to inherit. Another, gladdened by offspring, sheds sad tears over the misdeeds of a son or daughter.

So no one is easily at peace with the condition of his fortune; for in each case there is something that the one who has not experienced it does not know, and the one who has experienced it dreads. Add that the most fortunate have the most delicate feelings, and unless everything is at their beck and call, being unused to any adversity, they are laid low by the smallest things; so very slight are the things that rob the most fortunate of the height of their happiness. How many do you suppose there are who would think themselves next to heaven if even the smallest share of what is left of your fortune came their way? This very place that you call exile is home to those who live here; so true is it that nothing is wretched unless you think it so, and, conversely, every lot is happy for one who bears it with equanimity. Who is so happy that, once he has given in to impatience, he would not wish to change his state? How much bitterness is sprinkled over the sweetness of human

LATIN

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happiness! Even if it seems pleasant to the one enjoying it, still it cannot be held back from leaving when it wishes.

Liquet igitur quam sit mortalium rerum misera beatitudo quae nec apud aequanimos perpetua perdurat nec anxios tota delectat. Quid igitur o mortales extra petitis intra uos positam felicitatem? Error uos inscitiaque confundit. Ostendam breuiter tibi summae cardinem felicitatis. Estne aliquid tibi te ipso pretiosius? Nihil inquies. Igitur si tui compos fueris, possidebis quod nec tu amittere umquam uelis nec fortuna possit auferre. Atque ut agnoscas in his fortuitis rebus beatitudinem constare non posse sic collige. Si beatitudo est summum naturae bonum ratione degentis nec est summum bonum quod eripi ullo modo potest, quoniam praecellit id quod nequeat auferri, manifestum est quoniam ad beatitudinem percipiendam fortunae instabilitas adspirare non possit. Ad haec quem caduca ista felicitas uehit uel scit eam uel nescit esse mutabilem.

It is clear, then, how wretched is the happiness of mortal things, which neither lasts forever among the even-minded nor wholly delights the anxious. Why then, mortals, do you seek outside yourselves a happiness that lies within you? Error and ignorance confuse you. I will briefly show you the hinge of the highest happiness. Is there anything more precious to you than yourself? "Nothing," you will say. So if you are in possession of yourself, you will possess what you would never want to lose and what Fortune could not take away. And so that you may recognize that happiness cannot consist in these things of chance, reason it out this way. If happiness is the highest good of a nature that lives by reason, and if what can in any way be snatched away is not the highest good, since what cannot be taken away is superior, then it is clear that the instability of Fortune cannot aspire to attaining happiness. Besides, whoever is carried along by this fleeting happiness either knows or does not know that it is changeable.

Si nescit, quaenam beata sors esse potest ignorantiae caecitate? Si scit, metuat necesse est, ne amittat quod amitti posse non dubitat; quare continuus timor non sinit esse felicem. An uel si amiserit, neglegendum putat? Sic quoque perexile bonum est quod aequo animo feratur amissum. Et quoniam tu idem es cui persuasum atque insitum permultis demonstrationibus scio mentes hominum nullo modo esse mortales cumque clarum sit fortuitam felicitatem corporis morte finiri, dubitari nequit, si haec afferre beatitudinem potest, quin omne mortalium genus in miseriam mortis fine labatur. Quod si multos scimus beatitudinis fructum non morte solum uerum etiam doloribus suppliciisque quaesisse, quonam modo praesens facere beatos potest quae miseros transacta non efficit?"

If he does not know, what lot can be happy in the blindness of ignorance? If he knows, he must be afraid of losing what he does not doubt can be lost; and so continual fear does not let him be happy. Or if he does lose it, does he think it of no account? Then too it is a very slight good that can be lost with an even mind. And you are the same man who, I know, is convinced by very many demonstrations, and has it firmly planted within him, that human minds are in no way mortal; and it is clear that chance happiness is ended by the death of the body. So it cannot be doubted, if this happiness can bring true happiness, that the whole human race slides into misery at the end of death. But if we know that many have sought the fruit of happiness not only by death but even by pain and torture, how can present happiness make people happy, when it does not make them wretched once it is gone?

POEM 4: A HOUSE ON THE ROCK

Build your life low and firm, safe from wind and waves.

LATIN

ENGLISH

2.M4

LATIN	ENGLISH
Quisquis uolet perennem Cautus ponere sedem Stabilisque nec sonori Sterni flatibus Euri Et fluctibus minantem Curat spernere pontum, Montis cacumen alti, Bibulas uitet harenas. Illud proteruus Auster Totis uiribus urget, Hae pendulum solutae Pondus ferre recusant. Fugiens periculosam Sortem sedis amoenae Humili domum memento Certus figere saxo. Quamuis tonet ruinis Miscens aequora uentus, Tu conditus quieti Felix robore ualli Duces serenus aeuum Ridens aetheris iras.	Whoever wants, with caution, to build a lasting home, steady, not to be flattened by the blasts of the roaring east wind, and cares to scorn the sea that threatens with its waves, let him avoid the summit of a high mountain and the thirsty sands. The one, the insolent south wind assails with all its strength; the others, shifting loose, refuse to bear a hanging weight. Fleeing the dangerous lot of a pleasant site, remember to fix your house firmly on a low rock. Though the wind thunders with ruin, churning up the seas, you, stored away in quiet, happy in the strength of your rampart, will spend your life serene, laughing at the rages of the sky.

PROSE 5: THE EMPTINESS OF RICHES

Wealth, jewels, land and fine clothes are not truly one's own goods.

LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P5 Sed quoniam rationum iam in te mearum fomenta descendunt, paulo ualidioribus utendum puto. Age enim si iam caduca et momentaria fortunae dona non essent, quid in eis est quod aut uestrum umquam fieri queat aut non perspectum consideratumque uilescat? Diuitiaene uel uestra uel sui natura pretiosae sunt? Quid earum potius, aurumne an uis congesta pecuniae? Atqui haec effundendo magis quam coaceruando melius nitent, si quidem auaritia semper odiosos, claros largitas facit. Quod si manere apud quemque non potest quod transfertur in alterum, tunc est pretiosa pecunia cum translata in alios largiendi usu desinit possideri. At eadem si apud unum quanta est ubique gentium congeratur, ceteros sui inopes fecerit.	But since the soothing applications of my arguments are now sinking into you, I think I should use somewhat stronger ones. Come, then: even if the gifts of Fortune were not fleeting and momentary, what is there in them that could ever become yours, or that does not lose its value when looked at closely and considered? Are riches precious by your nature or by their own? What part of them, then—the gold, or a heap of money? Yet these shine more brightly when poured out than when piled up, since greed always makes people hated, and generosity makes them famous. But if what is passed to another cannot remain with anyone, then money is precious when, transferred to others by the practice of giving, it ceases to be possessed. And if all the money there is anywhere in the world were piled up with one person, it would leave everyone else without any.
Et uox quidem tota pariter multorum replet auditum; uestrae uero diuitiae nisi comminutae in plures transire non possunt. Quod cum factum est, pauperes necesse est faciant quos relinquunt. O igitur angustas inopesque	A voice fills the hearing of many all at once and whole; but your riches cannot pass to many without being broken up. And when that happens, they must make poor those whom they leave. O

LATIN

diuitias quas nec habere totas pluribus licet et ad quemlibet sine ceterorum paupertate non ueniunt! An gemmarum fulgor oculos trahit? Sed si quid est in hoc splendore praecipui, gemmarum est lux illa non hominum, quas quidem mirari homines uehementer admiror. Quid est enim carens animae motu atque compage quod animatae rationabilique naturae pulchrum esse iure uideatur? Quae tametsi conditoris opera suique distinctione postremae aliquid pulchritudinis trahunt, infra uestram tamen excellentiam conlocatae admirationem uestram nullo modo merebantur. An uos agrorum pulchritudo delectat? Quidni? Est enim pulcherrimi operis pulchra portio.

Sic quondam sereni maris facie gaudemus; sic caelum sidera lunam solemque miramur. Num te horum aliquid attingit? Num audes alicuius talium splendore gloriari? An uernis floribus ipse distingueris aut tua in aestiuos fructus intumescit ubertas? Quid inanibus gaudiis raperis? Quid externa bona pro tuis amplexaris? Numquam tua faciet esse fortuna quae a te natura rerum fecit aliena. Terrarum quidem fructus animantium procul dubio debentur alimentis. Sed si, quod naturae satis est, replere indigentiam uelis, nihil est quod fortunae affluentiam petas. Paucis enim minimisque natura contenta est, cuius satietatem si superfluis urgere uelis, aut iniucundum quod infuderis fiet aut noxium. Iam uero pulchrum uariis fulgere uestibus putas, quarum si grata intuitu species est, aut materiae naturam aut ingenium mirabor artificis.

An uero te longus ordo famulorum facit esse felicem? Qui si uitiosi moribus sint, perniciosa domus sarcina et ipsi domino uehementer inimica; sin uero probi, quonam modo in tuis opibus aliena probitas numerabitur? Ex quibus omnibus nihil horum quae tu in tuis conputas bonis tuum esse bonum liquido monstratur. Quibus si nihil inest appetendae pulchritudinis, quid est quod uel amissis doleas uel laeteris retentis? Quod si natura pulchra sunt, quid id tua refert? Nam haec per se a tuis quoque opibus sequestrata placuissent. Neque enim idcirco sunt pretiosa quod in tuas uenere diuitias, sed quoniam pretiosa uidebantur, tuis ea diuitiis adnumerare

ENGLISH

narrow and needy riches, then, which many cannot have whole, and which come to no one without the poverty of the rest! Or does the gleam of jewels catch your eye? But if there is anything special in that brilliance, the light belongs to the jewels, not to human beings; and I marvel greatly that human beings marvel at them. For what is there that lacks the movement and structure of a soul that could rightly seem beautiful to a nature with a soul and reason? Though by their maker's work and their own distinctness they draw some small share of the lowest beauty, they are placed below your excellence and in no way deserved your admiration. Or does the beauty of the fields delight you? Why not? It is a beautiful part of a most beautiful work.

So we sometimes rejoice at the face of a calm sea; so we admire the sky, the stars, the moon and the sun. Does any of these touch you? Do you dare to boast of the splendor of any such thing? Are you yourself adorned with spring flowers, or does your own fertility swell into summer fruits? Why are you carried away by empty joys? Why do you embrace external goods as your own? Fortune will never make yours what the nature of things has made foreign to you. The fruits of the earth are no doubt owed to the nourishment of living creatures. But if you want to fill your need to the extent that is enough for nature, there is no reason to seek Fortune's abundance. For nature is content with few and very small things; and if you want to press its fullness with superfluities, what you pour in will become either unpleasant or harmful. Now you think it is beautiful to shine in various clothes; but if their appearance is pleasing to the eye, I will admire either the nature of the material or the skill of the craftsman.

Or does a long line of servants make you happy? If they are vicious in character, they are a ruinous burden on the house and bitterly hostile to their master himself; but if they are honest, how will someone else's honesty be counted among your wealth? From all of this it is plainly shown that none of the things you count among your goods is your good. And if there is no beauty in them worth seeking, why should you grieve when they are lost or rejoice when you keep them? And if they are beautiful by nature, what is that to you? For they would have pleased in themselves even if separ-

LATIN

maluisti. Quid autem tanto fortunae strepitu desideratis? Fugare credo indigentiam copia quaeritis. Atqui hoc uobis in contrarium cedit.

Pluribus quippe adminiculis opus est ad tuendam pretiosae supellectilis uarietatem, uerumque illud est permultis eos indigere qui permulta possideant contraque minimum qui abundantiam suam naturae necessitate non ambitus superfluitate metiantur. Itane autem nullum est proprium uobis atque insitum bonum ut in externis ac sepositis rebus bona uestra quaeratis? Sic rerum uersa condicio est ut diuinum merito rationis animal non aliter sibi splendere nisi inanimatae supellectilis possessione uideatur? Et alia quidem suis contenta sunt; uos autem deo mente consimiles ab rebus infimis excellentis naturae ornamenta captatis nec intellegitis quantam conditori uestro faciatis iniuriam. Ille genus humanum terrenis omnibus praestare uoluit; uos dignitatem uestram infra infima quaeque detruditis.

Nam si omne cuiusque bonum eo cuius est constat esse pretiosius, cum uilissima rerum uestra bona esse iudicatis, eisdem uosmet ipsos uestra existimatione submittitis, quod quidem haud inmerito cadit. Humanae quippe naturae ista condicio est ut tum tantum ceteris rebus cum se cognoscit excellat, eadem tamen infra bestias redigatur, si se nosse desierit. Nam ceteris animantibus sese ignorare naturae est; hominibus uitio uenit. Quam uero late patet uester hic error qui ornari posse aliquid ornamentis existimatis alienis? At id fieri nequit. Nam si quid ex appositis luceat, ipsa quidem quae sunt apposita laudantur; illud uero his tectum atque uelatum in sua nihilo minus foeditate perdurat. Ego uero nego ullum esse bonum quod noceat habenti. Num id mentior? ' Minime,' inquis.

Atqui diuitiae possidentibus persaepe nocuerunt, cum pessimus quisque eoque alieni magis auidus quidquid usquam auri gemmarumque est se solum qui habeat dignissimum putat. Tu igitur qui nunc contum gladiumque sollicitus pertimescis, si uitae huius callem

ENGLISH

ated from your wealth. They are not precious because they have come into your riches; rather, because they seemed precious, you chose to count them among your riches. But what do you all want with such a clamor about fortune? You seek, I suppose, to drive away want by abundance. Yet this turns out the opposite for you.

For more supports are needed to protect a variety of precious furnishings; and it is true that those who possess very much need very much, and on the contrary those need very little who measure their abundance by the necessity of nature, not by the excess of ambition. Is there, then, no good of your own, planted within you, that you seek your goods in things external and set apart? Is the condition of things so reversed that a creature made divine by the gift of reason thinks it can shine only by possessing lifeless furnishings? Other things are content with their own; but you, like God in your mind, seek the ornaments of your excellent nature from the lowest things, and do not understand how great a wrong you do to your creator. He willed that the human race should stand above all earthly things; you thrust your dignity down below the lowest of them.

For if every good of anything is agreed to be more precious than the thing whose good it is, then when you judge the vilest things to be your goods, by your own estimation you subject yourselves to them—and that indeed is deserved. For this is the condition of human nature: it surpasses all other things only when it knows itself, but it is brought lower than the beasts if it ceases to know itself. For other animals, not to know themselves is their nature; for human beings it comes from vice. How far this error of yours extends, which thinks that anything can be adorned by ornaments that belong to others! But that cannot be. For if anything shines by what is added to it, it is the added things themselves that are praised; what is covered and veiled by them remains, nonetheless, in its own ugliness. I, for my part, deny that anything is good that harms its possessor. Am I lying? “Not at all,” you say.

Yet riches have very often harmed their possessors, since all the worst men, being all the greedier for what belongs to others, think themselves alone most worthy to have whatever gold and jewels there are anywhere. So you, who now

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	uacuus uiator intrasses, coram latrone cantares. O praeclara opum mortalium beatitudo quam cum adeptus fueris securus esse desistis!	anxiously dread the pike and the sword, would sing in the robber's face if you had set out on the path of this life as a traveler with empty pockets. O the splendid happiness of mortal wealth: once you have gained it, you stop being safe![5]

POEM 5: THE FIRST AGE

The first people lived simply and peacefully, before greed dug up gold.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.M5	Felix nimium prior aetas Contenta fidelibus aruis Nec inerti perdita luxu, Facili quae sera solebat Ieiunia soluere glande. Non Bacchica munera norant Liquido confundere melle Nec lucida uellera Serum Tyrio miscere ueneno. Somnos dabat herba salubres, Potum quoque lubricus amnis, Vmbras altissima pinus. Nondum maris alta secabat Nec mercibus undique lectis Noua litora uiderat hospes. Tunc classica saeua tacebant, Odiis neque fusus acerbis Cruor horrida tinxerat arua. Quid enim furor hosticus ulla Vellet prior arma mouere, Cum uulnera saeua uiderent Nec praemia sanguinis ulla? Vtinam modo nostra redirent In mores tempora priscos! Sed saeuior ignibus Aetnae Feruens amor ardet habendi.	Too happy was that earlier age, content with its faithful fields and not ruined by idle luxury, that used to break its late fasts with acorns easily gathered. They did not know how to blend the gifts of Bacchus with clear honey, nor to dip the shining fleeces of the Seres in Tyrian dye. The grass gave them healthy sleep, the gliding river gave them drink, the towering pine gave them shade. No stranger yet cut through the deep sea or, with goods gathered from every land, had seen new shores. Then the savage war trumpets were silent; blood, shed in bitter hatred, had not yet stained the fearful fields. For why would hostile fury want to be the first to take up arms, when men saw cruel wounds and no reward for blood? If only our times would now return to the old ways! But fiercer than the fires of Etna burns the seething love of possession.[6]
	/ Heu primus quis fuit ille Auri qui pondera tecti Gemmasque latere uolentes Pretiosa pericula fodit?	/ Alas, who was that first man who dug up the weight of hidden gold and gems that wished to stay concealed— precious perils?

PROSE 6: OFFICE AND POWER

High office and power can fall to the worst men and cannot make anyone good.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P6	Quid autem de dignitatibus potentiaque disseram quae uos uerae dignitatis ac potestatis inscii caelo exaequatis?	What am I to say of high office and power, which you, knowing nothing of true dignity and power,

5 An echo of Juvenal, *Satires* 10.19–22, on the empty-handed traveler who sings in front of a robber.

LATIN

Quae si in improbissimum quemque ceciderunt, quae flammis Aetnae eructuantibus, quod diluuium tantas strages dederint? Certe, uti meminisse te arbitror, consulare imperium, quod libertatis principium fuerat, ob superbiam consulum uestri ueteres abolere cupiuerunt, qui ob eandem superbiam prius regium de ciuitate nomen abstulerant. At si quando, quod perrarum est, probis deferantur, quid in eis aliud quam probitas utentium placet? Ita fit ut non uirtutibus ex dignitate sed ex uirtute dignitatibus honor accedat. Quae uero est ista uestra expetibilis ac praeclara potentia? Nonne, o terrena animalia, consideratis quibus qui praesidere uideamini? Nunc si inter mures uideres unum aliquem ius sibi ac potestatem prae ceteris uindicantem, quanto mouereris cachinno!

Quid uero, si corpus spectes, inbecillius homine reperire queas quos saepe muscularum quoque uel morsus uel in secreta quaeque reptantium necat introitus? Quo uero quisquam ius aliquod in quempiam nisi in solum corpus et quod infra corpus est, fortunam loquor, possit exserere? Num quidquam libero imperabis animo? Num mentem firma sibi ratione cohaerentem de statu propriae quietis amouebis? Cum liberum quendam uirum suppliciis se tyrannus adacturum Putaret, ut aduersum se factae coniurationis conscios proderet, linguam ille momordit atque abscidit et in os tyranni saeuientis abiecit; ita cruciatus, quos putabat tyrannus materiam crudelitatis, uir sapiens fecit esse uirtutis. Quid autem est quod in alium facere quisquam possit, quod sustinere ab alio ipse non possit? Busiridem accipimus necare hospites solitum ab Hercule hospite fuisse mactatum.

Regulus plures Poenorum bello captos in uincla coniecerat, sed mox ipse uictorum catenis manus praebuit. Vllamne igitur eius hominis potentiam putas, qui quod ipse in alio potest, ne id in se alter ualeat efficere non possit? Ad haec si ipsis dignitates ac potestatibus inesset aliquid naturalis ac proprii boni, numquam pessimis prouenirent. Neque enim sibi solent

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raise to the level of heaven? If they fall to the worst of men, what eruption of Etna's flames, what flood could cause such devastation? Surely, as I think you remember, your ancestors wanted to abolish the authority of the consuls, which had been the beginning of liberty, because of the consuls' arrogance—the same ancestors who, for that same arrogance, had earlier removed the name of king from the city. But if, as very rarely happens, offices are given to good men, what is pleasing in them except the goodness of those who hold them? So it comes about that honor does not come to virtue from office, but to office from virtue. And what is this desirable and splendid power of yours? You creatures of earth, do you not consider over whom you seem to preside? Now if you saw one mouse among the rest claiming rights and power for himself over the others, how you would roar with laughter![7]

And if you look at the body, what could you find weaker than a human being, whom the bite of a tiny fly, or some creeping thing working its way into the body's hidden passages, often kills? How could anyone exercise any right over another except over the body alone, and over what is lower than the body—I mean his fortune? Will you ever command a free mind? Will you ever move a mind held together by firm reason from its own state of calm? When a tyrant thought he could force a free man by torture to betray those who knew of a conspiracy against him, the man bit off his tongue and spat it in the raging tyrant's face. So the tortures that the tyrant thought were material for his cruelty, the wise man made material for virtue. And what can anyone do to another that he cannot suffer from another himself? We are told that Busiris, who used to kill his guests, was himself slain by his guest Hercules.[8]

Regulus had thrown many Carthaginians captured in war into chains, but soon he himself held out his hands to the chains of his conquerors. Do you think, then, that a man has any power if he cannot prevent another from doing to him what he can do to another? Besides, if offices and powers had in them any natural good of their own, they would

6 The Seres (the Chinese) were known to the Romans as the source of silk; Tyre, in Phoenicia, was famous for its purple dye.
7 The kings were expelled from Rome in 509 BC; in 451 BC the consulship was suspended in favor of a board of ten, the decemvirs.
8 The tongue story is told of the philosophers Zeno of Elea and Anaxarchus. Busiris was a mythical king of Egypt who sacrificed strangers.

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aduersa sociari; natura respuit ut contraria quaeque iungantur. Ita cum pessimos plerumque dignitatibus fungi dubium non sit, illud etiam liquet natura sui bona non esse quae se pessimis haerere patiantur. Quod quidem de cunctis fortunae muneribus dignius existimari potest, quae ad improbissimum quemque uberiora perueniunt. De quibus illud etiam considerandum puto, quod nemo dubitat esse fortem, cui fortitudinem inesse conspexerit, et cuicumque uelocitas adest manifestum est esse uelocem.	never come to the worst of men. For opposites do not usually keep company; nature refuses to join contraries. So since there is no doubt that the worst men very often hold high office, it is also clear that things which allow themselves to cling to the worst men are not good by their own nature. This can be judged even more fittingly of all Fortune's gifts, which come most abundantly to the most wicked. On this point I think we should also consider the following: no one doubts that a man is brave if he has seen bravery in him, and whoever has swiftness is plainly swift.[9]
Sic musica quidem musicos medicina medicos rhetorice rhetores facit. Agit enim cuiusque rei natura quod proprium est nec contrariarum rerum miscetur effectibus et ultro quae sunt auersa depellit. Atqui nec opes inexpletam restinguere auaritiam queunt nec potestas sui compotem fecerit quem uitiosae libidines insolubilibus adstrictum retinent catenis, et collata improbis dignitas non modo non efficit dignos, sed prodit potius et ostentat indignos. Cur ita prouenit? Gaudetis enim res sese aliter habentes falsis compellare nominibus quae facile ipsarum rerum redarguuntur effectu; itaque nec illae diuitiae nec illa potentia nec haec dignitas iure appellari potest. Postremo idem de tota concludere fortuna licet in qua nihil expetendum, nihil natiuae bonitatis inesse manifestum est, quae nec se bonis semper adiungit et bonos quibus fuerit adiuncta non efficit.	In the same way music makes musicians, medicine physicians, rhetoric orators. For the nature of each thing does what is proper to it; it is not mixed with the effects of contrary things, and it actively drives away what is opposed to it. Yet riches cannot quench insatiable greed, nor could power make a man master of himself if vicious desires hold him bound in unbreakable chains; and dignity conferred on the wicked not only fails to make them worthy, but rather betrays them and puts their unworthiness on display. Why does this happen? Because you like to call things by false names when they are really otherwise, and those names are easily refuted by the effects of the things themselves. So those riches cannot rightly be called riches, nor that power power, nor this dignity dignity. Finally, the same conclusion may be drawn about Fortune as a whole: it is clear that there is nothing in her worth seeking, nothing of native goodness, since she does not always attach herself to the good, and does not make good those she is attached to.

POEM 6: NERO

Nero's vast power could not cure his cruelty.

LATIN	ENGLISH
2.M6 Nouimus quantas dederit ruinas Vrbe flammata patribusque caesis Fratre qui quondam ferus interempto Matris effuso maduit cruore Corpus et uisu gelidum pererrans Ora non tinxit lacrimis, sed esse Censor extincti potuit decoris. Hic tamen sceptro populos regebat	We know what ruin he wrought when he burned the city and slaughtered the senators, he who once, in his savagery, killed his brother and grew wet with his mother's spilt blood, and, running his eyes over her cold body, did not wet his face with tears, but could sit as critic of her dead beauty.

9 Marcus Atilius Regulus, Roman consul, was captured by the Carthaginians in 255 BC during the First Punic War.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Quos uidet condens radios sub undas Phoebus extremo ueniens ab ortu, Quos premunt septem gelidi triones, Quos Notus sicco uiolentus aestu Torret ardentes recoquens harenas. Celsa num tandem ualuit potestas Vertere praui rabiem Neronis? Heu grauem sortem, quotiens iniquus Additur saeuo gladius ueneno!	Yet this man ruled with his scepter the peoples whom Phoebus sees when he hides his rays beneath the waves and when he rises from the farthest east, those who lie beneath the seven cold stars of the north, those whom the south wind, violent with its dry heat, scorches as it bakes the burning sands. Could lofty power in the end change the madness of depraved Nero? Alas for the grievous lot, whenever the unjust sword is added to cruel poison![10]

PROSE 7: THE SMALLNESS OF FAME

On a tiny earth, and set against eternity, glory is next to nothing.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P7	Tum ego: "Scis," inquam, "ipsa minimum nobis ambitionem mortalium rerum fuisse dominatam. Sed materiam gerendis rebus optauimus quo ne uirtus tacita consenesceret." Et illa: "Atqui hoc unum est quod praestantes quidem natura mentes sed nondum ad extremam manum uirtutum perfectione perductas allicere possit, gloriae scilicet cupido et optimorum in rem publicam fama meritorum; quae quam sit exilis et totius uacua ponderis, sic considera. Omnem terrae ambitum, sicuti astrologicis demonstrationibus accepisti, ad caeli spatium puncti constat obtinere rationem, id est ut, si ad caelestis globi magnitudinem conferatur, nihil spatii prorsus habere iudicetur.	Then I said: "You know yourself that ambition for mortal things has had very little mastery over me. But I did want the opportunity to take part in public affairs, so that virtue would not grow old in silence." And she said: Yet this is the one thing that can lure minds that are excellent by nature but not yet brought to the finishing touch by the perfection of the virtues: namely the desire for glory, and a reputation for the greatest services to the state. Consider how slight it is, how empty of all weight. You have learned from the demonstrations of astronomy that the whole circuit of the earth has, compared with the expanse of the heavens, the proportion of a point; that is, if it is compared with the size of the celestial sphere, it must be judged to have no extent at all.
	Huius igitur tam exiguae in mundo regionis quarta fere portio est, sicut Ptolomaeo probante didicisti, quae nobis cognitis animantibus incolatur Huic quartae, si quantum maria paludesque premunt quantumque siti uasta regio distenditur cogitatione subtraxeris, uix angustissima inhabitandi hominibus area relinquetur. In hoc igitur minimo puncti quodam puncto circumsaepti atque conclusi de peruulganda fama, de proferendo nomine cogitatis? Aut quid habeat amplum magnificumque gloria tam angustis exiguisque limitibus artata? Adde quod hoc ipsum breuis habitaculi saeptum plures incolunt nationes lingua, moribus, totius uitae ratione distantes, ad quas tum difficultate itinerum tum loquendi diuersitate tum	Of this region, so tiny within the universe, about one quarter, as you learned from Ptolemy's proofs, is inhabited by living creatures known to us. If from this quarter you subtract in thought all that is covered by seas and marshes and all the vast expanse stretched out in drought, hardly the narrowest space will be left for human beings to live in. Hedged in and shut up in this tiniest point of a point, do you think about spreading your fame and extending your name? What greatness or splendor can glory have, squeezed within such narrow and meager limits? Besides, this very en-

10 Nero, emperor AD 54–68, was blamed for the fire of Rome in AD 64, and had his half-brother Britannicus and his mother Agrippina killed. The "seven stars" are the Plough, marking the north.

LATIN

commercii insolentia non modo fama hominum singulorum sed ne urbium quidem peruenire queat.

Aetate denique Marci Tullii, sicut ipse quodam loco significat, nondum Caucasum montem Romanae rei publicae fama transcenderat, et erat tunc adulta Parthis etiam ceterisque id locorum gentibus formidolosa. Videsne igitur quam sit angusta, quam compressa gloria quam dilatare ac propagare laboratis? An ubi Romani nominis transire fama nequit, Romani hominis gloria progredietur? Quid quod diuersarum gentium mores inter se atque instituta discordant, ut quod apud alios laude apud alios supplicio dignum iudicetur. Quo fit ut si quem famae praedicatio delectat, huic in plurimos populos nomen proferre nullo modo conducat. Erit igitur peruagata inter suos gloria quisque contentus et intra unius gentis terminos praeclara illa famae inmortalitas coartabitur. Sed quam multos clarissimos suis temporibus uiros scriptorum inops deleuit obliuio!

Quamquam quid ipsa scripta proficiant, quae cum suis auctoribus premit longior atque obscura uetustas? Vos uero inmortalitatem uobis propagare uidemini, cum futuri famam temporis cogitatis. Quod si aeternitatis infinita spatia pertractes, quid habes quod de nominis tui diuturnitate laeteris? Vnius etenim mora momenti, si decem milibus conferatur annis, quoniam utrumque spatium definitum est, minimam, licet, habet tamen aliquam portionem. At hic ipse numerus annorum eiusque quamlibet multiplex ad interminabilem diuturnitatem ne comparari quidem potest. Etenim finitis ad se inuicem fuerit quaedam, infiniti uero atque finiti nulla umquam poterit esse collatio. Ita fit ut quamlibet prolixi temporis fama, si cum inexhausta aeternitate cogitetur, non parua sed plane nulla esse uideatur.

Vos autem nisi ad populares auras inanesque rumores recte facere nescitis et relicta conscientiae uirtutisque

ENGLISH

closure of a small dwelling-place is inhabited by many nations differing in language, customs and their whole way of life. Because of the difficulty of travel, the diversity of speech and the rarity of trade, not only the fame of individual men but not even the fame of cities can reach them.[11]

In the age of Marcus Tullius, indeed, as he himself indicates somewhere, the fame of the Roman republic had not yet crossed the Caucasus mountains, though it was then at its height and feared even by the Parthians and the other peoples of that region. Do you see, then, how narrow, how cramped is the glory you labor to widen and extend? Where the fame of the Roman name cannot pass, will the glory of a Roman man advance? And what of the fact that the customs and institutions of different peoples disagree with one another, so that what is judged worthy of praise among some is judged worthy of punishment among others? So if anyone delights in being talked about, it does him no good at all to carry his name to many peoples. Each man, then, will be content with glory spread among his own people, and that glorious immortality of fame will be confined within the borders of a single nation. But how many men who were most famous in their own day have been wiped out by oblivion for lack of writers![12]

And yet what good are writings themselves, when a long and dark antiquity buries them along with their authors? You seem to yourselves to be extending your immortality when you think of fame in time to come. But if you consider the infinite expanses of eternity, what reason do you have to rejoice in the long life of your name? The length of a single moment, compared with ten thousand years, has some share in it, however small, since both spans are finite. But this number of years, and any multiple of it you like, cannot even be compared with unending duration. Between finite things there can be some comparison, but between the infinite and the finite there can never be any. So it comes about that fame, however long it lasts, if it is thought of alongside inexhaustible eternity, seems not small but plainly nothing.

But you do not know how to act rightly except for the breeze of popular favor and empty rumors;

11 Ptolemy (2nd century AD), the Alexandrian astronomer and geographer.
12 Marcus Tullius Cicero (106–43 BC); the passage is in the "Dream of Scipio" at the end of his *Republic*.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	praestantia de alienis praemia sermunculis postulatis. Accipe in huiusmodi arrogantiae leuitate quam festiue aliquis inluserit. Nam cum quidam adortus esset hominem contumeliis, qui non ad uerae uirtutis usum sed ad superbam gloriam falsum sibi philosophi nomen induerat, adiecissetque iam se sciturum, an ille philosophus esset, si quidem illatas iniurias leniter patienterque tolerasset, ille patientiam paulisper adsumpsit acceptaque contumelia uelut insultans: 'Iam tandem,' inquit, 'intellegis me esse philosophum?' Tum ille nimium mordaciter: 'Intellexeram,' inquit, ' si tacuisses.' Quid autem est quod ad praecipuos uiros, de his enim sermo est, qui uirtute gloriam petunt, quid, inquam, est quod ad hos de fama post resolutum morte suprema corpus attineat?	abandoning the excellence of conscience and virtue, you demand your rewards from other people's idle talk. Hear how wittily someone mocked the shallowness of this kind of arrogance. A certain man had assumed the false name of philosopher, not to practice true virtue but for proud glory. Someone attacked him with insults, adding that he would soon know whether he was a philosopher, if he bore the injuries done him gently and patiently. The man put on patience for a little while, and having taken the insult, said as if in triumph: "Now at last do you see that I am a philosopher?" Then the other replied, very bitingly: "I would have, if you had kept quiet." But what has fame to do with outstanding men—for it is of them we are speaking—who seek glory through virtue? What, I say, has fame to do with them, once the body has been dissolved in death at the last?
	Nam si, quod nostrae rationes credi uetant, toti moriuntur homines, nulla est omnino gloria, cum is cuius ea esse dicitur non exstet omnino. Sin uero bene sibi mens conscia terreno carcere resoluta caelum libera petit, nonne omne terrenum negotium spernat quae se caelo fruens terrenis gaudet exemptam?"	For if human beings die entirely—which our reasoning forbids us to believe—there is no glory at all, since the one whose glory it is said to be does not exist at all. But if the mind, conscious of having done well, is released from its earthly prison and freely seeks heaven, will it not despise all earthly business, since, enjoying heaven, it rejoices to be free of earthly things?

POEM 7: DEATH SCORNS GLORY

Death levels high and low, and famous names soon fade.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.M7	Quicumque solam mente praecipiti petit Summumque credit gloriam, Late patentes aetheris cernat plagas Artumque terrarum situm. Breuem replere non ualentis ambitum Pudebit aucti nominis. Quid o superbi colla mortali iugo Frustra, leuare gestiunt? Licet remotos fama per populos means Diffusa linguas explicet Et magna titulis fulgeat claris domus, Mors spernit altam gloriam, Inuoluit humile pariter et celsum caput Aequatque summis infima. Vbi nunc fidelis ossa Fabricii manent, Quid Brutus aut rigidus Cato? Signat superstes fama tenuis pauculis Inane nomen litteris.	Whoever with headlong mind seeks glory alone and believes it the highest good, let him look at the wide-open spaces of the sky and the cramped position of the earth. A name that cannot fill so small a circuit, however it has grown, will make him ashamed. Why, you proud, do your necks strain in vain to rise from the mortal yoke? Though fame travels through distant peoples and spreads abroad, setting tongues talking, and a great house shines with famous titles, death scorns lofty glory, wraps up the humble and the lofty head alike, and makes the lowest equal to the highest. Where now do the bones of faithful Fabricius lie? What of Brutus, or stern Cato? A thin surviving fame marks, in a few letters, an empty name.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Sed quod decora nouimus uocabula, Num scire consumptos datur? Iacetis ergo prorsus ignorabiles Nec fama notos efficit.	But because we know their splendid names, are we given to know the dead themselves? You lie there, then, utterly unknown, and fame does not make you known.[13]
/ Quod si putatis longius uitam trahi Mortalis aura nominis, Cum sera uobis rapiet hoc etiam dies, Iam uos secunda mors manet.	/ But if you think life is prolonged by the breath of a mortal name, when a late day snatches even this from you, then a second death awaits you.

PROSE 8: THE USES OF BAD FORTUNE

Adverse fortune teaches the truth and reveals who one's real friends are.

LATIN	ENGLISH
2.P8 Sed ne me inexorabile contra fortunam gerere bellum putes, est aliquando cum de hominibus illa, fallax illa nihil, bene mereatur, tum scilicet cum se aperit, cum frontem detegit moresque profitetur Nondum forte quid loquar intellegis. Mirum est quod dicere gestio, eoque sententiam uerbis explicare uix queo. Etenim plus hominibus reor aduersam quam prosperam prodesse fortunam. Illa enim semper specie felicitatis cum uidetur blanda, mentitur; haec semper uera est, cum se instabilem mutatione demonstrat. Illa fallit, haec instruit, illa mendacium specie bonorum mentes fruentium ligat, haec cognitione fragilis felicitatis absoluit. Itaque illam uideas uentosam, fluentem suique semper ignaram, hanc sobriam succinctamque et ipsius aduersitatis exercitatione prudentem. Postremo felix a uero bono deuios blanditiis trahit, aduersa plerumque ad uera bona reduces unco retrahit.	But so that you do not think I am waging an implacable war against Fortune: there is a time when she, that deceiver, deceives in nothing and deserves well of human beings—namely when she reveals herself, uncovers her face and declares her ways. Perhaps you do not yet understand what I am saying. What I am eager to say is strange, and so I can hardly put my thought into words. I think that adverse fortune does people more good than prosperous fortune. For prosperous fortune, when she seems to smile, always lies with the look of happiness; adverse fortune is always truthful, when she shows by changing that she is unstable. The one deceives, the other instructs; the one binds the minds of those who enjoy her with the false appearance of good things, the other frees them with the knowledge that happiness is fragile. And so you may see the one windy, flowing, always ignorant of herself, and the other sober, girded for action, and made wise by the very practice of adversity. Finally, happy fortune draws people away from the true good with her flatteries; adverse fortune usually hauls them back to true goods with a hook.
An hoc inter minima aestimandum putas quod amicorum tibi fidelium mentes haec aspera, haec horribilis fortuna detexit, haec tibi certos sodalium uultus ambiguosque secreuit, discedens suos abstulit, tuos reliquit? Quanti hoc integer, ut uidebaris tibi fortunatus, emisses! Nunc et amissas opes querere; quod pretiosissimum diuitiarum genus est amicos inuenisti.	Or do you think it should be counted among the least of things that this harsh, this terrible fortune has revealed to you the minds of your faithful friends? She has sorted out for you the sure faces of your companions from the doubtful ones; in leaving, she took away her own and left you yours. What would you have paid for this when you were unharmed and, as you thought, fortunate! Go on,

13 Gaius Fabricius (3rd century BC) was a byword for incorruptibility; Brutus is probably Lucius Junius Brutus, who expelled the kings, and Cato either the Elder or the Younger, both models of stern virtue.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
		complain now of lost riches: you have found friends, the most precious kind of riches there is.

POEM 8: LOVE BINDS THE WORLD

The love that orders the cosmos should also rule human hearts.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
2.M8	Quod mundus stabili fide Concordes uariat uices, Quod pugnantia semina Foedus perpetuum tenent, Quod Phoebus roseum diem Curru prouehit aureo, Vt quas duxerit Hesperos Phoebe noctibus imperet, Vt fluctus auidum mare Certo fine coerceat, Ne terris liceat uagis Latos tendere terminos. Hanc rerum seriem ligat Terras ac pelagus regens Et caelo imperitans amor. Hic si frena remiserit, Quidquid nunc amat inuicem Bellum continuo geret Et quam nunc socia fide Pulchris motibus incitant, Certent soluere machinam. Hic sancto populos quoque Iunctos foedere continet, Hic et coniugii sacrum Castis nectit amoribus, Hic fidis etiam sua Dictat iura sodalibus.	That the world with steady faith varies its harmonious changes, that warring seeds keep a lasting treaty, that Phoebus brings forth the rosy day in his golden chariot, that the nights which Hesperus has ushered in are ruled by Phoebe, that the greedy sea holds its waves within fixed bounds, so that the restless land may not push its borders wide: all this chain of things is bound together by love, ruling land and sea and holding command in heaven. If love should slacken the reins, all that now loves each other would at once make war, and the world-machine that now, in allied faith, they drive with lovely motions, they would strive to break apart. Love also holds peoples joined in a sacred treaty; love binds the sacred bond of marriage with chaste affection; love also dictates its laws to faithful friends.[14]
	/ O felix hominum genus, Si uestros animos amor Quo caelum regitur regat.	/ O happy human race, if your minds were ruled by the love that rules the heavens.

14 Phoebe is the moon.

Book III

The true good
Wealth, office, power, fame and pleasure fail; true happiness is God himself.

PROSE 1: THE PROMISE OF TRUE HAPPINESS

Eager for stronger remedies, Boethius asks where she will lead him: to true happiness.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P1	IAM cantum illa finiuerat, cum me audiendi auidum stupentemque arrectis adhuc auribus carminis mulcedo defixerat. Itaque paulo post: "O" inquam, "summum lassorum solamen animorum quam tu me uel sententiarum pondere uel canendi etiam iucunditate refouisti! Adeo ut iam me post haec inparem fortunae ictibus esse non arbitrer. Itaque remedia quae paulo acriora esse dicebas, non modo non perhorresco, sed audiendi auidus uehementer efflagito." Tum illa "Sensi," inquit, "cum uerba nostra tacitus attentusque rapiebas, eumque tuae mentis habitum uel exspectaui uel, quod est uerius, ipsa perfeci. Talia sunt quippe quae restant, ut degustata quidem mordeant, interius autem recepta dulcescant. Sed quod tu te audiendi cupidum dicis, quanto ardore flagrares, si quonam te ducere aggrediamur agnosceres!" Quonam? inquam.	She had already finished her song, but its sweetness held me spellbound, eager to hear more, astonished, my ears still pricked up. So after a little while I said: "O highest comfort of weary minds, how you have revived me, both by the weight of your thoughts and by the delight of your singing! So much so that I no longer think myself unequal to the blows of Fortune. And so the remedies you said were rather sharp, far from dreading them, I now urgently demand, eager to hear." Then she said: "I sensed it when you were drinking in my words, silent and attentive, and I either waited for that state of your mind or, more truly, produced it myself. What remains is of such a kind that it stings when tasted, but grows sweet once taken inside. But as for your saying that you are eager to hear, how you would burn with longing if you knew where I am setting out to lead you!" "Where?" I said.
	"Ad ueram", inquit, "felicitatem, quam tuus quoque somniat animus, sed occupato ad imagines uisu ipsam illam non potest intueri." Tum ego: "Fac obsecro et quae illa uera sit, sine cunctatione demonstra." "Faciam," inquit illa, "tui causa libenter. Sed quae tibi causa notior est, eam prius designare uerbis atque informare conabor ut ea perspecta cum in contrariam partem flexeris oculos, uerae beatitudinis speciem possis agnoscere."	"To true happiness," she said, "which your mind also dreams of; but because its sight is taken up with images, it cannot look upon happiness itself." Then I said: "Please do so, and show me without delay what true happiness is." "Gladly," she said, "for your sake. But first I will try to sketch in words and give shape to what is better known to you, so that once you have seen it clearly and then turned your eyes the other way, you may recognize the form of true happiness."

POEM 1: CLEARING THE FIELD

As a field is cleared before sowing, false goods must be seen for what they are.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M1	Qui serere ingenuum uolet agrum, Liberat arua prius fruticibus, Falce rubos filicemque resecat,	Whoever wants to sow a fertile field first clears the land of brushwood, cuts back brambles and fern with a sickle,

LATIN	ENGLISH
Vt noua fruge grauis Ceres eat. Dulcior est apium mage labor, Si malus ora prius sapor edat. Gratius astra nitent ubi Notus Desinit imbriferos dare sonos. Lucifer ut tenebras pepulerit Pulchra dies roseos agit equos. Tu quoque falsa tuens bona prius Incipe colla iugo retrahere. Vera dehinc animum subierint.	so that Ceres may come heavy with new grain. The labor of bees tastes sweeter if a bitter flavor has first stung the mouth. The stars shine more pleasingly when the south wind stops sounding its rainy blasts. When the morning star has driven off the darkness, lovely day drives her rosy horses. You too, looking first at false goods, begin to draw your neck back from the yoke. Then true goods will enter your mind.

PROSE 2: THE HIGHEST GOOD

All people seek happiness, the state that contains all goods, but by different routes.

LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P2 Tum defixo paululum uisu et uelut in augustam suae mentis sedem recepta sic coepit: “Omnis mortalium cura quam multiplicium studiorum labor exercet, diuerso quidem calle procedit, sed ad unum tamen beatitudinis finem nititur peruenire. Id autem est bonum quo quis adepto nihil ulterius desiderare queat. Quod quidem est omnium summum bonorum cunctaque intra se bona continens, cui si quid aforet summum esse non posset, quoniam relinqueretur extrinsecus quod posset optari. Liquet igitur esse beatitudinem statum bonorum omnium congregatione perfectum. Hunc, uti diximus, diuerso tramite mortales omnes conantur adipisci. Est enim mentibus hominum ueri boni naturaliter inserta cupiditas, sed ad falsa deuius error abducit.	Then, fixing her gaze for a little while and withdrawing, as it were, into the noble seat of her mind, she began: All the concern of mortals, busied with the labor of many different pursuits, advances by different paths, yet strives to arrive at one goal, happiness. And that is the good which, once someone has gained it, leaves him nothing further to desire. It is the highest of all goods and contains all goods within itself; if anything were missing from it, it could not be the highest, since something would be left outside it that could still be wished for. It is clear, then, that happiness is a state made perfect by the gathering together of all goods. This, as we said, all mortals try to reach by different routes. For the desire for the true good is naturally planted in human minds, but error leads them astray toward false goods.
Quorum quidem alii summum bonum esse nihilo indigere credentes ut diuitiis affluant elaborant; alii uero bonum quod sit dignissimum ueneratione iudicantes adeptis honoribus reuerendi ciuibus suis esse nituntur. Sunt qui summum bonum in summa potentia esse constituant; hi uel regnare ipsi uolunt uel regnantibus adhaerere conantur. At quibus optimum quiddam claritas uidetur, hi uel belli uel pacis artibus gloriosum nomen propagare festinant. Plurimi uero boni fructum gaudio laetitiaque metiuntur; hi felicissimum putant uoluptate diffluere. Sunt etiam qui horum fines causasque alterutro permutent, ut qui diuitias ob potentiam uoluptatesque desiderant uel qui potentiam seu pecuniae causa seu proferendi nominis appetunt.	Some of them, believing that the highest good is to need nothing, labor to abound in riches. Others, judging the good to be what is most worthy of veneration, strive to gain offices and so be revered by their fellow citizens. There are those who place the highest good in the highest power; these either want to rule themselves or try to attach themselves to those who rule. Those to whom renown seems something supremely good hurry to spread a glorious name through the arts of war or of peace. Very many measure the fruit of the good by joy and gladness; these think it the happiest thing to melt away in pleasure. There are also those who exchange the ends and causes of these things, one for another: for example, those who want riches

LATIN

In his igitur ceterisque talibus humanorum actuum uotorumque uersatur intentio, ueluti nobilitas fauorque popularis quae uidentur quandam claritudinem comparare, uxor ac liberi quae iucunditatis gratia petuntur; amicorum uero quod sanctissimum quidem genus est, non in fortuna sed in uirtute numeratur, reliquum uero uel potentiae causa uel delectationis assumitur. Iam uero corporis bona promptum est ut ad superiora referantur. Robur enim magnitudoque uidetur praestare ualentiam, pulchritudo atque uelocitas celebritatem, salubritas uoluptatem; quibus omnibus solam beatitudinem desiderari liquet. Nam quod quisque prae ceteris petit, id summum esse iudicat bonum. Sed summum bonum beatitudinem esse definiuimus; quare beatum esse iudicat statum quem prae ceteris quisque desiderat. Habes igitur ante oculos propositam fere formam felicitatis humanae — opes, honores, potentiam, gloriam, uoluptates.

Quae quidem sola considerans Epicurus consequenter sibi summum bonum uoluptatem esse constituit, quod cetera omnia iucunditatem animo uideantur afferre. Sed ad hominum studia reuertor, quorum animus etsi caligante memoria tamen bonum suum repetit, sed uelut ebrius domum quo tramite reuertatur ignorat. Num enim uidentur errare hi qui nihilo indigere nituntur? Atqui non est aliud quod aeque perficere beatitudinem possit quam copiosus bonorum omnium status nec alieni egens sed sibi ipse sufficiens. Num uero labuntur hi qui quod sit optimum, id etiam reuerentiae cultu dignissimum putent? Minime. Neque enim uile quiddam contemnendumque est quod adipisci omnium fere mortalium laborat intentio. An in bonis non est numeranda potentia? Quid igitur? Num imbecillum ac sine uiribus aestimandum est, quod omnibus rebus constat esse praestantius?

An claritudo nihili pendenda est? Sed sequestrari nequit quin omne quod excellentissimum sit id etiam uideatur esse clarissimum. Nam non esse anxiam tristemque beatitudinem nec doloribus molestiisque subiectam quid attinet dicere, quando in minimis quoque rebus id appetitur quod habere fruique delectet? Atqui haec sunt

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for the sake of power and pleasures, or those who seek power either for money's sake or to spread their name.

It is around these, then, and others like them that the aim of human actions and prayers turns: nobility, for example, and popular favor, which seem to procure a kind of renown; wife and children, which are sought for the delight they give. Friends, the most sacred kind of good, are counted not under fortune but under virtue; the rest are taken up either for the sake of power or of pleasure. As for the goods of the body, it is easy to see that they are to be referred to those above. Strength and size seem to bestow ability; beauty and speed, renown; health, pleasure. In all of these it is clear that happiness alone is desired. For what each person seeks above everything else, he judges to be the highest good. But we have defined the highest good as happiness; therefore each person judges the state he desires above all else to be happiness. So you have before your eyes, roughly, the pattern of human happiness: wealth, honors, power, glory, pleasures.

Epicurus, considering these alone, concluded consistently enough that the highest good was pleasure, since all the others seem to bring delight to the mind. But I return to human pursuits. The human mind, though its memory is clouded, still seeks its own good; but like a drunk man it does not know by which path to get home. Do those who strive to need nothing seem to be mistaken? But nothing can complete happiness so well as a state rich in all goods, needing nothing from outside, sufficient to itself. Are those mistaken who think that what is best is also most worthy of reverent honor? Not at all. For it is nothing cheap or contemptible that the effort of nearly all mortals labors to obtain. Or is power not to be counted among goods? What then? Is that to be thought weak and without strength which is plainly superior to all things?[1]

Or is renown to be counted as nothing? But it cannot be set apart: whatever is most excellent must also seem most renowned. As for happiness not being anxious and gloomy, nor subject to pains and troubles, what need is there to say it, when even in the smallest things people seek what it de-

1 Epicurus (341–270 BC), Greek philosopher who made pleasure the highest good.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	quae adipisci homines uolunt eaque de causa diuitias, dignitates, regna, gloriam uoluptatesque desiderant quod per haec sibi sufficientiam, reuerentiam, potentiam, celebritatem, laetitiam credunt esse uenturam. Bonum est igitur quod tam diuersis studiis homines petunt; in quo quanta sit naturae uis facile monstratur, cum licet uariae dissidentesque sententiae tamen in diligendo boni fine consentiunt."	lights them to have and enjoy? These, then, are what people want to obtain; they desire riches, offices, kingdoms, glory and pleasures because they believe that through them they will gain sufficiency, reverence, power, renown and joy. It is the good, then, that people seek by such different pursuits. And in this it is easily shown how great the power of nature is, since, though their opinions vary and disagree, they agree in loving the good as their end.

POEM 2: THE PULL OF NATURE

Lions, birds and saplings return to their nature; all things seek their origin.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M2	Quantas rerum flectat habenas Natura potens, quibus inmensum Legibus orbem prouida seruet Stringatque ligans inresoluto Singula nexu, placet arguto Fidibus lentis promere cantu. Quamuis Poeni pulchra leones Vincula gestent manibusque datas Captent escas metuantque trucem Soliti uerbera, ferre magistrum. Si cruor horrida tinxerit ora, Resides olim redeunt animi Fremituque graui meminere sui; Laxant nodis colla solutis Primusque lacer dente cruento Domitor rabidas imbuit iras.	How many reins of things mighty Nature turns, by what laws in her foresight she keeps the vast world, binding each single thing tight in an unbreakable knot—I wish to tell in clear song on the pliant strings. Though African lions wear handsome chains, and take food given them by hand, and fear the harsh master whose blows they are used to bearing, if blood has stained their fearsome mouths, their spirits, long dormant, return, and with a deep roar they remember themselves; they slip the knots and free their necks, and the tamer, first to be torn by the bloody tooth, gives their raging fury its first taste.
	/ Quae canit altis garrula ramis Ales caueae clauditur antro; Huic licet inlita pocula melle Largasque dapes dulci studio Ludens hominum cura ministret, Si tamen arto saliens texto Nemorum gratas uiderit umbras, Sparsas pedibus proterit escas, Siluas tantum maesta requirit, Siluas dulci uoce susurrat. Validis quondam uiribus acta Pronum flectit uirga cacumen; Hanc si curuans dextra remisit, Recto spectat uertice caelum. Cadit Hesperias Phoebus in undas, Sed secreto tramite rursus Currum solitos uertit ad ortus. Repetunt proprios quaeque recursus	/ The bird that chatters in the high branches is shut in the hollow of a cage; though cups smeared with honey and lavish meals, with fond attention, are served to it by playful human care, yet if, hopping in its cramped wickerwork, it sees the pleasant shade of the woods, it tramples the scattered food with its feet, longs sadly for the forests alone, murmurs of the forests in its sweet voice. A sapling, once bent by powerful force, bows its top down toward the ground; if the hand that bent it lets it go, it looks at the sky with its top upright. Phoebus sets in the western waves, but by a hidden path again turns his chariot to its usual rising. All things seek again their own return

LATIN	ENGLISH
Redituque suo singula gaudent Nec manet ulli traditus ordo Nisi quod fini iunxerit ortum Stabilemque sui fecerit orbem.	and each rejoices in its homecoming; nor does any thing keep the order it is given unless it has joined its rising to its end and made its own circle steady.

PROSE 3: WEALTH DOES NOT SATISFY

Riches promise sufficiency but create new needs.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P3	"Vos quoque, o terrena animalia, tenui licet imagine uestrum tamen principium somniatis uerumque illum beatitudinis finem licet minime perspicaci qualicumque tamen cogitatione prospicitis eoque uos et ad uerum bonum naturalis ducit intentio et ab eodem multiplex error abducit. Considera namque an per ea quibus se homines adepturos beatitudinem putant ad destinatum finem ualeant peruenire. Si enim uel pecuniae uel honores ceteraque tale quid afferunt cui nihil bonorum abesse uideatur, nos quoque fateamur fieri aliquos horum adeptione felices. Quod si neque id ualent efficere quod promittunt bonisque pluribus carent, nonne liquido falsa in eis beatitudinis species deprehenditur? Primum igitur te ipsum qui paulo ante diuitiis affluebas, interrogo: Inter illas abundantissimas opes numquamne animum tuum concepta ex qualibet iniuria confudit anxietas?"	"You too, creatures of earth, dream of your origin, though in a faint image; and though with no very keen sight, still with some kind of thought you look toward that true goal of happiness. And so natural inclination leads you toward the true good, and manifold error leads you away from it. Consider whether people can reach their appointed goal through the things by which they think they will gain happiness. If money or honors or the rest really bring something to which no good seems lacking, then let us too admit that some people become happy by gaining them. But if they cannot deliver what they promise, and lack many goods, is not a false appearance of happiness clearly caught out in them? First, then, I ask you yourself, who were so recently overflowing with riches: amid that abundant wealth, did anxiety, born of some wrong or other, never trouble your mind?"
	Atqui, inquam, "libero me fuisse animo quin aliquid semper angerer reminisci non queo." "Nonne quia uel aberat quod abesse non uelles uel aderat quod adesse noluisses?" "Ita est," inquam. "Illius igitur praesentiam huius absentiam desiderabas?" "Confiteor," inquam. "Eget uero," inquit, "eo quod quisque desiderat?" "Eget," inquam. "Qui uero eget aliquo, non est usquequaque sibi ipse sufficiens?" "Minime," inquam. "Tu itaque hanc insufficientiam plenus," inquit, "opibus sustinebas? "Quidni? inquam. "Opes igitur nihilo indigentem sufficientemque sibi facere nequeunt et hoc erat quod promittere uidebantur. Atqui hoc quoque maxime considerandum puto quod nihil habeat suapte natura pecunia ut his a quibus possidetur inuitis nequeat auferri." "Fateor," inquam. "Quidni fateare, cum eam cotidie ualentior aliquis eripiat inuito?	"Yet," I said, "I cannot remember ever having been so free in mind that I was not always troubled by something." "Was it not because either something was absent that you did not want absent, or something was present that you did not want present?" "That is so," I said. "So you desired the presence of the one and the absence of the other?" "I admit it," I said. "But does a person lack what he desires?" she said. "He does," I said. "And one who lacks something is not wholly sufficient to himself?" "No," I said. "So you, full of riches," she said, "had to put up with this insufficiency?" "Of course," I said. "Then riches cannot make a person need nothing and be sufficient to himself; and that is what they seemed to promise. And I think this is especially worth considering: money has nothing in its own nature to prevent its being taken from those who possess it against their will." "I admit it," I said. "Of course you admit it, when every day someone stronger snatches it from someone unwilling.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	Vnde enim forenses querimoniae nisi quod uel ui uel fraude nolentibus pecuniae repetuntur ereptae?" "Ita est," inquam. "Egebit igitur," inquit, "extrinsecus petito praesidio quo suam pecuniam quisque tueatur?" "Quis id," inquam, "neget?" "Atqui non egeret eo, nisi possideret pecuniam quam posset amittere?" "Dubitari," inquam, "nequit." "In contrarium igitur relapsa res est; nam quae sufficientes sibi facere putabantur opes, alieno potius praesidio faciunt indigentes. Quis autem modus est quo pellatur diuitiis indigentia? Num enim diuites esurire nequeunt? Num sitire non possunt? Num frigus hibernum pecuniosorum membra non sentiunt? Sed adest, inquies, opulentis quo famem satient, quo sitim frigusque depellant. Sed hoc modo consolari quidem diuitiis indigentia potest, auferri penitus non potest.	"For where do lawsuits come from, except that money taken by force or fraud from unwilling owners is being reclaimed?" "That is so," I said. "So everyone will need protection sought from outside to guard his money?" "Who would deny it?" I said. "But he would not need it unless he possessed money that he could lose?" "That cannot be doubted," I said. "Then the matter has turned into its opposite: the riches that were thought to make people sufficient to themselves in fact make them need the protection of others. And in what way is need driven out by riches? Can the rich not be hungry? Can they not be thirsty? Do the limbs of the moneyed not feel the winter cold? But the wealthy, you will say, have the means to satisfy their hunger and drive off thirst and cold. In this way need can indeed be soothed by riches; it cannot be removed altogether.
	Nam si haec hians semper atque aliquid poscens opibus expletur, maneat necesse est quae possit expleri. Taceo quod naturae minimum, quod auaritiae nihil satis est. Quare si opes nec submouere possunt indigentiam et ipsae suam faciunt, quid est quod eas sufficientiam praestare credatis?"	"For if need, always gaping and demanding something, is filled by riches, there must always remain a need to be filled. I say nothing of the fact that very little is enough for nature, and nothing is enough for greed. So if riches cannot remove need, and even create need of their own, why do you believe they provide sufficiency?"

POEM 3: THE RICH MAN'S CARE

However much the greedy man gains, care stays with him and his wealth leaves him at death.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M3	Quamuis fluente diues auri gurgite Non expleturas cogat auarus opes Oneretque bacis colla rubri litoris Ruraque centeno scindat opima boue, Nec cura mordax deseret superstitem, Defunctumque leues non comitantur opes.	Though the rich man, from a flowing flood of gold, greedily amasses wealth that will never satisfy him, and loads his neck with pearls from the shores of the Red Sea, and ploughs his rich fields with a hundred oxen, gnawing care will not leave him while he lives, and when he dies his fickle wealth does not go with him.

PROSE 4: OFFICE DOES NOT CONFER HONOR

High office exposes the wicked and has no dignity of its own.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P4	Sed dignitates honorabilem reuerendumque cui prouenerint reddunt. Num uis ea est magistratibus ut utentium mentibus uirtutes inserant uitia depellant? Atqui non fugare sed illustrare potius nequitiam solent;	But offices, you say, make the person they come to honored and revered. Do magistracies have such power that they plant virtues in the minds of those who hold them and drive out vices? Yet they usu-

LATIN

quo fit ut indignemur eas saepe nequissimis hominibus contigisse, unde Catullus licet in curuli Nonium sedentem strumam tamen appellat. Videsne quantum malis dedecus adiciant dignitates? Atqui minus eorum patebit indignitas, si nullis honoribus inclarescant. Tu quoque num tandem tot periculis adduci potuisti ut cum Decorato gerere magistratum putares, cum in eo mentem nequissimi scurrae delatorisque respiceres? Non enim possumus ob honores reuerentia dignos iudicare quos ipsis honoribus iudicamus indignos. At si quem sapientia praeditum uideres, num posses eum uel reuerentia uel ea qua est praeditus sapientia non dignum putare? Minime.

ENGLISH

ally do not banish wickedness but rather put it in the spotlight; and so we are often indignant that they have fallen to the most wicked men. That is why Catullus calls Nonius "a tumor," though he sat in the curule chair. Do you see how much disgrace offices add to bad men? Their unworthiness would be less exposed if no honors made them conspicuous. And you yourself—could you ever be brought, even under the threat of so many dangers, to consider holding office alongside Decoratus, when you saw in him the mind of a worthless buffoon and informer? For we cannot judge people worthy of reverence because of their honors when we judge them unworthy of those very honors. But if you saw someone endowed with wisdom, could you think him unworthy of reverence, or of the wisdom with which he is endowed? Surely not.[2]

Inest enim dignitas propria uirtuti, quam protinus in eos quibus fuerit adiuncta transfundit. Quod quia populares facere nequeunt honores, liquet eos propriam dignitatis pulchritudinem non habere.

For virtue has a dignity of its own, which it at once passes on to those it is joined with. Since popular honors cannot do this, it is clear that they do not have the beauty proper to dignity.

In quo illud est animaduertendum magis. Nam si eo abiectior est quo magis a pluribus quisque contemnitur, cum reuerendos facere nequeat quos pluribus ostentat, despectiores potius improbos dignitas facit. Verum non impune; reddunt namque improbi parem dignitatibus uicem quas sua contagione commaculant. Atque ut agnoscas ueram illam reuerentiam per has umbratiles dignitates non posse contingere, si qui multiplici consulatu functus in barbaras nationes forte deuenerit, uenerandumne barbaris honor faciet? Atqui si hoc naturale munus dignitatibus foret, ab officio suo quoquo gentium nullo modo cessarent, sicut ignis ubique terrarum numquam tamen calere desistit, sed quoniam id eis non propria uis sed hominum fallax adnectit opinio, uanescunt ilico, cum ad eos uenerint qui dignitates eas esse non aestimant.

Here something further should be noticed. If a person is more contemptible the more people despise him, then office, since it cannot make revered those it puts on show to many, rather makes the wicked more despised. But not without payback: for the wicked repay offices in kind, staining them with their contagion. And so that you may recognize that true reverence cannot come through these shadowy offices, consider this. If someone who had been consul many times happened to go among foreign peoples, would his office make him venerable to the foreigners? Yet if this were a natural gift of offices, they would never fail in their function anywhere in the world, just as fire never stops being hot anywhere on earth. But since it is not their own power but people's deceptive opinion that attaches this to them, they vanish at once when they come among those who do not consider them offices.

Sed hoc apud exteras nationes. Inter eos uero apud quos ortae sunt num perpetuo perdurant? Atqui praetura magna olim potestas nunc inane nomen et senatorii census grauis sarcina; si quis populi quondam curasset annonam, magnus habebatur, nunc ea praefectura quid

But that is among foreign nations. Among those where they arose, do they at least last forever? The praetorship was once a great power; now it is an empty name and a heavy burden on a senator's fortune. If someone had once taken charge of the

2 Catullus, poem 52, on Nonius; the curule chair was the seat of Rome's senior magistrates. Decoratus held office at the Gothic court around AD 508; little else is known of him.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	abiectius? Vt enim paulo ante diximus, quod nihil habet proprii decoris, opinione utentium nunc splendorem accipit nunc amittit. Si igitur reuerendos facere nequeunt dignitates, si ultro improborum contagione sordescunt, si mutatione temporum splendere desinunt, si gentium aestimatione uilescunt, quid est quod in se expetendae pulchritudinis habeant, nedum aliis praestent?	people's grain supply, he was considered great; now what is more lowly than that prefecture? For, as we said a little earlier, what has no splendor of its own receives splendor at one time and loses it at another, according to the opinion of those who deal with it. If, then, offices cannot make people revered, if they are soiled besides by contact with the wicked, if they cease to shine as times change, if they grow cheap in the estimation of nations, what beauty worth seeking do they have in themselves, let alone give to others?[3]

POEM 4: NERO'S HONORS

Honors handed out by a wretch like Nero cannot make anyone happy.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M4	Quamuis se Tyrio superbus ostro Comeret et niueis lapillis, Inuisus tamen omnibus uigebat Luxuriae Nero saeuientis. Sed quondam dabat improbus uerendis Patribus indecores curules. Quis illos igitur putet beatos Quos miseri tribuunt honores?	Though he decked himself out, proud, in Tyrian purple and snow-white gems, yet he flourished, hated by all, Nero of the raging luxury. Yet this wicked man once handed out to the revered senators curule chairs that brought disgrace. Who then would think those happy whose honors come from wretches?

PROSE 5: THE WEAKNESS OF KINGS

Kings and their favorites live in fear, and their power cannot protect them.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P5	An uero regna regumque familiaritas efficere potentem ualet? Quidni, quando eorum felicitas perpetuo perdurat? Atqui plena est exemplorum uetustas, plena etiam praesens aetas, qui reges felicitatem calamitate mutauerint. O praeclara potentia quae ne ad conseruationem quidem sui satis efficax inuenitur! Quod si haec regnorum potestas beatitudinis auctor est, nonne si qua parte defuerit, felicitatem minuat, miseriam inportet? Sed quamuis late humana tendantur imperia, plures necesse est gentes relinqui quibus regum quisque non imperet. Qua uero parte beatos faciens desinit potestas, hac inpotentia subintrat quae miseros facit; hoc igitur modo maiorem regibus inesse necesse est miseriae portionem. Expertus sortis suae periculorum tyrannus regni metus pendentis supra uerticem gladii terrore simulauit. Quae est igitur haec potestas quae	Or can kingdoms, and friendship with kings, make a person powerful? Why not, when their happiness lasts forever? Yet antiquity is full of examples, and so is the present age, of kings who have exchanged happiness for disaster. What splendid power, which is found too weak even to preserve itself! And if this royal power is the author of happiness, does it not, wherever it falls short, lessen happiness and bring in misery? But however far human empires extend, there must remain many peoples over whom any given king does not rule. And where the power that makes men happy stops, there powerlessness creeps in, which makes them wretched; in this way, then, kings must have the larger share of misery. A tyrant who had experienced the dangers of his lot

3 By Boethius's day the praetorship was largely ceremonial, and its holder was expected to pay for public games.

LATIN	ENGLISH
sollicitudinum morsus expellere, quae formidinum aculeos uitare nequit?	represented the fears of kingship by the terror of a sword hanging over a man's head. What sort of power is this, then, which cannot drive away the bite of anxieties or avoid the stings of fear?[4]
Atqui uellent ipsi uixisse securi, sed nequeunt; dehinc de potestate gloriantur. An tu potentem censes quem uideas uelle quod non possit efficere? Potentem censes qui satellite latus ambit, qui quos terret ipse plus metuit, qui ut potens esse uideatur, in seruientium manu situm est? Nam quid ego de regum familiaribus disseram, cum regna ipsa tantae inbecillitatis plena demonstrem? Quos quidem regia potestas saepe incolumis saepe autem lapsa prosternit. Nero Senecam familiarem praeceptoremque suum ad eligendae mortis coegit arbitrium. Papinianum diu inter aulicos potentem militum gladiis Antoninus obiecit. Atqui uterque potentiae suae renuntiare uoluerunt, quorum Seneca opes etiam suas tradere Neroni seque in otium conferre conatus est; sed dum ruituros moles ipsa trahit, neuter quod uoluit effecit.	They would like to have lived free from care, but they cannot; and then they boast of their power! Do you think a man powerful when you see him wanting what he cannot achieve? Do you think a man powerful who goes about with a bodyguard at his side, who fears more than those he terrifies, who, to seem powerful, is in the hands of his servants? And why should I speak of the friends of kings, when I show that kingdoms themselves are full of such weakness? Royal power often lays them low, sometimes while it stands, sometimes when it has fallen. Nero forced Seneca, his friend and teacher, to choose the manner of his own death. Antoninus threw Papinian, long powerful among the courtiers, to the soldiers' swords. Yet both wanted to renounce their power; Seneca even tried to hand his wealth over to Nero and retire into leisure. But while their very bulk dragged them down to their fall, neither achieved what he wanted.[5]
Quae est igitur ista potentia quam pertimescunt habentes, quam nec cum habere uelis tutus sis et cum deponere cupias uitare non possis. An praesidio sunt amici quos non uirtus sed fortuna conciliat? Sed quem felicitas amicum fecit, infortunium faciet inimicum. Quae uero pestis efficacior ad nocendum quam familiaris inimicus.	What sort of power is this, then, which its possessors dread, which you are not safe in having when you want to have it, and which you cannot escape when you want to lay it down? Or are friends a protection, when fortune, not virtue, has won them? But the one whom good fortune made a friend, misfortune will make an enemy. And what plague is more effective at doing harm than an enemy who is an intimate?

POEM 5: TRUE POWER

Only one who masters his own passions is truly powerful.

LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M5 Qui se uolet esse potentem Animos domet ille feroces Nec uicta libidine colla Foedis submittat habenis. Etenim licet Indica longe Tellus tua iura tremescat Et seruiat ultima Thyle,	Whoever wants to be powerful must tame his fierce passions, and not, conquered by lust, bow his neck to its foul reins. For though the land of India far away may tremble at your laws, and farthest Thule be your slave,

4 Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, who seated the flatterer Damocles beneath a sword hung by a single hair (Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 5.61–62).

5 The jurist Papinian was executed in AD 212 by the emperor Caracalla, officially named Antoninus.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	Tamen atras pellere curas Miserasque fugare querelas Non posse potentia non est.	still, if you cannot drive off black cares and put your wretched complaints to flight, that is not power.[6]

PROSE 6: GLORY AND NOBLE BIRTH

Fame is often undeserved and always narrow, and noble birth is someone else's merit.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P6	Gloria uero quam fallax saepe, quam turpis est! Vnde non iniuria tragicus exclamat: ὦ δόξα δόξα μυρίοισι δὴ βροτῶν οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὤγκωσας μέγαν. Plures enim magnum saepe nomen falsis uulgi opinionibus abstulerunt; quo quid turpius excogitari potest? Nam qui falso praedicantur, suis ipsi necesse est laudibus erubescant. Quae si etiam meritis conquisita sit, quid tamen sapientis adiecerit conscientiae qui bonum suum non populari rumore, sed conscientiae ueritate metitur? Quod si hoc ipsum propagasse nomen pulchrum uidetur, consequens est ut foedum non extendisse iudicetur. Sed cum, uti paulo ante disserui, plures gentes esse necesse sit ad quas unius fama hominis nequeat peruenire, fit ut quem tu aestimas esse gloriosum, pro maxima parte terrarum uideatur inglorius.	And glory—how deceptive it often is, how shameful! So the tragic poet rightly exclaims: ὦ δόξα δόξα μυρίοισι δὴ βροτῶν οὐδὲν γεγῶσι βίοτον ὤγκωσας μέγαν ["O glory, glory, for countless mortals who were nothing you have puffed their lives up great!"]. For many people have often won a great name through the false opinions of the crowd; and what can be imagined more shameful than that? Those who are falsely praised must themselves blush at their praises. And even if glory is won by merit, what will it add to the conscience of the wise man, who measures his good not by popular rumor but by the truth of his conscience? And if it seems a fine thing to have spread one's name, it follows that not to have spread it must be judged shameful. But since, as I argued a little earlier, there must be many nations that the fame of one man cannot reach, it happens that the man you think glorious seems without glory over the greater part of the earth.[7]
	Inter haec uero popularem gratiam ne commemoratione quidem dignam puto, quae nec iudicio prouenit nec umquam firma perdurat. Iam uero quam sit inane quam futtile nobilitatis nomen, quis non uideat? Quae si ad claritudinem refertur, aliena est. Videtur namque esse nobilitas quaedam de meritis ueniens laus parentum. Quod si claritudinem praedicatio facit, illi sint clari necesse est qui praedicantur. Quare splendidum te, si tuam non habes, aliena claritudo non efficit. Quod si quid est in nobilitate bonum, id esse arbitror solum, ut inposita nobilibus necessitudo uideatur ne a maiorum uirtute degeneret.	Among these things I think popular favor not even worth mentioning, since it neither arises from judgment nor ever lasts firmly. And who does not see how empty, how worthless the name of nobility is? If it is referred to renown, the renown belongs to someone else. For nobility seems to be a kind of praise that comes from the merits of one's parents. But if praise creates renown, then those who are praised must be the renowned. So if you have no renown of your own, another's renown does not make you illustrious. If there is anything good in nobility, I think it is this alone: that the nobly born seem to be under an obligation not to fall short of their ancestors' virtue.

6 Thule was the name given to the most northerly land known to the ancients.
7 Euripides, *Andromache* 319–20.

POEM 6: ONE ORIGIN

All human beings come from one father, so none is ignoble except by vice.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M6	Omne hominum genus in terris simili surgit ab ortu Vnus enim rerum pater est, unus cuncta ministrat. Ille dedit Phoebo radios dedit et cornua lunae, Ille homines etiam terris dedit ut sidera caelo, Hic clausit membris animos celsa sede petitos. Mortales igitur cunctos edit nobile germen. Quid genus et proauos strepitis? Si primordia uestra Auctoremque deum spectes, nullus degener exstat, Ni uitiis peiora fouens proprium deserat ortum.	The whole human race on earth springs from a like origin. For there is one father of things; one provides for all. He gave Phoebus his rays and gave the moon her horns, he gave human beings to the earth as he gave stars to the sky, he shut up in limbs souls drawn from a lofty seat. So all mortals spring from a noble seed. Why do you clamor about your family and ancestors? If you look at your beginnings and at God your maker, no one is ignoble, unless, fostering what is worse through vice, he abandons his own origin.

PROSE 7: BODILY PLEASURE

Pleasures of the body bring anxiety, disease and regret.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P7	Quid autem de corporis uoluptatibus loquar, quarum appetentia quidem plena est anxietatis, satietas uero poenitentiae? Quantos illae morbos, quam intolerabiles dolores quasi quendam fructum nequitiae fruentium solent referre corporibus! Quarum motus quid habeat iucunditatis, ignoro. Tristes uero esse uoluptatum exitus, quisquis reminisci libidinum suarum uolet, intelleget. Quae si beatos explicare possunt, nihil causae est quin pecudes quoque beatae esse dicantur quarum omnis ad explendam corporalem lacunam festinat intentio. Honestissima quidem coniugis foret liberorumque iucunditas, sed nimis e natura dictum est nescio quem filios inuenisse tortorem; quorum quam sit mordax quaecumque condicio, neque alias expertum te neque nunc anxium necesse est admonere. In quo Euripidis mei sententiam probo, qui carentem liberis infortunio dixit esse felicem.	What should I say of the pleasures of the body? The craving for them is full of anxiety, and having one's fill of them full of remorse. What diseases, what unbearable pains they tend to bring to the bodies of those who enjoy them, as a kind of fruit of wickedness! What delight there is in their motions I do not know. But that the endings of pleasures are sad, anyone who is willing to remember his own lusts will understand. If they can make people happy, there is no reason why cattle too should not be called happy, whose whole effort hastens to fill the bodily void. The delight of wife and children would indeed be most honorable; but it was said all too truly that someone found his sons to be his torturers. How galling their condition is, whatever it may be, there is no need to remind you, who have experienced it before and are anxious now. In this I approve the saying of my Euripides, who said that a man without children is happy in his misfortune.[8]

8 Euripides, *Andromache* 418–20. The saying about sons as torturers has not been traced.

POEM 7: THE BEE'S STING

Every pleasure stings once its sweetness is gone.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M7	Habet hoc uoluptas omnis, Stimulis agit fruentes Apiumque par uolantum Vbi grata mella fudit, Fugit et nimis tenaci Ferit icta corda morsu.	Every pleasure has this about it: it drives those who enjoy it with stings, and, like the winged bees, once it has poured out its pleasant honey, it flies off, and with a bite that clings too long strikes the hearts it has hit.

PROSE 8: FALSE PATHS

Each of these goods brings harm, and the goods of the body are slight and fleeting.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P8	Nihil igitur dubium est quin hae ad beatitudinem uiae deuia quaedam sint nec perducere quemquam eo ualeant ad quod se perducturas esse promittunt. Quantis uero implicitae malis sint, breuissime monstrabo. Quid enim? Pecuniamne congregare conaberis? Sed eripies habenti. Dignitatibus fulgere uelis? Danti supplicabis et qui praeire ceteros honore cupis, poscendi humilitate uilesces. Potentiamne desideras? Subiectorum insidiis obnoxius periculis subiacebis. Gloriam petas? Sed per aspera quaeque distractus securus esse desistis. Voluptariam uitam degas? Sed quis non spernat atque abiciat uilissimae fragilissimaeque rei corporis seruum? Iam uero qui bona prae se corporis ferunt, quam exigua, quam fragili possessione nituntur! Num enim elephantos mole, tauros robore superare poteritis, num tigres uelocitate praeibitis? Respicite caeli spatium, firmitudinem, celeritatem et aliquando desinite uilia mirari.	There is no doubt, then, that these roads to happiness are byways, and cannot lead anyone to the place they promise to lead him. And how great are the evils in which they are entangled, I will show very briefly. What then? Will you try to amass money? But you will have to snatch it from someone who has it. Would you shine with high offices? You will have to beg from the one who grants them, and you who long to outdo others in honor will be cheapened by the humility of asking. Do you desire power? Exposed to the plots of your subjects, you will lie open to dangers. Do you seek glory? But pulled this way and that by every kind of hardship, you cease to be free of care. Would you lead a life of pleasure? But who would not despise and reject the slave of the body, that most worthless and fragile thing? And those who make a show of bodily goods—how slight, how fragile a possession they rely on! Will you be able to surpass elephants in size, or bulls in strength? Will you outrun tigers? Look at the expanse of the sky, its firmness, its swiftness, and stop at last admiring worthless things.
	Quod quidem caelum non his potius est quam sua qua regitur ratione mirandum. Formae uero nitor ut rapidus est, ut uelox et uernalium florum mutabilitate fugacior! Quod si, ut Aristoteles ait, Lynceis oculis homines uterentur, ut eorum uisus obstantia penetraret, nonne introspectis uisceribus illud Alcibiadis superficie pulcherrimum corpus turpissimum uideretur? Igitur te pulchrum uideri non tua natura sed oculorum spectantium reddit infirmitas. Sed aestimate quam uultis nimio corporis bona, dum sciatis hoc quodcumque miramini triduanae febris igniculo posse dissolui! Ex	And yet the sky is to be admired less for these things than for the reason by which it is governed. As for the gleam of beauty, how quick, how swift it is, more fleeting than the changing flowers of spring! If, as Aristotle says, human beings had the eyes of Lynceus, so that their sight could pierce through obstacles, would not the body of Alcibiades, so beautiful on the surface, seem utterly foul once its insides were seen? So it is not your own nature that makes you seem beautiful, but the weakness of the eyes that look at you. Value the

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	quibus omnibus illud redigere in summam licet, quod haec quae nec praestare quae pollicentur bona possunt nec omnium bonorum congregatione perfecta sunt, ea nec ad beatitudinem quasi quidam calles ferunt nec beatos ipsa perficiunt	goods of the body as highly as you like, so long as you know that whatever you admire can be dissolved by the little flame of a three-day fever! From all this we can sum up: these things, which cannot give the goods they promise and are not made perfect by the gathering of all goods, neither lead to happiness as paths nor make anyone happy by themselves.[9]

POEM 8: IGNORANCE OF THE GOOD

People know where to find gold and fish, but not the good they seek.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M8	Eheu quae miseros tramite deuios Abducit ignorantia! Non aurum in uiridi quaeritis arbore Nec uite gemmas carpitis, Non altis laqueos montibus abditis Vt pisce ditetis dapes Nec uobis capreas si libeat sequi, Tyrrhena captatis uada. Ipsos quin etiam fluctibus abditos Norunt recessus aequoris, Quae gemmis niueis unda feracior Vel quae rubentis purpurae Nec non quae tenero pisce uel asperis Praestent echinis litora. Sed quonam lateat quod cupiunt bonum, Nescire caeci sustinent, Et quod stelliferum trans abiit polum, Tellure demersi petunt. Quid dignum stolidis mentibus inprecer? Opes honores ambiant; Et cum falsa graui mole parauerint, Tum uera cognoscant bona.	Alas, what ignorance leads the wretched away from the path, astray! You do not look for gold on a green tree, nor pick gems from the vine; you do not hide your nets on high mountains to enrich your feasts with fish, nor, if you want to hunt roe deer, do you search the Tyrrhenian shallows. Indeed, people know the hidden places beneath the waves, the very recesses of the sea: which waters are richest in snow-white pearls or in red purple, and which shores excel in tender fish or prickly sea urchins. But where the good they desire lies hidden, they are content, in their blindness, not to know; and what lies beyond the starry pole they seek, sunk in the earth. What fitting curse shall I call down on foolish minds? Let them chase wealth and honors; and when they have piled up false goods in a heavy mass, then let them recognize the true ones.

PROSE 9: TRUE HAPPINESS

Sufficiency, power, reverence, renown and joy are one; true happiness gives them all at once.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P9	“Hactenus mendacis formam felicitatis ostendisse suffecerit, quam si perspicaciter intueris, ordo est deinceps quae sit uera monstrare.” “Atqui uideo,”	“It will be enough to have shown the form of false happiness this far. If you have seen it clearly, the next step is to show what true happiness is.” “But I

9 Lynceus, one of the Argonauts, could see through solid earth. Alcibiades (c. 450–404 BC), Athenian statesman famed for his beauty. The Aristotle passage is from a lost work, probably the *Protrepticus*.

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inquam, “nec opibus sufficientiam nec regnis potentiam nec reuerentiam dignitatibus nec celebritatem gloria nec laetitiam uoluptatibus posse contingere.” “An etiam causas, cur id ita sit, deprehendisti?” “Tenui quidem ueluti rimula mihi uideor intueri, sed ex te apertius cognoscere malim.”

“Atqui promptissima ratio est. Quod enim simplex est indiuisumque natura, id error humanus separat et a uero atque perfecto ad falsum imperfectumque traducit. An tu arbitraris quod nihilo indigeat egere potentia?” “Minime,” inquam. “Recte tu quidem. Nam si quid est quod in ulla re inbecillioris ualentiae sit, in hac praesidio necesse est egeat alieno.” “Ita est,” inquam. “Igitur sufficientiae potentiaeque una est eademque natura.” “Sic uidetur. “Quod uero huiusmodi sit, spernendumne esse censes an contra rerum omnium ueneratione dignissimum?” “At hoc,” inquam, “ne dubitari quidem potest.” “Addamus igitur sufficientiae potentiaeque reuerentiam, ut haec tria unum esse iudicemus.” “Addamus, si quidem uera uolumus confiteri.” “Quid uero,” inquit, “obscurumne hoc atque ignobile censes esse an omni celebritate clarissimum?

Considera uero, ne quod nihilo indigere, quod potentissimum, quod honore dignissimum esse concessum est, egere claritudine quam sibi praestare non possit atque ob id aliqua ex parte uideatur abiectius.” “Non possum,” inquam, “quin hoc uti est ita etiam celeberrimum esse confitear.” “Consequens igitur est ut claritudinem superioribus tribus nihil differre fateamur.” “Consequitur,” inquam. “Quod igitur nullius egeat alieni, quod suis cuncta uiribus possit, quod sit clarum atque reuerendum, nonne hoc etiam constat esse laetissimum?” Sed unde huic, inquam, “tali maeror ullus obrepat ne cogitare quidem possum; quare plenum esse laetitiae, si quidem superiora manebunt, necesse est confiteri.” “Atqui illud quoque per eadem necessarium est sufficientiae, potentiae, claritudinis, reuerentiae, iucunditatis nomina quidem esse diuersa, nullo modo uero discrepare substantiam.” “Necesse est,” inquam.

“Hoc igitur quod est unum simplexque natura, prauitas humana dispertit et dum rei quae partibus caret partem conatur adipisci, nec portionem quae nulla est nec ipsam

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do see,” I said, “that sufficiency cannot come from riches, nor power from kingdoms, nor reverence from offices, nor renown from glory, nor joy from pleasures.” “And have you also grasped the reasons why this is so?” “I seem to glimpse them as if through a narrow crack, but I would rather learn them more clearly from you.”

“The reason is very easy to see. What is simple and undivided by nature, human error splits apart, and carries it away from the true and perfect to the false and imperfect. Do you think that what needs nothing lacks power?” “Not at all,” I said. “You are right. For if something is of weaker strength in any respect, in that respect it must need help from someone else.” “That is so,” I said. “So sufficiency and power have one and the same nature.” “So it seems.” “And do you think that such a thing should be despised, or on the contrary that it is the most worthy of veneration of all things?” “That,” I said, “cannot even be doubted.” “Let us add reverence, then, to sufficiency and power, so that we judge these three to be one.” “Let us add it, if we want to admit the truth.” “Well then,” she said, “do you think this is obscure and undistinguished, or most illustrious with every kind of renown?

“Consider whether what has been granted to need nothing, to be most powerful and most worthy of honor, might lack renown, which it could not supply for itself, and so seem in some respect more lowly.” “I cannot help admitting,” I said, “that, being all this, it is also most renowned.” “It follows, then, that we must admit that renown does not differ from the other three.” “It follows,” I said. “So what needs nothing from anything else, what can do all things by its own strength, what is renowned and revered—is it not clear that this is also most joyful?” “But how any sorrow could steal upon such a thing,” I said, “I cannot even imagine; so, if what we said before holds, I must admit that it is full of joy.” “And by the same reasoning it also necessarily follows that the names of sufficiency, power, renown, reverence and delight are indeed different, but that their substance in no way differs.” “It necessarily follows,” I said.

“This, then, which is one and simple by nature, human perversity divides; and while it tries to gain part of a thing that has no parts, it obtains

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quam minime affectat assequitur." "Quonam," inquam, "modo?" "Qui diuitias," inquit, "petit penuriae fuga, de potentia nihil laborat, uilis obscurusque esse mauult, multas etiam sibi naturales quoque subtrahit uoluptates, ne pecuniam quam parauit amittat. Sed hoc modo ne sufficientia quidem contingit ei quem ualentia deserit, quem molestia pungit, quem uilitas abicit, quem recondit obscuritas. Qui uero solum posse desiderat, profligat opes, despicit uoluptates honoremque potentia carentem gloriam quoque nihili pendit. Sed hunc quoque quam multa deficiant uides. Fit enim ut aliquando necessariis egeat, ut anxietatibus mordeatur cumque haec depellere nequeat, etiam id quod maxime petebat potens esse desistat.

Similiter ratiocinari de honoribus, gloria, uoluptatibus licet. Nam cum unumquodque horum idem quod cetera sit, quisquis horum aliquid sine ceteris petit, ne illud quidem quod desiderat apprehendit." "Quid igitur? inquam. "Si qui cuncta simul cupiat adipisci, summam quidem ille beatitudinis uelit. Sed num in his eam reperiet, quae demonstrauimus id quod pollicentur non posse conferre?" "Minime," inquam. "In his igitur quae singula quaedam expetendorum praestare creduntur, beatitudo nullo modo uestiganda est." "Fateor," inquam, "et hoc nihil dici uerius potest." "Habes igitur," inquit, "et formam falsae felicitatis et causas. Deflecte nunc in aduersum mentis intuitum; ibi enim ueram quam promisimus statim uidebis." Atqui haec, inquam, "uel caeco perspicua est eamque tu paulo ante monstrasti, dum falsae causas aperire conaris.

Nam nisi fallor ea uera est et perfecta felicitas quae sufficientem, potentem, reuerendum, celebrem laetumque perficiat. Atque ut me interius animaduertisse cognoscas, quae unum horum, quoniam idem cuncta sunt, ueraciter praestare potest hanc esse plenam beatitudinem sine ambiguitate cognosco." "O te alumne hac opinione felicem, si quidem hoc," inquit, "adieceris.... "Quidnam? inquam. "Essene aliquid in his mortalibus caducisque rebus putas quod huiusmodi statum possit afferre?" "Minime," inquam, "puto idque a te, nihil ut amplius desideretur, ostensum est." "Haec igitur uel imagines ueri boni uel inperfecta quaedam bona dare mortalibus uidentur, uerum autem atque perfectum

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neither the part, which does not exist, nor the whole, which it hardly aims at." "How so?" I said. "The man who seeks riches," she said, "to escape poverty, cares nothing for power; he prefers to be lowly and obscure, and even denies himself many natural pleasures so as not to lose the money he has gathered. But in this way not even sufficiency comes to one whom strength abandons, whom trouble pricks, whom lowliness casts down, whom obscurity hides away. And the man who desires only power squanders wealth, scorns pleasures, and thinks honor and glory without power worth nothing. But you see how many things this man lacks too. It happens that at times he needs necessities, that he is gnawed by anxieties; and since he cannot drive these off, he ceases to be even what he most sought—powerful.

"One can reason in the same way about honors, glory and pleasures. For since each of these is the same as the others, whoever seeks one of them without the rest does not get even the one he desires." "What then?" I said. "If someone wanted to obtain them all together, he would indeed want the sum of happiness. But will he find it in these things, which we have shown cannot give what they promise?" "No," I said. "So happiness is by no means to be tracked down in the things that are believed to supply one or another of the things worth seeking." "I admit it," I said, "and nothing truer could be said." "So you have," she said, "both the form of false happiness and its causes. Now turn your mind's gaze the other way; for there you will at once see the true happiness I promised." "But that is plain even to a blind man," I said, "and you showed it a little earlier, when you were trying to lay bare the causes of the false.

"For unless I am mistaken, true and perfect happiness is that which makes a person sufficient, powerful, revered, renowned and joyful. And so that you may know I have understood more deeply: since these are all the same, I recognize without any doubt that whatever can truly provide one of them is full happiness." "O my pupil, how happy you are in this opinion," she said, "if you add this ..." "What?" I said. "Do you think there is anything among these mortal and perishable things that can bring such a state?" "I do not," I said, "and you have shown it so clearly that nothing more is needed." "These things, then, seem to

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bonum conferre non possunt." "Assentior" inquam. "Quoniam igitur agnouisti quae uera illa sit, quae autem beatitudinem mentiantur, nunc superest ut unde ueram hanc petere possis agnoscas."	give mortals either images of the true good or certain imperfect goods, but they cannot confer the true and perfect good." "I agree," I said. "Since, then, you have recognized what true happiness is, and what things only counterfeit it, it now remains for you to learn where you can seek this true happiness."
"Id quidem," inquam, "iam dudum uehementer exspecto." "Sed cum, ut in Timaeo Platoni," inquit, "nostro placet, in minimis quoque rebus diuinum praesidium debeat implorari, quid nunc faciendum censes, ut illius summi boni sedem reperire mereamur?" "Inuocandum," inquam, "rerum omnium patrem, quo praetermisso nullum rite fundatur exordium." "Recte," inquit, "ac simul ita modulata est."	"That," I said, "is what I have long been eagerly waiting for." "But since, as our Plato holds in the *Timaeus*," she said, "we ought to call for divine help even in the smallest matters, what do you think we should do now, to be worthy of finding the seat of that highest good?" "We must call upon the Father of all things," I said, "for without him no beginning is rightly founded." "Rightly said," she replied, and at once she sang these words.[10]

POEM 9: O YOU WHO GOVERN THE WORLD

Philosophy prays to the maker who orders the universe, asking to see the source of the good.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M9	O qui perpetua mundum ratione gubernas Terrarum caelique sator qui tempus ab aeuo Ire iubes stabilisque manens das cuncta moueri, Quem non externae pepulerunt fingere causae Materiae fluitantis opus, uerum insita summi Forma boni liuore carens, tu cuncta superno Ducis ab exemplo, pulchrum pulcherrimus ipse Mundum mente gerens similique in imagine formans Perfectasque iubens perfectum absoluere partes. Tu numeris elementa ligas ut frigora flammis Arida conueniant liquidis, ne purior ignis Euolet aut mersas deducant pondera terras. Tu triplicis mediam naturae cuncta mouentem Conectens animam per consona membra resoluis. Quae cum secta duos motum glomerauit in orbes, In semet reditura meat mentemque profundam Circuit et simili conuertit imagine caelum.	O you who govern the world by everlasting reason, maker of earth and heaven, who command time to go forth from eternity, and, abiding unmoved, give all things motion: no causes from outside drove you to fashion this work of shifting matter, but the form of the highest good, innate in you and free of envy. You draw all things from the heavenly pattern; most beautiful yourself, you bear the beautiful world in your mind, and shape it in a like image, and command its perfect parts to complete a perfect whole. You bind the elements by numbers, so that cold agrees with flame and dry with wet, so that the purer fire may not fly off, nor weight drag the earth down to sink. You link the soul that moves all things, the middle of threefold nature, and release it through harmonious members. Once divided, it gathers its motion into two circles,

10 Plato, *Timaeus* 27c.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
		and goes forth, to return into itself, and circles the deep mind, and turns the heavens in a like image.[11]
	/ Tu causis animas paribus uitasque minores Prouehis et leuibus sublimes curribus aptans In caelum terramque seris quas lege benigna Ad te conuersas reduci facis igne reuerti. Da pater augustam menti conscendere sedem, Da fontem lustrare boni, da luce reperta In te conspicuos animi defigere uisus. Dissice terrenae nebulas et pondera molis Atque tuo splendore mica! Tu namque serenum, Tu requies tranquilla piis, te cernere finis, Principium, uector, dux, semita, terminus idem.	/ With like causes you bring forth souls and lesser lives, and fitting them, raised on high, to light chariots, you sow them in heaven and earth; and by a kindly law you make them turn back to you and return by the fire that leads them home. Grant, Father, that my mind may climb to your august seat, grant it to behold the source of the good; grant that, the light found, it may fix the clear sight of the soul on you. Scatter the clouds and the weight of earthly mass, and shine out in your splendor! For you are the clear sky, you are calm rest for the devout; to see you is the end: you are beginning, carrier, guide, path and goal, all at once.

PROSE 10: GOD IS THE HIGHEST GOOD

The perfect good exists and is God, so happiness is God himself.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P10	"Quoniam igitur quae sit imperfecti, quae etiam perfecti boni forma uidisti, nunc demonstrandum reor quonam haec felicitatis perfectio constituta sit. In quo illud primum arbitror inquirendum, an aliquod huiusmodi bonum quale paulo ante definisti in rerum natura possit exsistere, ne nos praeter rei subiectae ueritatem cassa cogitationis imago decipiat. Sed quin exsistat sitque hoc ueluti quidam omnium fons bonorum negari nequit. Omne enim quod inperfectum esse dicitur, id inminutione perfecti inperfectum esse perhibetur. Quo fit, ut si in quolibet genere inperfectum quid esse uideatur, in eo perfectum quoque aliquid esse necesse sit. Etenim perfectione sublata, unde illud quod inperfectum perhibetur exstiterit ne fingi quidem potest. Neque enim ab deminutis inconsummatisque natura rerum coepit exordium, sed ab integris absolutisque procedens in haec extrema atque effeta dilabitur.	"Since, then, you have seen the form of the imperfect good and also of the perfect good, I think we must now show where this perfection of happiness is located. And here I think we must first ask whether any such good as you defined a little earlier can exist in the nature of things, so that no empty image of thought may deceive us, apart from the truth of the matter before us. But that it exists, and is as it were the source of all goods, cannot be denied. For everything that is called imperfect is said to be imperfect by some lessening of the perfect. So if in any kind of thing something appears imperfect, there must also be something perfect in that kind. For if perfection is taken away, one cannot even imagine where what is called imperfect could have come from. The nature of things did not take its beginning from what is diminished and incomplete, but, proceeding from what is whole and complete, it declines into these last and exhausted things.

11 The poem condenses Plato's account of the making of the world in the *Timaeus*, including the world-soul and its two circles.

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Quod si, uti paulo ante monstrauimus, est quaedam boni fragilis inperfecta felicitas, esse aliquam solidam perfectamque non potest dubitari." "Firmissime," inquam, "uerissimeque conclusum est." "Quo uero," inquit, "habitet, ita considera. Deum rerum omnium principem bonum esse communis humanorum conceptio probat animorum. Nam cum nihil deo melius excogitari queat, id quo melius nihil est bonum esse quis dubitet? Ita uero bonum esse deum ratio demonstrat, ut perfectum quoque in eo bonum esse conuincat. Nam ni tale sit, rerum omnium princeps esse non poterit. Erit enim eo praestantius aliquid perfectum possidens bonum, quod hoc prius atque antiquius esse uideatur; omnia namque perfecta minus integris priora esse claruerunt. Quare ne in infinitum ratio prodeat, confitendum est summum deum summi perfectique boni esse plenissimum.

Sed perfectum bonum ueram esse beatitudinem constituimus; ueram igitur beatitudinem in summo deo sitam esse necesse est." "Accipio," inquam, "nec est quod contradici ullo modo queat." "Sed quaeso," inquit, "te uide quam id sancte atque inuiolabiliter probes quod boni summi summum deum diximus esse plenissimum." "Quonam," inquam, "modo?" "Ne hunc rerum omnium patrem illud summum bonum quo plenus esse perhibetur uel extrinsecus accepisse uel ita naturaliter habere praesumas, quasi habentis dei habitaeque beatitudinis diuersam cogites esse substantiam. Nam si extrinsecus acceptum putes, praestantius id quod dederit ab eo quod acceperit existimare possis. Sed hunc esse rerum omnium praecellentissimum dignissime confitemur. Quod si natura quidem inest, sed est ratione diuersum, cum de rerum principe loquamur deo, fingat qui potest: quis haec diuersa coniunxerit?

Postremo quod a qualibet re diuersum est, id non est illud a quo intellegitur esse diuersum. Quare quod a summo bono diuersum est sui natura, id summum bonum non est — quod nefas est de eo cogitare quo nihil constat esse praestantius. Omnino enim nullius rei natura suo principio melior poterit exsistere, quare quod omnium principium sit, id etiam sui substantia summum esse

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"So if, as we showed a little earlier, there is a certain imperfect happiness in fragile good, there can be no doubt that there is some solid and perfect happiness." "That is concluded most firmly," I said, "and most truly." "And where it dwells," she said, "consider in this way. That God, the first principle of all things, is good is proved by the common conception of human minds. For since nothing better than God can be thought of, who could doubt that that than which nothing is better is good? Reason shows God to be good in such a way that it also proves that perfect good is in him. For if he were not such, he could not be the first principle of all things. There would be something more excellent than he, possessing perfect good, which would seem to be prior to him and more ancient; for it has become clear that all perfect things come before those less complete. So, lest our reasoning go on to infinity, we must admit that the highest God is utterly full of the highest and perfect good.

"But we have established that the perfect good is true happiness; therefore true happiness must be located in the highest God." "I accept that," I said, "and there is no way it can be contradicted." "But I ask you," she said, "see how reverently and inviolably you approve what we have said, that the highest God is utterly full of the highest good." "How do you mean?" I said. "Do not presume that this Father of all things received from outside that highest good of which he is said to be full, or that he has it by nature in such a way that you would think the substance of God who has it and of the happiness he has are different. For if you think it was received from outside, you might judge the giver more excellent than the receiver. But we most rightly acknowledge that he is the most excellent of all things. And if it is in him by nature, but is distinct from him in concept, then—since we are speaking of God, the first principle of all things—let anyone imagine it who can: who joined these different things together?

"Finally, what is different from any thing is not the thing from which it is understood to be different. So what is by its nature different from the highest good is not the highest good—and it is wrong to think this of him than whom nothing is known to be more excellent. For absolutely nothing can be better by nature than its own source; so I would

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bonum uerissima ratione concluserim." "Rectissime," inquam. "Sed summum bonum beatitudinem esse concessum est." "Ita est," inquam. "Igitur," inquit, "deum esse ipsam beatitudinem necesse est confiteri." "Nec propositis," inquam, "prioribus refragari queo et illis hoc inlatum consequens esse perspicio." "Respice," inquit, "an hinc quoque idem firmius approbetur, quod duo summa bona quae a se diuersa sint esse non possunt.

Etenim quae discrepant bona, non esse alterum quod sit alterum liquet; quare neutrum poterit esse perfectum, cum alterutri alterum deest. Sed quod perfectum non sit, id summum non esse manifestum est; nullo modo igitur quae summa sunt bona ea possunt esse diuersa. Atqui et beatitudinem et deum summum bonum esse collegimus; quare ipsam necesse est summam esse beatitudinem quae sit summa diuinitas." "Nihil," inquam, "nec reapse uerius nec ratiocinatione firmius nec deo dignius concludi potest." "Super haec," inquit, "igitur ueluti geometrae solent demonstratis propositis aliquid inferre quae porismata ipsi uocant, ita ego quoque tibi ueluti corollarium dabo.

Nam quoniam beatitudinis adeptione fiunt homines beati, beatitudo uero est ipsa diuinitas, diuinitatis adeptione beatos fieri manifestum est: sed uti iustitiae adeptione iusti, sapientiae sapientes fiunt, ita diuinitatem adeptos deos fieri simili ratione necesse est. Omnis igitur beatus deus, sed natura quidem unus; participatione uero nihil prohibet esse quam plurimos." "Et pulchrum," inquam, "hoc atque pretiosum, siue porisma siue corollarium uocari mauis." "Atqui hoc quoque pulchrius nihil est, quod his annectendum esse ratio persuadet. "Quid? inquam, "Cum multa," inquit, "beatitudo continere uideatur, utrumne haec omnia unum ueluti corpus beatitudinis quadam partium uarietate coniungant an sit eorum aliquid quod beatitudinis substantiam compleat, ad hoc uero cetera referantur?" "Vellem," inquam, "id ipsarum rerum commemoratione patefaceres." "Nonne," inquit, "beatitudinem bonum esse censemus?" "Ac summum quidem," inquam.

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conclude by the truest reasoning that what is the source of all things is also, in its very substance, the highest good." "Most rightly," I said. "But it has been granted that the highest good is happiness." "That is so," I said. "Then," she said, "we must admit that God is happiness itself." "I cannot resist the premises laid down before," I said, "and I see that this follows from them." "See," she said, "whether the same thing is proved still more firmly from this: that there cannot be two highest goods that are different from each other.

"For of goods that differ, it is clear that the one is not what the other is; so neither could be perfect, since each lacks the other. But what is not perfect is clearly not highest; so the goods that are highest can in no way be different. Yet we have concluded that both happiness and God are the highest good; therefore the highest happiness must be the same as the highest divinity." "Nothing," I said, "could be concluded that is truer in fact, firmer in reasoning or more worthy of God." "On top of this, then," she said, "just as geometers, once they have demonstrated their propositions, like to infer something further which they call *porismata* ['deductions'], so I too will give you a sort of corollary.[12]

"Since people become happy by gaining happiness, and happiness is divinity itself, it is clear that they become happy by gaining divinity. And just as people become just by gaining justice, and wise by gaining wisdom, so by the same reasoning those who have gained divinity must become gods. Everyone who is happy, then, is a god. By nature, indeed, there is only one God; but nothing prevents there being as many as you like by participation." "This is beautiful and precious," I said, "whether you prefer to call it a porism or a corollary." "Yet nothing is more beautiful than this, which reason persuades us to attach to it." "What?" I said. "Since happiness seems to contain many things," she said, "do all these join together into one body of happiness, as it were, through a variety of parts, or is there one of them that completes the substance of happiness, to which the rest are referred?" "I wish," I said, "you would make this clear by going through the things themselves." "Do we not think," she said, "that happiness is a good?" "Yes, indeed, the highest," I said.

12 *Corollarium* in Latin first meant a small garland given as a bonus or gratuity.

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"Addas," inquit, "hoc omnibus licet. Nam eadem sufficientia summa est, eadem summa potentia, reuerentia quoque, claritas ac uoluptas beatitudo esse iudicatur. Quid igitur? Haecine omnia bonum — sufficientia potentia ceteraque — ueluti quaedam beatitudinis membra sunt an ad bonum ueluti ad uerticem cuncta referuntur?" "Intellego," inquam, "quid inuestigandum proponas, sed quid constituas audire desidero." "Cuius discretionem rei sic accipe. Si haec omnia beatitudinis membra forent, a se quoque inuicem discreparent. Haec est enim partium natura ut unum corpus diuersa componant. Atqui haec omnia idem esse monstrata sunt; minime igitur membra sunt. Alioquin ex uno membro beatitudo uidebitur esse coniuncta — quod fieri nequit." "Id quidem," inquam, "dubium non est, sed id quod restat exspecto." "Ad bonum uero cetera referri palam est.

Idcirco enim sufficientia petitur quoniam bonum esse iudicatur, idcirco potentia quoniam id quoque esse creditur bonum; idem de reuerentia, claritudine, iucunditate coniectare licet. Omnium igitur expetendorum summa atque causa bonum est. Quod enim neque re neque similitudine ullum in se retinet bonum, id expeti nullo modo potest. Contraque etiam quae natura bona non sunt, tamen si esse uideantur, quasi uere bona sint appetuntur. Quo fit uti summa, cardo atque causa expetendorum omnium bonitas esse iure credatur. Cuius uero causa quid expetitur, id maxime uidetur optari, ueluti si salutis causa quispiam uelit equitare, non tam equitandi motum desiderat quam salutis effectum. Cum igitur omnia boni gratia petantur, non illa potius quam bonum ipsum desideratur ab omnibus.

Sed propter quod cetera optantur, beatitudinem esse concessimus; quare sic quoque sola quaeritur beatitudo. Ex quo liquido apparet ipsius boni et beatitudinis unam atque eandem esse substantiam." "Nihil uideo cur dissentire quispiam possit." "Sed deum ueramque beatitudinem unum atque idem esse monstrauimus." "Ita," inquam. "Securo igitur concludere licet dei quoque in ipso bono nec usquam alio sitam esse substantiam."

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"You may add that to all of them," she said. "For happiness is judged to be the same as the highest sufficiency, the highest power, and reverence, renown and pleasure too. What then? Are all these goods—sufficiency, power and the rest—limbs, as it were, of happiness, or are they all referred to the good as to their summit?" "I understand," I said, "what you propose to investigate, but I want to hear what you conclude." "Take the answer to this question as follows. If all these were limbs of happiness, they would also differ from one another. For this is the nature of parts: being different, they make up one body. But all these have been shown to be the same; so they are not limbs at all. Otherwise happiness will seem to be made up of one limb—which is impossible." "That is not in doubt," I said, "but I am waiting for what remains." It is obvious that the others are referred to the good.

Sufficiency is sought because it is judged to be good, and power because it too is believed to be good; and the same can be inferred about reverence, renown and delight. The good, then, is the sum and cause of all things sought. For what holds no good in itself, either in reality or in appearance, cannot be sought in any way. And conversely, things that are not good by nature are still sought as though they were truly good, if they seem to be good. So it comes about that goodness is rightly believed to be the sum, the hinge and the cause of all things sought. And that for the sake of which something is sought seems to be what is most desired: if someone wanted to ride for the sake of his health, for example, he does not so much desire the motion of riding as the effect of health. Since, then, all things are sought for the sake of the good, it is not they but the good itself that is desired by all.

But we have granted that happiness is that for the sake of which the other things are wished for; so in this way too happiness alone is sought. From this it plainly appears that the good itself and happiness have one and the same substance. "I see no reason why anyone could disagree." "But we have shown that God and true happiness are one and the same." "Yes," I said. "Then we may safely conclude that the substance of God also lies in the good itself and nowhere else."

POEM 10: THE ONE REFUGE

All who are captive to desire are invited to the harbor of the true good.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M10	Huc omnes pariter uenite capti Quos fallax ligat improbis catenis Terrenus habitans libido mentes, Haec erit uobis requies laborum, Hic portus placida manens quiete, Hoc patens unum miseris asylum. Non quidquid Tagus aureis harenis Donat aut Hermus rutilante ripa Aut Indus calido propinquus orbi Candidis miscens uirides lapillos, Inlustrent aciem magisque caecos In suas condunt animos tenebras. Hoc quidquid placet excitatque mentes, Infimis tellus aluit cauernis; Splendor quo regitur uigetque caelum, Vitat obscuras animae ruinas. Hanc quisquis poterit notare lucem, Candidos Phoebi radios negabit.	Come here together, all you captives whom deceitful desire binds in wicked chains— desire that dwells in earthbound minds. Here will be your rest from toil, here a harbor abiding in calm quiet, this the one refuge open to the wretched. Not all that the Tagus gives with its golden sands, or the Hermus with its glowing red banks, or the Indus, near the torrid zone, mingling green stones with white, could make the eyes see clearly; rather, they bury blinded minds deeper in their own darkness. All this that pleases and excites the mind the earth has nourished in its lowest caverns; the splendor by which heaven is ruled and flourishes shuns the dark ruins of the soul. Whoever can discern this light will deny that the rays of Phoebus are bright.[13]

PROSE 11: THE GOOD IS THE ONE

All things seek unity and their own survival, and so all things seek the good.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P11	“Adsentior,” inquam, “cuncta enim firmissimis nexa rationibus constant.” Tum illa, “Quanti,” inquit, “aestimabis, si bonum ipsum quid sit agnoueris?” “Infinito,” inquam, “si quidem mihi pariter deum quoque qui bonum est continget agnoscere.” “Atqui hoc uerissima,” inquit, “ratione patefaciam, maneant modo quae paulo ante conclusa sunt. “Manebunt. “Nonne,” inquit, “monstrauimus ea quae appetuntur pluribus idcirco uera perfectaque bona non esse quoniam a se inuicem discreparent cumque alteri abesset alterum, plenum absolutumque bonum afferre non posse? Tum autem uerum bonum fieri cum in unam ueluti formam atque efficientiam colliguntur, ut quae sufficientia est, eadem sit potentia, reuerentia, claritas atque iucunditas, nisi uero unum atque idem omnia sint, nihil habere quo inter expetenda numerentur?” “Demonstratum,” inquam “nec dubitari ullo modo potest.”	“I agree,” I said, “for it all holds together, bound by the firmest arguments.” Then she said, “How highly will you value it if you come to know what the good itself is?” “Infinitely,” I said, “if I may at the same time come to know God too, who is the good.” “And yet I will make it plain by the truest reasoning,” she said, “provided only that what we concluded a little while ago stands.” “It will stand.” “Have we not shown,” she said, “that the things most people seek are not true and perfect goods, because they differ from one another, and since one lacks what the other has, they cannot bring a full and absolute good? And that they become the true good when they are gathered, as it were, into a single form and operation, so that what is sufficiency is also power, reverence, renown and delight; but that unless they are all one and the same, they have nothing to earn them a place among things worth seeking?” “That has been

13 The Tagus (in Spain) and the Hermus (in Asia Minor) were famous for gold-bearing sands.

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demonstrated," I said, "and cannot be doubted in any way."

"Quae igitur cum discrepant minime bona sunt, cum uero unum esse coeperint, bona fiunt; nonne haec ut bona sint, unitatis fieri adeptione contingit?" "Ita," inquam, "uidetur." "Sed omne quod bonum est boni participatione bonum esse concedis an minime? "Ita est. "Oportet igitur idem esse unum atque bonum simili ratione concedas; eadem namque substantia est eorum quorum naturaliter non est diuersus effectus." "Negare," inquam, "nequeo." "Nostine igitur," inquit, "omne quod est tam diu manere atque subsistere quam diu sit unum, sed interire atque dissolui pariter atque unum destiterit?" "Quonam modo? "Vt in animalibus," inquit, "cum in unum coeunt ac permanent anima corpusque, id animal uocatur; cum uero haec unitas utriusque separatione dissoluitur, interire nec iam esse animal liquet.

"Then these things, which are not goods at all when they differ, but become goods when they begin to be one—is it not by acquiring unity that they come to be goods?" "So it seems," I said. "But do you grant that everything good is good by participation in the good, or not?" "It is so." "Then by the same reasoning you must grant that the one and the good are the same; for things whose effect is by nature not different have the same substance." "I cannot deny it," I said. "Do you know, then," she said, "that everything that exists continues and subsists just as long as it is one, but perishes and dissolves as soon as it ceases to be one?" "How so?" "As with animals," she said. "When soul and body come together into one and remain so, it is called an animal; but when this unity is dissolved by the separation of the two, it plainly perishes and is no longer an animal.

Ipsum quoque corpus cum in una forma membrorum coniunctione permanet, humana uisitur species; at si distributae segregataeque partes corporis distraxerint unitatem, desinit esse quod fuerat. Eoque modo percurrenti cetera procul dubio patebit subsistere unumquodque, dum unum est, cum uero unum esse desinit, interire." "Consideranti," inquam, "mihi plura minime aliud uidetur." "Estne igitur," inquit, "quod in quantum naturaliter agat relicta subsistendi appetentia uenire ad interitum corruptionemque desideret?" "Si animalia," inquam, "considerem quae habent aliquam uolendi nolendique naturam, nihil inuenio quod nullis extra cogentibus abiciant manendi intentionem et ad interitum sponte festinent. Omne namque animal tueri salutem laborat, mortem uero perniciemque deuitat. Sed quid de herbis arboribusque, quid de inanimatis omnino consentiam rebus prorsus dubito."

"The body itself, too, while it remains in one form through the joining of its limbs, is seen as a human shape; but if the parts of the body are separated and set apart and so break up its unity, it ceases to be what it was. Anyone who runs through other cases in the same way will see beyond doubt that each thing subsists while it is one, and perishes when it ceases to be one." "When I consider more cases," I said, "it seems to me no different." "Is there, then," she said, "anything which, insofar as it acts by nature, abandons the desire to subsist and wishes to come to destruction and decay?" "If I consider animals," I said, "which have some nature capable of willing and not willing, I find none that, without compulsion from outside, throws away the will to endure and hurries of its own accord to its death. For every animal works to protect its life, and avoids death and destruction. But what I should think about plants and trees, and about inanimate things altogether, I am quite unsure."

"Atqui non est quod de hoc quoque possis ambigere, cum herbas atque arbores intuearis primum sibi conuenientibus innasci locis, ubi quantum earum natura queat cito exarescere atque interire non possint. Nam aliae quidem campis aliae montibus oriuntur, alias ferunt paludes, aliae saxis haerent, aliarum fecundae sunt steriles harenae, quas si in alia quispiam loca transferre conetur, arescant. Sed dat cuique natura quod conuenit

And yet there is no reason for you to be in doubt about this either, when you see, first, that plants and trees spring up in places suited to them, where, so far as their nature allows, they cannot quickly wither and die. Some grow on plains, others on mountains; marshes bear some, others cling to rocks, and barren sands are fertile for still others; and if anyone tried to move them to other

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et ne, dum manere possunt, intereant, elaborat. Quid quod omnes uelut in terras ore demerso trahunt alimenta radicibus ac per medullas robur corticemque diffundunt? Quid quod mollissimum quidque, sicuti medulla est, interiore semper sede reconditur, extra uero quadam ligni firmitate, ultimus autem cortex aduersum caeli intemperiem quasi mali patiens defensor opponitur? Iam uero quanta est naturae diligentia, ut cuncta semine multiplicat propagentur!

Quae omnia non modo ad tempus manendi uerum generatim quoque quasi in perpetuum permanendi ueluti quasdam machinas esse quis nesciat? Ea etiam quae inanimata esse creduntur nonne quod suum est quaeque simili ratione desiderant? Cur enim flammas quidem sursum leuitas uehit, terras uero deorsum pondus deprimit, nisi quod haec singulis loca motionesque conueniunt? Porro autem quod cuique consentaneum est, id unumquodque conseruat, sicuti ea quae sunt inimica corrumpunt. Iam uero quae dura sunt ut lapides, adhaerent tenacissime partibus suis et ne facile dissoluantur resistunt. Quae uero liquentia ut aer atque aqua, facile quidem diuidentibus cedunt, sed cito in ea rursus a quibus sunt abscisa relabuntur, ignis uero omnem refugit sectionem.

Neque nunc nos de uoluntariis animae cognoscentis motibus, sed de naturali intentione tractamus, sicuti est quod acceptas escas sine cogitatione transigimus, quod in somno spiritum ducimus nescientes; nam ne in animalibus quidem manendi amor ex animae uoluntatibus, uerum ex naturae principiis uenit. Nam saepe mortem cogentibus causis quam natura reformidat uoluntas amplectitur, contraque illud quo solo mortalium rerum durat diuturnitas gignendi opus, quod natura semper appetit, interdum coercet uoluntas. Adeo haec sui caritas non ex animali motione sed ex naturali intentione procedit. Dedit enim prouidentia creatis a se rebus hanc uel maximam manendi causam ut quoad possunt naturaliter manere desiderent; quare nihil est quod ullo modo queas dubitare cuncta quae sunt appetere naturaliter constantiam permanendi, deuitare perniciem."

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places, they would wither. But nature gives each what suits it, and labors that they should not perish while they can still endure. What of the fact that all of them draw their nourishment through their roots, as though with mouths plunged into the earth, and spread strength through their pith and bark? What of the fact that the softest part, such as the pith, is always hidden in the innermost place, while outside there is a certain firmness of wood, and last of all the bark is set against the harshness of the weather, like a defender able to endure hardship? And then how great is nature's care, that all things are propagated by multiplying their seed!

Who does not know that all these are like mechanisms, not only for enduring for a time, but for enduring, generation after generation, as if forever? And the things believed to be inanimate—does not each of them, by similar reasoning, desire what is its own? Why else does lightness carry flames upward, while weight presses earth downward, except that these places and motions suit each of them? Moreover, what is in keeping with each thing preserves it, just as what is hostile to it destroys it. Hard things such as stones cling most tightly to their parts and resist being easily broken up. Fluid things such as air and water yield easily to what divides them, but quickly flow back into the parts from which they were cut; and fire refuses all division.

We are not now dealing with the voluntary motions of the knowing soul, but with natural inclination—as when we digest the food we have taken without thinking about it, or breathe in our sleep without knowing it. For even in animals the love of survival comes not from the will of the soul but from the principles of nature. Often, under compelling causes, the will embraces death, which nature dreads; and conversely the will sometimes restrains the work of procreation, by which alone mortal things endure, and which nature always seeks. So true is it that this love of self proceeds not from a movement of the soul but from natural inclination. For providence gave the things it created this, as the greatest cause of their endurance: that they naturally desire to endure as long as they can. So there is no way you can doubt that all things that exist naturally seek to persist, and avoid destruction.

LATIN	ENGLISH
"Confiteor," inquam, "nunc me indubitato cernere quae dudum incerta uidebantur." "Quod autem," inquit, "subsistere ac permanere petit, id unum esse desiderat; hoc enim sublato ne esse quidem cuiquam permanebit." "Verum est," inquam. "Omnia igitur," inquit, "unum desiderant." Consensi. "Sed unum id ipsum monstrauimus esse quod bonum." "Ita quidem. "Cuncta igitur bonum petunt, quod quidem ita describas licet ipsum bonum esse quod desideretur ab omnibus." "Nihil," inquam, "uerius excogitari potest. Nam uel ad nihil unum cuncta referuntur et uno ueluti uertice destituta sine rectore fluitabunt, aut si quid est ad quod uniuersa festinent, id erit omnium summum bonorum." Et illa: "Nimium," inquit, "o alumne laetor, ipsam enim mediae ueritatis notam mente fixisti. Sed in hoc patuit tibi quod ignorare te paulo ante dicebas. "Quid? inquam.	"I confess," I said, "that I now see beyond doubt what long seemed uncertain." "Now whatever seeks to subsist and endure," she said, "desires to be one; for take this away, and nothing will even continue to exist." "That is true," I said. "All things, then," she said, "desire the one." I agreed. "But we have shown that the one is the very same as the good." "Yes, indeed." "All things, then, seek the good; which you may in fact define like this: the good is that which is desired by all." "Nothing truer can be thought of," I said. "For either all things are referred to nothing single and, left without one summit as it were, will drift with no one to guide them; or, if there is something toward which all things hurry, it will be the highest of all goods." And she said, "I am very glad, my pupil; for you have fixed in your mind the very mark of the central truth. But in this it has become clear to you what you said a little while ago you did not know." "What?" I said.
"Quis esset," inquit, "rerum omnium finis. Is est enim profecto, quod desideratur ab omnibus, quod quia bonum esse collegimus, oportet rerum omnium finem bonum esse fateamur."	"What the end of all things is," she said. "For it is surely that which is desired by all; and since we have concluded that this is the good, we must admit that the end of all things is the good."

POEM 11: TRUTH WITHIN

Truth is found by turning inward; learning is remembering.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M11	Quisquis profunda mente uestigat uerum Cupitque nullis ille deuiis falli, In se reuoluat intimi lucem uisus Longosque in orbem cogat inflectens motus Animumque doceat quidquid extra molitur Suis retrusum possidere thesauris. Dudum quod atra texit erroris nubes Lucebit ipso perspicacius Phoebo. Non omne namque mente depulit lumen Obliuiosam corpus inuehens molem. Haeret profecto semen introrsum ueri Quod excitatur uentilante doctrina. Nam cur rogati sponte recta censetis, Ni mersus alto uiueret fomes corde? Quod si Platonis Musa personat uerum, Quod quisque discit immemor recordatur.	Whoever searches for the truth with a deep mind and wishes not to be misled by any false paths, let him turn back upon himself the light of his inner sight, bend his long wanderings round into a circle, and teach his soul that whatever it strives for outside it possesses, hidden away, among its own treasures. What the black cloud of error long concealed will shine more clearly than Phoebus himself. For the body has not driven all light from the mind, though it brings with it a heavy mass of forgetfulness. Surely the seed of truth clings deep within, and is roused when teaching fans it into flame. For why, when questioned, do you judge rightly of your own accord, unless a spark still lived, buried deep in the heart?

LATIN	ENGLISH
	And if Plato's Muse proclaims the truth, what each one learns, he is remembering, having forgotten.[14]

PROSE 12: GOD GOVERNS BY GOODNESS

God rules all things through the good, and they obey willingly; evil is nothing.

LATIN	ENGLISH
3.P12 Tum ego: "Platoni," inquam, "uehementer assentior, nam me horum iam secundo commemoras, primum quod memoriam corporea contagione, dehinc cum maeroris mole pressus amisi." Tum illa: "Si priora," inquit, "concessa respicias, ne illud quidem longius aberit quin recorderis quod te dudum nescire confessus es. "Quid? inquam. "Quibus," ait illa, "gubernaculis mundus regatur." "Memini," inquam, "me inscitiam meam fuisse confessum, sed quid afferas, licet iam prospiciam, planius tamen ex te audire desidero." "Mundum," inquit, "hunc deo regi paulo ante minime dubitandum putabas." "Ne nunc quidem arbitror," inquam, "nec umquam dubitandum putabo quibusque in hoc rationibus accedam breuiter exponam. Mundus hic ex tam diuersis contrariisque partibus in unam formam minime conuenisset, nisi unus esset qui tam diuersa coniungeret.	Then I said, "I agree strongly with Plato; for you are now reminding me of these things a second time. I lost the memory of them first through contact with the body, and then again when I was weighed down by the burden of grief." Then she said, "If you look back at what has already been granted, you will not be far from remembering what you confessed a little while ago that you did not know." "What?" I said. "By what rudders the world is steered," she said. "I remember," I said, "that I confessed my ignorance; but though I already foresee what you are going to offer, I want to hear it from you more plainly." "A little while ago," she said, "you thought there was no doubt at all that this world is ruled by God." "Nor do I think so now," I said, "nor will I ever think it open to doubt, and I will briefly set out the reasons that lead me to this. This world would never have come together into one form out of parts so diverse and contrary, unless there were one who joined such diverse things.
Coniuncta uero naturarum ipsa diuersitas inuicem discors dissociaret atque diuelleret, nisi unus esset qui quod nexuit contineret. Non tam uero certus naturae ordo procederet nec tam dispositos motus locis, temporibus, efficientia, spatiis, qualitatibus explicarent, nisi unus esset qui has mutationum uarietates manens ipse disponeret. Hoc quidquid est quo condita manent atque agitantur, usitato cunctis uocabulo deum nomino." Tum illa: "Cum haec," inquit, "ita sentias, paruam mihi restare operam puto ut felicitatis compos patriam sospes reuisas. Sed quae proposuimus intueamur. Nonne in beatitudine sufficientiam numerauimus deumque beatitudinem ipsam esse consensimus?" "Ita quidem. "Et ad mundum igitur" inquit, "regendum nullis extrinsecus adminiculis indigebit; alioquin si quo egeat, plenam sufficientiam non habebit." "Id," inquam, "ita est necessarium." "Per se igitur solum cuncta disponit." "Negari," inquam, "nequit."	"And once they were joined, the very diversity of their natures, at odds with itself, would pull them apart and tear them asunder, unless there were one who held together what he had bound. Nor would the order of nature proceed so surely, nor would things unfold such well-ordered motions in place, time, operation, extent and quality, unless there were one who, himself remaining unchanged, ordered these varieties of change. Whatever this is by which created things endure and are moved, I call it by the word everyone uses: God." Then she said, "Since this is what you think, I believe little work remains for me before you can see your homeland again, safe and in possession of happiness. But let us look at what we set out. Did we not count sufficiency as part of happiness, and agree that God is happiness itself?" "Yes, indeed." "Then to rule the world," she said, "he

14 Plato taught that learning is recollection of what the soul knew before birth (*Meno, Phaedo*).

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will need no help from outside; otherwise, if he needed anything, he would not have full sufficiency." "That," I said, "necessarily follows." "Then he orders all things through himself alone." "That cannot be denied," I said.

"Atqui deus ipsum bonum esse monstratus est." "Memini," inquam. "Per bonum igitur cuncta disponit, si quidem per se regit omnia quem bonum esse consensimus et hic est ueluti quidam clauus atque gubernaculum quo mundana machina stabilis atque incorrupta seruatur." "Vehementer assentior," inquam, "et id te paulo ante dicturam tenui licet suspicione prospexi." "Credo;" inquit, "iam enim ut arbitror uigilantius ad cernenda uera oculos deducis. Sed quod dicam non minus ad contuendum patet. "Quid? inquam. "Cum deus," inquit, "omnia bonitatis clauo gubernare iure credatur eademque omnia sicuti docui ad bonum naturali intentione festinent, num dubitari potest quin uoluntaria regantur seque ad disponentis nutum ueluti conuenientia contemperataque rectori sponte conuertant?" "Ita," inquam, "necesse est; nec beatum regimen esse uideretur, si quidem detrectantium iugum foret, non obtemperantium salus."

"And yet God has been shown to be the good itself." "I remember," I said. "Then he orders all things through the good, since he rules all things through himself, whom we have agreed to be the good; and this is, as it were, the helm and rudder by which the machine of the world is kept stable and unimpaired." "I agree strongly," I said, "and a little while ago I foresaw, if only with a faint suspicion, that you were going to say this." "I believe it," she said; "for now, I think, you are turning your eyes more alertly to see what is true. But what I am going to say is no less plain to see." "What?" I said. "Since God is rightly believed to steer all things with the helm of goodness," she said, "and all these same things, as I have taught, hurry toward the good by natural inclination, can there be any doubt that they are ruled willingly, and turn of their own accord at the nod of the one who orders them, as things in tune and in harmony with their ruler?" "It must be so," I said; "nor would it seem a happy rule if it were a yoke on the unwilling rather than the well-being of the obedient."

"Nihil est igitur quod naturam seruans deo contraire conetur." "Nihil," inquam. "Quod si conetur," ait, "num tandem proficiet quidquam, aduersus eum quem iure beatitudinis potentissimum esse concessimus?" "Prorsus," inquam, "nihil ualeret." "Non est igitur aliquid quod summo huic bono uel uelit uel possit obsistere." "Non," inquam, "arbitror." "Est igitur summum, inquit, bonum quod regit cuncta fortiter suauiterque disponit." Tum ego: "Quam," inquam, "me non modo ea quae conclusa est summa rationum, uerum multo magis haec ipsa quibus uteris uerba delectant, ut tandem aliquando stultitiam magna lacerantem sui pudeat." "Accepisti, inquit, "in fabulis lacessentes caelum Gigantas; sed illos quoque, uti condignum fuit, benigna fortitudo disposuit. Sed uisne rationes ipsas inuicem collidamus? Forsitan ex huiusmodi conflictatione pulchra quaedam ueritatis scintilla dissiliat." "Tuo," inquam, "arbitratu."

"Then there is nothing that, keeping its nature, tries to oppose God." "Nothing," I said. "And if it tried," she said, "would it achieve anything at all against him whom we agreed is most powerful by right of his happiness?" "It would have no power at all," I said. "Then there is nothing that either wishes or is able to resist this highest good." "I think not," I said. "Then it is the highest good," she said, "that rules all things mightily and disposes them sweetly." Then I said, "How I am delighted, not only by the conclusion your arguments have reached, but much more by these very words you use—so that at last the folly that tears at great things may be ashamed of itself!" "You have heard in the stories," she said, "of the Giants attacking heaven; but a kindly strength disposed of them too, as they deserved. But would you like us to set the arguments themselves against one another? Perhaps from such a clash some beautiful spark of truth may fly out." "As you please," I said.[15]

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"Deum," inquit, "esse omnium potentem nemo dubitauerit." "Qui quidem, inquam, "mente consistat, nullus prorsus ambigat." "Qui uero est," inquit, "omnium potens, nihil est quod ille non possit." "Nihil," inquam. "Num igitur deus facere malum potest?" "Minime," inquam." Malum igitur," inquit, "nihil est, cum id facere ille non possit, qui nihil non potest." "Ludisne," inquam, "me inextricabilem labyrinthum rationibus texens, quae nunc quidem qua egrediaris introeas, nunc uero quo introieris egrediare, an mirabilem quendam diuinae simplicitatis orbem complicas? Etenim paulo ante beatitudine incipiens eam summum bonum esse dicebas quam in summo deo sitam loquebare. Ipsum quoque deum summum esse bonum plenamque beatitudinem disserebas; ex quo neminem beatum fore nisi qui pariter deus esset quasi munusculum dabas.

Rursus ipsam boni formam dei ac beatitudinis loquebaris esse substantiam ipsumque unum id ipsum esse bonum docebas quod ab omni rerum natura peteretur. Deum quoque bonitatis gubernaculis uniuersitatem regere disputabas uolentiaque cuncta parere nec ullam mali esse naturam. Atque haec nullis extrinsecus sumptis sed ex altero altero fidem trahente insitis domesticisque probationibus explicabas."

Tum illa: "Minime," inquit, "ludimus remque omnium maximam dei munere quem dudum deprecabamur exegimus. Ea est enim diuinae forma substantiae ut neque in externa dilabatur nec in se externum aliquid ipsa suscipiat, sed, sicut de ea Parmenides ait: πάντοθεν εὐκύκλου σφαίρης ἐναλίγκιον ὄγκῳ rerum orbem mobilem rotat, dum se immobilem ipsa conseruat. Quod si rationes quoque non extra petitas sed intra rei quam tractabamus ambitum collocatas agitauimus, nihil est quod admirere, cum Platone sanciente didiceris cognatos de quibus loquuntur rebus oportere esse sermones."

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"No one would doubt," she said, "that God is all-powerful." "No one at all who is in his right mind," I said, "would hesitate." "But for one who is all-powerful," she said, "there is nothing he cannot do." "Nothing," I said. "Can God, then, do evil?" "Not at all," I said. "Then evil is nothing," she said, "since he cannot do it, who can do everything." "Are you playing with me," I said, "weaving with your arguments a labyrinth from which there is no way out—now going in by the way you should come out, now coming out by the way you went in—or are you folding together some wonderful circle of the divine simplicity? For a little earlier, beginning from happiness, you said it was the highest good, and you described it as located in the highest God. You also argued that God himself is the highest good and full happiness; and from this you handed me, as a little bonus, that no one would be happy unless he were likewise a god.

"Again, you said that the very form of the good is the substance of God and of happiness, and you taught that the one itself is the very good that is sought by the whole of nature. You argued, too, that God rules the universe by the rudders of goodness, that all things obey willingly, and that evil has no nature. And you unfolded all this with no proofs brought in from outside, but with proofs internal and at home, each drawing its credibility from the other."

Then she said, "We are not playing at all. By the gift of God, whom we prayed to a while ago, we have accomplished the greatest thing of all. For such is the form of the divine substance that it neither slips away into what is outside it nor takes anything outside into itself; but, as Parmenides says of it, πάντοθεν εὐκύκλου σφαίρης ἐναλίγκιον ὄγκῳ [in bulk like a well-rounded sphere on every side], it turns the moving orb of things while keeping itself unmoved. And if we have also used arguments not sought from outside but placed within the bounds of the subject we were treating, there is nothing for you to wonder at, since you have learned, on Plato's authority, that words must be akin to the things they speak of."[16]

15 "Rules all things mightily and disposes them sweetly" echoes Wisdom 8:1. The Giants, in Greek myth, made war on the gods and were overthrown.

16 Parmenides, Greek philosopher (5th century BC), fragment 8; the Plato reference is *Timaeus* 29b. The prayer is the hymn of 3.M9.

POEM 12: ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

Orpheus wins Eurydice back from the underworld but loses her by looking back.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
3.M12	Felix qui potuit boni Fontem uisere lucidum, Felix qui potuit grauis Terrae soluere uincula. Quondam funera coniugis Vates Threicius gemens Postquam flebilibus modis Siluas currere mobiles. Amnes stare coegerat, Iunxitque intrepidum latus Saeuis cerua leonibus, Nec uisum timuit lepus Iam cantu placidum canem, Cum flagrantior intima Feruor pectoris ureret, Nec qui cuncta subegerant Mulcerent dominum modi, Inmites superos querens Infernas adiit domos. Illic blanda sonantibus Chordis carmina temperans Quidquid praecipuis deae Matris fontibus hauserat, Quod luctus dabat impotens, Quod luctum geminans amor, Deflet Taenara commouens Et dulci ueniam prece Vmbrarum dominos rogat.	Happy is he who has been able to see the shining fountain of the good; happy is he who has been able to loose the chains of the heavy earth. Once, mourning his wife's death, the Thracian bard, after he had, with his tearful measures, made the woods run and move, and forced the rivers to stand still, and the hind had laid her fearless flank beside savage lions, and the hare no longer feared the sight of the hound, now calmed by song— when a burning passion, fiercer still, scorched the inmost depths of his breast, and the strains that had subdued all things could not soothe their master, complaining that the gods above were pitiless, he went to the dwellings below. There, tuning gentle songs to the sounding strings, all that he had drawn from the chief springs of the goddess his mother, all that unbridled grief could give, and love that doubled grief, he pours out in weeping, moving Taenarus, and with sweet prayer asks pardon of the lords of the shades.[17]
	/ Stupet tergeminus nouo Captus carmine ianitor, Quae sontes agitant metu Ultrices scelerum deae Iam maestae lacrimis madent. Non Ixionium caput Velox praecipitat rota Et longa site perditus Spernit flumina Tantalus. Vultur dum satur est modis, Non traxit Tityi iecur. Tandem, 'Vincimur,' arbiter Vmbrarum miserans ait, ' Donamus comitem uiro Emptam carmine coniugem,	/ The three-headed doorkeeper stands stunned, captured by the new song; the goddesses who avenge crimes, who drive the guilty with fear, now are wet with sorrowful tears. Ixion's head is not whirled headlong by the swift wheel, and Tantalus, ruined by long thirst, disdains the rivers. The vulture, sated with the music, did not tear at Tityus's liver. At last the judge of the shades, in pity, says, "We are beaten. We give the man his wife as companion,

17 Orpheus, the legendary singer of Thrace, son of the Muse Calliope; Taenarus, a cape in southern Greece thought to be an entrance to the underworld.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Sed lex dona coerceat, Ne, dum Tartara liquerit, Fas sit lumina flectere. Quis legem det amantibus? Maior lex amor est sibi. Heu, noctis prope terminos Orpheus Eurydicen suam Vidit, perdidit, occidit. Vos haec fabula respicit Quicumque in superum diem Mentem ducere quaeritis.	bought by his song. But let a law restrain the gift: until he has left Tartarus, he may not turn his eyes back." Who can give lovers a law? Love is a greater law to itself. Alas, near the very bounds of night Orpheus saw his Eurydice, lost her, killed her. This tale concerns you, all who seek to lead your mind up into the day above.[18]
/ Nam qui Tartareum in specus Victus lumina flexerit, Quidquid praecipuum trahit Perdit, dum uidet inferos.	/ For whoever, overcome, turns his eyes back toward the pit of Tartarus loses whatever excellent thing he draws with him, while he looks upon the dead below.

18 Cerberus, the three-headed dog, guards the underworld; the Furies avenge crimes; Ixion (bound to a wheel), Tantalus (tormented by thirst) and Tityus (his liver eaten by a vulture) suffer punishment there.

Book IV

Providence and fate
Why the wicked seem to prosper, and how providence orders all things.

PROSE 1: WHY DO THE WICKED PROSPER?

Boethius asks how evil can flourish under a good God; Philosophy promises an answer.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.P1	HAEC cum Philosophia dignitate uultus et oris grauitate seruata leniter suauiterque cecinisset, tum ego nondum penitus insiti maeroris oblitus intentionem dicere adhuc aliquid parantis abrupi. Et: "O," inquam, "ueri praeuia luminis quae usque adhuc tua fudit oratio, cum sui speculatione diuina tum tuis rationibus inuicta patuerunt, eaque mihi etsi ob iniuriae dolorem nuper oblita non tamen antehac prorsus ignorata dixisti. Sed ea ipsa est uel maxima nostri causa maeroris, quod, cum rerum bonus rector exsistat, uel esse omnino mala possint uel impunita praetereant; quod solum quanta dignum sit admiratione profecto consideras. At huic aliud maius adiungitur. Nam imperante florenteque nequitia uirtus non solum praemiis caret, uerum etiam sceleratorum pedibus subiecta calcatur et in locum facinorum supplicia luit.	When Philosophy had sung these things gently and sweetly, preserving the dignity of her face and the gravity of her expression, I, who had not yet wholly forgotten the grief planted deep in me, broke in on her as she was preparing to say something more. "O guide toward the true light," I said, "the things your speech has poured out up to now have shown themselves unanswerable, both as divine in their own contemplation and by your arguments; and what you said, though I had recently forgotten it through the pain of the injustice done to me, I was not altogether ignorant of before. But this is perhaps the greatest cause of my grief: that although there is a good ruler of things, evils can exist at all, or pass by unpunished. How much wonder this alone deserves you surely consider. But to this another, greater thing is added. For while wickedness rules and flourishes, virtue not only lacks rewards but is even thrown under the feet of criminals and trampled, and pays the penalties in place of the crimes.
	Quae fieri in regno scientis omnia, potentis omnia sed bona tantummodo uolentis dei nemo satis potest nec admirari nec conqueri."	"That these things should happen in the kingdom of a God who knows all things, can do all things, but wills only good things—no one can wonder at it or lament it enough."
	Tum illa: "Et esset," inquit, "infiniti stuporis omnibusque horribilius monstris, si, uti tu aestimas, in tanti uelut patrisfamilias dispositissima domo uilia uasa colerentur, pretiosa sordescerent. Sed non ita est. Nam si ea quae paulo ante conclusa sunt inconuulsa seruantur, ipso de cuius nunc regno loquimur auctore cognosces semper quidem potentes esse bonos, malos uero abiectos semper atque inbecillos nec sine poena umquam esse uitia nec sine praemio uirtutes, bonis felicia, malis semper infortunata contingere multaque id genus quae sopitis querelis firma te soliditate corroborent. Et quoniam uerae formam beatitudinis me dudum monstrante	Then she said, "It would indeed be a thing of boundless astonishment, and more horrible than any monster, if, as you suppose, in the perfectly ordered house of so great a master of the household, as it were, the cheap vessels were cared for while the precious ones were left to grow filthy. But it is not so. For if the conclusions we reached a little while ago are kept intact, you will learn, on the authority of the very one whose kingdom we are now speaking of, that the good are always powerful, while the wicked are always abject and

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	uidisti, quo etiam sita sit agnouisti, decursis omnibus quae praemittere necessarium puto, uiam tibi quae te domum reuehat ostendam.	weak; that vices are never without punishment, nor virtues without reward; that good fortune always befalls the good, and misfortune the wicked; and many things of that kind, which will put your complaints to rest and strengthen you with firm solidity. And since you have seen the form of true happiness, which I showed you a while ago, and have recognized where it is located, then, after running through everything I think it necessary to set out first, I will show you the way that will carry you back home.
	Pennas etiam tuae menti quibus se in altum tollere possit adfigam, ut perturbatione depulsa sospes in patriam meo ductu, mea semita, meis etiam uehiculis reuertaris."	"I will also fasten wings to your mind, by which it may raise itself on high, so that, with your turmoil driven away, you may return safe to your homeland under my guidance, by my path, and even in my vehicles."

POEM 1: THE WINGS OF THE MIND

The mind can fly beyond the stars to its true homeland.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.M1	Sunt etenim pennae uolucres mihi Quae celsa conscendant poli. Quas sibi cum uelox mens induit, Terras perosa despicit, Aeris inmensi superat globum, Nubesque postergum uidet, Quique agili motu calet aetheris, Transcendit ignis uerticem, Donec in astriferas surgat domos Phoeboque coniungat uias Aut comitetur iter gelidi senis Miles corusci sideris, Vel quocumque micans nox pingitur, Recurrat astri circulum Atque ubi iam exhausti fuerit satis, Polum relinquat extimum Dorsaque uelocis premat aetheris Compos uerendi luminis. Hic regum sceptrum dominus tenet Orbisque habenas temperat Et uolucrem currum stabilis regit Rerum coruscus arbiter.	For I have swift wings that climb the heights of the sky. When the quick mind puts them on, it looks down in disgust on the earth, rises above the globe of the boundless air, and sees the clouds behind it; and the fire that grows hot from the ether's swift motion— it climbs beyond its highest point, until it rises into the star-bearing houses and joins its paths with Phoebus, or follows the journey of the cold old man, a soldier of the flashing star; or wherever the night is painted with sparkling lights, it runs again the circle of the stars; and when it has had enough of this, it leaves the outermost sphere and treads upon the back of the swift ether, possessed of the awesome light. Here the lord of kings holds the scepter and guides the reins of the world, and, steadfast, steers the swift chariot, the shining judge of things.[1]
	/ Huc te si reducem referat uia, Quam nunc requiris immemor:	/ If the road should bring you back here, the road you now seek, having forgotten it,

1 The "cold old man" is Saturn, the slowest and outermost of the known planets.

LATIN	ENGLISH
' Haec,' dices, ' memini, patria est mihi, Hinc ortus, hic sistam gradum.' Quod si terrarum placeat tibi Noctem relictam uisere, Quos miseri toruos populi timent Cernes tyrannos exules.	"This," you will say, "I remember—this is my homeland; here I was born, here I will plant my feet." And if you should wish to look back at the night of earth you have left behind, you will see the grim tyrants whom wretched peoples fear living as exiles.

PROSE 2: THE GOOD ARE POWERFUL, THE WICKED WEAK

All seek the good but only the good attain it, so the wicked have no real power.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.P2	Tum ego: "Papae," inquam, "ut magna promittis! Nec dubito quin possis efficere; tu modo quem excitaueris ne moreris." "Primum igitur," inquit, "bonis semper adesse potentiam, malos cunctis uiribus esse desertos agnoscas licebit, quorum quidem alterum demonstratur ex altero. Nam cum bonum malumque contraria sint, si bonum potens esse constiterit, liquet inbecillitas mali; at si fragilitas clarescat mali, boni firmitas nota est. Sed uti nostrae sententiae fides abundantior sit, alterutro calle procedam nunc hinc nunc inde proposita confirmans. Duo sunt quibus omnis humanorum actuum constat effectus, uoluntas scilicet ac potestas, quorum si alterutrum desit, nihil est quod explicari queat. Deficiente etenim uoluntate ne aggreditur quidem quisque quod non uult; at si potestas absit, uoluntas frustra sit.	Then I said, "My word, what great things you promise! And I do not doubt that you can accomplish them; only do not keep me waiting, now that you have stirred me up." "First, then," she said, "you may recognize that power is always present to the good, while the wicked are deserted by all strength; and each of these is proved by the other. For since good and evil are contraries, if it is established that the good is powerful, the weakness of evil is plain; and if the frailty of evil becomes clear, the firmness of the good is known. But so that our view may be the more abundantly credible, I will proceed along both paths, confirming my propositions now from one side, now from the other. There are two things on which the accomplishment of all human actions depends, namely will and power; if either is lacking, nothing can be carried out. For if the will is lacking, no one even undertakes what he does not want; but if power is absent, the will is in vain.
	Quo fit ut si quem uideas adipisci uelle quod minime adipiscatur, huic obtinendi quod uoluerit defuisse ualentiam dubitare non possis." "Perspicuum est," inquam, "nec ullo modo negari potest." "Quem uero effecisse quod uoluerit uideas, num etiam potuisse dubitabis? "Minime. "Quod uero quisque potest, in eo ualidus, quod uero non potest, in hoc imbecillis esse censendus est." "Fateor," inquam. "Meministine igitur," inquit, "superioribus rationibus esse collectum intentionem omnem uoluntatis humanae quae diuersis studiis agitur ad beatitudinem festinare?" "Memini," inquam, "illud quoque esse demonstratum." "Num recordaris beatitudinem ipsum esse bonum eoque modo, cum beatitudo petitur, ab omnibus desiderari bonum?" "Minime," inquam, "recordor, quoniam id memoriae fixum teneo." "Omnes igitur homines boni pariter ac mali	"So if you see someone wanting to obtain what he does not obtain at all, you cannot doubt that he lacked the strength to get what he wanted." "That is clear," I said, "and cannot be denied in any way." "And if you see someone who has accomplished what he wanted, will you doubt that he was also able to?" "Not at all." "And in what each person can do he must be judged strong, and in what he cannot do, weak." "I admit it," I said. "Do you remember, then," she said, "that it was concluded in our earlier arguments that the whole aim of the human will, though it is driven along by various pursuits, hurries toward happiness?" "I remember," I said, "that this too was demonstrated." "Do you recall that happiness is the good itself, and so, when happiness is sought, the good is desired by all?" "I

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indiscreta intentione ad bonum peruenire nituntur?" "Ita," inquam, "consequens est."

"Sed certum est adeptione boni bonos fieri. "Certum. "Adipiscuntur igitur boni quod appetunt?" "Sic uidetur. "Mali uero si adipiscerentur quod appetunt bonum, mali esse non possent. "Ita est. "Cum igitur utrique bonum petant, sed hi quidem adipiscantur, illi uero minime, num dubium est bonos quidem potentes esse, qui uero mali sunt imbecillos?" "Quisquis," inquam, "dubitat, nec rerum naturam nec consequentiam potest considerare rationum."

"Rursus," inquit, "si duo sint quibus idem secundum naturam propositum sit eorumque unus naturali officio id ipsum agat atque perficiat, alter uero naturale illud officium minime administrare queat, alio uero modo quam naturae conuenit non quidem impleat propositum suum sed imitetur implentem, quemnam horum ualentiorem esse decernis?" "Etsi coniecto," inquam, "quid uelis, planius tamen audire desidero." "Ambulandi," inquit, "motum secundum naturam esse hominibus num negabis?" "Minime," inquam. "Eiusque rei pedum officium esse naturale num dubitas?" "Ne hoc quidem," inquam. "Si quis igitur pedibus incedere ualens ambulet aliusque cui hoc naturale pedum desit officium, manibus nitens ambulare conetur, quis horum iure ualentior existimari potest?" "Contexe," inquam, "cetera; nam quin naturalis officii potens eo qui idem nequeat ualentior sit, nullus ambigat."

"Sed summum bonum, quod aeque malis bonisque propositum, boni quidem naturali officio uirtutum petunt, mali uero uariam per cupiditatem, quod adipiscendi boni naturale officium non est, idem ipsum conantur adipisci. An tu aliter existimas?" "Minime," inquam, "nam etiam quod est consequens patet. Ex his enim quae concesserim, bonos quidem potentes, malos uero esse necesse est imbecillos." "Recte," inquit, "praecurris idque, uti medici sperare solent, indicium est erectae iam resistentisque naturae. Sed quoniam te ad intellegendum promptissimum esse conspicio, crebras coaceruabo rationes. Vide enim quanta uitiosorum hominum pateat infirmitas qui ne ad hoc quidem peruenire queunt ad quod eos naturalis ducit ac paene

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do not so much recall it," I said, "as keep it fixed in my memory." "All people, then, good and bad alike, strive with the same undivided aim to reach the good?" "Yes," I said, "that follows."

"But it is certain that people become good by acquiring the good." "Certain." "Then the good obtain what they seek?" "So it seems." "But if the wicked obtained the good they seek, they could not be wicked." "That is so." "Since, then, both seek the good, but the one group obtains it and the other does not, can there be any doubt that the good are powerful, while those who are wicked are weak?" "Whoever doubts it," I said, "can consider neither the nature of things nor the logical sequence of arguments."

"Again," she said, "suppose there are two people who have the same goal set before them by nature, and one pursues and achieves it by a natural function, while the other cannot perform that natural function, but in some other way than suits nature does not really fulfill his goal, but only imitates the one who fulfils it: which of these do you judge to be stronger?" "Although I can guess what you mean," I said, "I want to hear it more plainly." "You will not deny," she said, "that the motion of walking is natural to human beings?" "Not at all," I said. "And you do not doubt that this is the natural function of the feet?" "Not that either," I said. "If, then, one person who is able to go on foot walks, while another, who lacks this natural function of the feet, tries to walk by leaning on his hands, which of them can rightly be thought stronger?" "Go on with the rest," I said, "for no one would doubt that one who has power over a natural function is stronger than one who cannot do the same."

"But the highest good, which is set before bad and good alike, the good seek by the natural function of the virtues, while the wicked try to obtain the very same thing through various desires, which is not a natural function for obtaining the good. Or do you think otherwise?" "Not at all," I said, "for what follows is also clear. From what I have granted, it must be that the good are powerful and the wicked weak." She said: You run ahead rightly, and that, as doctors like to hope, is a sign of a nature now rallying and fighting back. But since I see that you are very quick to understand, I will pile up arguments one after another. For see how great is

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compellit intentio. Et quid si hoc tam magno ac paene inuicto praeeuntis naturae desererentur auxilio? Considera uero quanta sceleratos homines habeat impotentia.

Neque enim leuia aut ludicra praemia petunt, quae consequi atque obtinere non possunt, sed circa ipsam rerum summam uerticemque deficiunt nec in eo miseris contingit effectus quod solum dies noctesque moliuntur; in qua re bonorum uires eminent. Sicut enim eum qui pedibus incedens ad eum locum usque peruenire potuisset, quo nihil ulterius peruium iaceret incessui, ambulandi potentissimum esse censeres, ita eum qui expetendorum finem quo nihil ultra est apprehendit, potentissimum necesse est iudices. Ex quo fit quod huic obiacet, ut idem scelesti, idem uiribus omnibus uideantur esse deserti. Cur enim relicta uirtute uitia sectantur? Inscitiane bonorum? Sed quid eneruatius ignorantiae caecitate? An sectanda nouerunt? Sed transuersos eos libido praecipitat. Sic quoque intemperantia fragiles qui obluctari uitio nequeunt. An scientes uolentesque bonum deserunt, ad uitia deflectunt?

Sed hoc modo non solum potentes esse sed omnino esse desinunt. Nam qui communem omnium quae sunt finem relinquunt, pariter quoque esse desistunt. Quod quidem cuipiam mirum forte uideatur, ut malos, qui plures hominum sunt, eosdem non esse dicamus; sed ita sese res habet. Nam qui mali sunt eos malos esse non abnuo; sed eosdem esse pure atque simpliciter nego. Nam uti cadauer hominem mortuum dixeris, simpliciter uero hominem appellare non possis, ita uitiosos malos quidem esse concesserim, sed esse absolute nequeam confiteri. Est enim quod ordinem retinet seruatque naturam; quod uero ab hac deficit, esse etiam quod in sua natura situm est derelinquit. 'Sed possunt,' inquies, 'mali.' Ne ego quidem negauerim, sed haec eorum potentia non a uiribus sed ab imbecillitate descendit.

Possunt enim mala quae minime ualerent, si in bonorum efficientia manere potuissent. Quae possibilitas eos

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the weakness of vicious people, who cannot even arrive at that toward which their natural inclination leads and almost compels them. And what if they were deprived of this great and almost invincible help of nature going before them? Consider, too, how great a powerlessness grips wicked people.

For the prizes they seek, and cannot gain and keep, are not light or trivial ones; they fail in the very sum and summit of things, and the wretches do not succeed in the one thing they labor at day and night. And in this the strength of the good stands out. For just as you would judge that person most capable of walking who, going on foot, could reach the place beyond which there was nothing further open to travel, so you must judge that person most powerful who grasps the end of things worth seeking, beyond which there is nothing more. From this follows the opposite: that the same people who are wicked are seen to be deserted by all their strength. For why do they abandon virtue and pursue vices? From ignorance of what is good? But what is more feeble than the blindness of ignorance? Or do they know what they should pursue? But desire drives them headlong off course. So they are weak through lack of self-control too, since they cannot struggle against vice. Or do they abandon the good knowingly and willingly, and turn aside to vices?

But in this way they cease not only to be powerful but to be at all. For those who abandon the common end of all things that are cease, equally, to exist. This may perhaps seem strange to someone—that we should say the wicked, who are the majority of people, do not exist; but that is how things stand. I do not deny that those who are wicked are wicked; but I deny that they exist purely and simply. For just as you might call a corpse a dead man but could not simply call it a man, so I would grant that the vicious are wicked, but I cannot admit that they exist in an absolute sense. For that exists which keeps its order and preserves its nature; but what falls away from this also abandons the existence that lies in its nature. “But the wicked can do things,” you will say. I would not deny it either; but this power of theirs comes not from strength but from weakness.

For they can do evil, which they would have no power to do if they had been able to remain in the

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euidentius nihil posse demonstrat. Nam si, uti paulo ante collegimus, malum nihil est, cum mala tantummodo possint, nihil posse improbos liquet." "Perspicuum est." "Atque ut intellegas quaenam sit huius potentiae uis, summo bono nihil potentius esse paulo ante definiuimus." "Ita est," inquam. "Sed idem," inquit, "facere malum nequit. "Minime. "Est igitur," inquit, "aliquis qui omnia posse homines putet?" "Nisi quis insaniat, nemo." "Atqui idem possunt mala." "Vtinam quidem," inquam, "non possent." "Cum igitur bonorum tantummodo potens possit omnia, non uero queant omnia potentes etiam malorum, eosdem qui mala possunt minus posse manifestum est.

Huc accedit quod omnem potentiam inter expetenda numerandam omniaque expetenda referri ad bonum uelut ad quoddam naturae suae cacumen ostendimus. Sed patrandi sceleris possibilitas referri ad bonum non potest; expetenda igitur non est. Atqui omnis potentia expetenda est; liquet igitur malorum possibilitatem non esse potentiam. Ex quibus omnibus bonorum quidem potentia, malorum uero minime dubitabilis apparet infirmitas ueramque illam Platonis esse sententiam liquet solos quod desiderent facere posse sapientes, improbos uero exercere quidem quod libeat, quod uero desiderent explere non posse. Faciunt enim quaelibet, dum per ea quibus delectantur id bonum quod desiderant se adepturos putant; sed minime adipiscuntur, quoniam ad beatitudinem probra non ueniunt."

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efficacy of the good. And this ability shows all the more clearly that they can do nothing. For if, as we concluded a little earlier, evil is nothing, then since they can do only evil, it is plain that the wicked can do nothing. "That is clear." "And so that you may understand what the force of this power is, we established a little while ago that nothing is more powerful than the highest good." "That is so," I said. "But the same cannot do evil," she said. "Not at all." "Is there anyone, then," she said, "who thinks that human beings can do everything?" "No one, unless he is mad." "And yet they can do evil." "I only wish," I said, "that they could not." "Since, then, one who is capable only of good can do everything, while those who are capable of evil too cannot do everything, it is clear that those who can do evil have less power.

"Add to this that we have shown that all power is to be counted among the things worth seeking, and that all things worth seeking are referred to the good, as to a kind of summit of their nature. But the ability to commit crime cannot be referred to the good; therefore it is not worth seeking. Yet all power is worth seeking; so it is plain that the ability of the wicked is not power. From all this the power of the good, and the weakness of the wicked, appear beyond doubt; and it is plain that Plato's view is true, that only the wise can do what they desire, while the wicked can indeed practice whatever they please, but cannot fulfill what they desire. For they do whatever they like, thinking that through the things that delight them they will obtain the good they desire; but they do not obtain it, since disgraceful deeds never arrive at happiness."[2]

POEM 2: TYRANTS IN CHAINS

Proud kings are slaves to lust, anger, grief and hope.

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4.M2 Quos uides sedere celsos solii culmine reges
Purpura claros nitente saeptos tristibus armis
Ore toruo comminantes rabie cordis anhelos,
Detrahat si quis superbis uani tegmina cultus,
Iam uidebit intus artas dominos ferre catenas.
Hinc enim libido uersat auidis corda uenenis.
Hinc flagellat ira mentem fluctus turbida tollens

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The kings you see sitting high on the summit of the throne,
bright in shining purple, fenced in by grim weapons,
threatening with fierce looks, panting with the rage of their hearts—
if someone stripped the proud of the coverings of

2 Plato, *Gorgias* 466–468.

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	Maeror aut captos fatigat aut spes lubrica torquet Ergo cum caput tot unum cernas ferre tyrannos, Non facit quod optat ipse dominis pressus iniquis.	their empty finery, he would see at once that inside, these lords wear tight chains. For here lust twists their hearts with greedy poisons, here anger whips the mind, stirring up turbulent waves; grief wears out its captives, or slippery hope torments them. So when you see one head bearing so many tyrants, he does not do what he wishes, oppressed by unjust masters.

PROSE 3: REWARD AND PUNISHMENT

Goodness is its own reward, and wickedness turns human beings into beasts.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.P3	Videsne igitur quanto in caeno probra uoluantur, qua probitas luce resplendeat? In quo perspicuum est numquam bonis praemia numquam sua sceleribus deesse supplicia. Rerum etenim quae geruntur illud propter quod unaquaeque res geritur, eiusdem rei praemium esse non iniuria uideri potest, uti currendi in stadio propter quam curritur iacet praemium corona. Sed beatitudinem esse idem ipsum bonum propter quod omnia geruntur ostendimus. Est igitur humanis actibus ipsum bonum ueluti praemium commune propositum. Atqui hoc a bonis non potest separari neque enim bonus ultra iure uocabitur qui careat bono; quare probos mores sua praemia non relinquunt. Quantumlibet igitur saeuiant mali, sapienti tamen corona non decidet, non arescet. Neque enim probis animis proprium decus aliena decerpit improbitas.	Do you see, then, in what mud disgraceful deeds wallow, and with what light goodness shines? From this it is clear that the good never lack rewards, nor crimes their own punishments. For of things that are done, that for the sake of which each thing is done may with good reason be seen as its reward, just as the crown for which one runs lies waiting as the prize for running on the racecourse. But we have shown that happiness is the very good for the sake of which all things are done. So the good itself is set before human actions as a kind of common reward. And yet this cannot be separated from good people—for no one who lacks the good will any longer rightly be called good—so upright conduct is never left without its rewards. However much, then, the wicked may rage, the crown of the wise will not fall, will not wither. For the wickedness of others does not pluck from good souls the honor that is their own.
	Quod si extrinsecus accepto laetaretur, poterat hoc uel alius quispiam uel ipse etiam qui contulisset auferre; sed quoniam id sua cuique probitas confert, tum suo praemio carebit, cum probus esse desierit. Postremo cum omne praemium idcirco appetatur quoniam bonum esse creditur, quis boni compotem praemii iudicet expertem? At cuius praemii? Omnium pulcherrimi maximique. Memento etenim corollarii illius quod paulo ante praecipuum dedi ac sic collige: cum ipsum bonum beatitudo sit, bonos omnes eo ipso quod boni sint fieri beatos liquet. Sed qui beati sint deos esse conuenit. Est	If a good person rejoiced in something received from outside, then someone else, or even the very person who had given it, could take it away; but since each person's goodness confers it on him, he will lack his reward only when he has ceased to be good. Finally, since every reward is sought because it is believed to be good, who would judge one who possesses the good to be without reward? And what reward? The most beautiful and greatest of all. For remember that corollary which I gave you a little while ago as a special gift, and reason

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igitur praemium bonorum quod nullus deterat dies, nullius minuat potestas, nullius fuscet improbitas, deos fieri. Quae cum ita sint, de malorum quoque inseparabili poena dubitare sapiens nequeat.

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thus: since the good itself is happiness, it is plain that all good people, by the very fact that they are good, become happy. But it is agreed that those who are happy are gods. So the reward of the good is one that no day can wear away, no one's power diminish, no one's wickedness darken: to become gods. Since this is so, no wise person could doubt that punishment, too, is inseparable from the wicked.[3]

Nam cum bonum malumque item poenae atque praemium aduersa fronte dissideant, quae in boni praemio uidemus accedere eadem necesse est in mali poena contraria parte respondeant. Sicut igitur probis probitas ipsa fit praemium, ita improbis nequitia ipsa supplicium est. Iam uero quisquis afficitur poena, malo se affectum esse non dubitat. Si igitur sese ipsi aestimare uelint, possuntne sibi supplicii expertes uideri quos omnium malorum extrema nequitia non affecit modo uerum etiam uehementer infecit? Vide autem ex aduersa parte bonorum, quae improbos poena comitetur. Omne namque quod sit unum esse ipsumque unum bonum esse paulo ante didicisti, cui consequens est ut omne quod sit id etiam bonum esse uideatur.

For since good and evil, and likewise punishment and reward, stand opposed face to face, what we see accruing to the reward of the good must correspond, on the opposite side, in the punishment of the wicked. Just as goodness itself becomes the reward of the good, so wickedness itself is the punishment of the wicked. Now whoever is afflicted with punishment does not doubt that he is afflicted with an evil. If, then, they were willing to assess themselves, could they think themselves free of punishment, when wickedness, the worst of all evils, has not only affected them but thoroughly infected them? But see, from the side opposite to the good, what punishment accompanies the wicked. You learned a little earlier that everything that is, is one, and that the one itself is good; from which it follows that everything that is also appears to be good.

Hoc igitur modo quidquid a bono deficit esse desistit; quo fit ut mali desinant esse quod fuerant, sed fuisse homines adhuc ipsa humani corporis reliqua species ostentat. Quare uersi in malitiam humanam quoque amisere naturam. Sed cum ultra homines quemque prouehere sola probitas possit, necesse est ut quos ab humana condicione deiecit, infra hominis meritum detrudat improbitas. Euenit igitur, ut quem transformatum uitiis uideas hominem aestimare non possis. Auaritia feruet alienarum opum uiolentus ereptor? Lupi similem dixeris. Ferox atque inquies linguam litigiis exercet? Cani comparabis. Insidiator occultus subripuisse fraudibus gaudet? Vulpeculis exaequetur. Irae intemperans fremit? Leonis animum gestare credatur. Pauidus ac fugax non metuenda formidat? Ceruis similis habeatur. Segnis ac stupidus torpit? Asinum uiuit. Leuis atque inconstans studia permutat? Nihil auibus differt.

In this way, whatever falls away from the good ceases to be; so the wicked cease to be what they were—though that they were human beings is still shown by the shape of the human body that remains. So, having turned to wickedness, they have lost their human nature too. But since goodness alone can raise anyone above the human, it must be that wickedness thrusts down below the dignity of a human being those whom it has cast down from the human condition. The result is that you cannot regard as human someone you see transformed by vices. Does a violent robber of others' wealth burn with greed? You might call him like a wolf. Is someone fierce and restless, always exercising his tongue in quarrels? You will compare him to a dog. Does a secret plotter delight in having stolen by fraud? Let him be ranked with foxes. Does someone roar with unrestrained anger? Let him be thought to carry the spirit of a lion. Is someone fearful and quick to flee, dread-

3 The corollary of 3.P10: since happiness is divinity, those who become happy become gods by participation.

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	ing what need not be feared? Let him be held to be like a deer. Is someone lazy and dull, sunk in torpor? He lives the life of an ass. Is someone fickle and inconstant, always changing his pursuits? He is no different from the birds.
Foedis inmundisque libidinibus immergitur? Sordidae suis uoluptate detinetur. Ita fit ut qui probitate deserta homo esse desierit, cum in diuinam condicionem transire non possit, uertatur in beluam.	Is someone sunk in foul and unclean lusts? He is held fast by the pleasures of a filthy sow. So it happens that one who has abandoned goodness and ceased to be human, since he cannot pass over into the divine condition, is turned into a beast.

POEM 3: CIRCE

Circe turns Ulysses' men into animals, but vice changes the mind itself.

LATIN	ENGLISH
4.M3 Vela Neritii ducis	The sails of the Neritian captain
Et uagas pelago rates	and his ships wandering on the sea
Eurus appulit insulae,	the east wind drove to the island
Pulchra qua residens dea	where the beautiful goddess dwells,
Solis edita semine	born of the seed of the Sun,
Miscet hospitibus nouis	who mixes for her new guests
Tacta carmine pocula.	cups touched by a spell.
Quos ut in uarios modos	When into various forms
Vertit herbipotens manus,	her herb-mighty hand had turned them,
Hunc apri facies tegit,	the face of a boar covers one;
Ille Marmaricus leo	another, a Libyan lion,
Dente crescit et unguibus.	grows teeth and claws;
Hic lupis nuper additus,	this one, newly added to the wolves,
Flere dum parat, ululat.	howls when he means to weep;
Ille tigris ut Indica	that one, like an Indian tiger,
tecta mitis obambulat.	paces tamely about the house.
Sed licet uariis malis	But though, beset as he was by various ills,
Numen Arcadis alitis	the power of the winged Arcadian god,
Obsitum miserans ducem	pitying the captain,
Peste soluerit hospitis,	freed him from his hostess's plague,
Iam tamen mala remiges	the rowers had already drunk
Ore pocula traxerant,	the evil cups with their mouths;
Iam sues Cerealia	already, as swine, they had exchanged
Glande pabula uerterant	the grain of Ceres for acorns,
Et nihil manet integrum	and nothing remains whole
Voce corpore perditis.	of those who have lost voice and body.
Sola mens stabilis super	Only the mind, steady above
Monstra quae patitur gemit.	the monstrous shapes it suffers, groans.[4]
/ O leuem nimium manum	/ O hand too weak,
Nec potentia gramina.	herbs without true power!
Membra quae ualeant licet,	Though they can change the limbs,

4 Ulysses (from Neritos, near Ithaca) and the enchantress Circe, daughter of the Sun; the winged Arcadian god is Mercury, who protected Ulysses (*Odyssey* 10). Marmarica, the original's word for Libya.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Corda uertere non ualent! Intus est hominum uigor Arce conditus abdita. Haec uenena potentius Detrahunt hominem sibi Dira quae penitus meant Nec nocentia corpori Mentis uulnere saeuiunt.	they cannot change the heart. The strength of human beings is within, hidden in a secret citadel. Those poisons are more powerful that drag a person away from himself, dread poisons that sink deep within, and, though they do no harm to the body, rage by wounding the mind.

PROSE 4: THE MISERY OF THE WICKED

The wicked are unhappier when they succeed, and when they go unpunished.

LATIN	ENGLISH
4.P4 Tum ego: "Fateor," inquam, "nec iniuria dici uideo uitiosos, tametsi humani corporis speciem seruent, in beluas tamen animorum qualitate mutari; sed quorum atrox sceleratque mens bonorum pernicie saeuit, id ipsum eis licere noluissem." "Nec licet," inquit, "uti conuenienti monstrabitur loco. Sed tamen si id ipsum quod eis licere creditur auferatur, magna ex parte sceleratorum hominum poena releuetur. Etenim quod incredibile cuiquam forte uideatur, infeliciores esse necesse est malos, cum cupita perfecerint, quam si ea quae cupiunt implere non possint. Nam si miserum est uoluisse praua, potuisse miserius est, sine quo uoluntatis miserae langueret effectus. Itaque cum sua singulis miseria sit, triplici infortunio necesse est urgeantur quos uideas scelus uelle, posse, perficere." "Accedo," inquam, "sed uti hoc infortunio cito careant patrandi sceleris possibilitate deserti uehementer exopto."	Then I said, "I admit it, and I see that it is not wrong to say that the vicious, although they keep the shape of the human body, are changed into beasts in the quality of their souls. But I would have wished that those whose savage and criminal minds rage to destroy the good were not allowed to do so." "Nor are they allowed," she said, "as will be shown in the proper place. But even so, if what they are believed to be allowed were taken away, the punishment of criminals would be in large part relieved. For—and this may perhaps seem incredible to some—the wicked must be more unhappy when they have accomplished what they desire than if they cannot fulfill what they desire. For if it is wretched to have wanted what is wicked, it is more wretched to have been able to do it, since without that ability the wretched will would languish without effect. So, since each of these has its own wretchedness, those whom you see wanting, being able and carrying out a crime must be weighed down by a triple misfortune." "I agree," I said, "but I earnestly wish that they may soon be free of this misfortune, by being deprived of the ability to commit crime."
"Carebunt," inquit, "ocius quam uel tu forsitan uelis uel illi sese aestiment esse carituros. Neque enim est aliquid in tam breuibus uitae metis ita serum quod exspectare longum immortalis praesertim animus putet: quorum magna spes et excelsa facinorum machina repentino atque insperato saepe fine destruitur, quod quidem illis miseriae modum statuit. Nam si nequitia miseros facit, miserior sit necesse est diuturnior nequam; quos infelicissimos esse iudicarem, si non eorum malitiam saltem mors extrema finiret. Etenim si de prauitatis infortunio uera conclusimus, infinitam liquet esse miseriam quam esse constat aeternam." Tum ego: "Mira	"They will be free of it," she said, "sooner than you perhaps wish, or than they themselves think they will. For in the short span of life there is nothing so late in coming that an immortal soul, above all, should think it a long wait; their great hopes and their lofty machinery of crime are often destroyed by a sudden and unexpected end, and that indeed sets a limit to their misery. For if wickedness makes people wretched, the longer one is wicked, the more wretched he must be; and I would judge them the unhappiest of all, if at least death did not finally put an end to their malice. For if our con-

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quidem," inquam, "et concessu difficilis inlatio, sed his eam quae prius concessa sunt nimium conuenire cognosco." "Recte," inquit, "aestimas.

Sed qui conclusioni accedere durum putat, aequum est uel falsum aliquid praecessisse demonstret uel collocationem propositionum non esse efficacem necessariae conclusionis ostendat; alioquin concessis praecedentibus nihil prorsus est quod de inlatione causetur. Nam hoc quoque quod dicam non minus mirum uideatur, sed ex his quae sumpta sunt aeque est necessarium. "Quidnam? inquam. "Feliciores," inquit, "esse improbos supplicia luentes quam si eos nulla iustitiae poena coerceat. Neque id nunc molior quod cuiuis ueniat in mentem, corrigi ultione prauos mores et ad rectum supplicii terrore deduci, ceteris quoque exemplum esse culpanda fugiendi, sed alio quodam modo infeliciores esse improbos arbitror impunitos, tametsi nulla ratio correctionis, nullus respectus habeatur exempli." "Et quis erit," inquam, "praeter hos alius modus?"

Et illa: "Bonos," inquit, "esse felices, malos uero miseros nonne concessimus?" "Ita est," inquam. "Si igitur," inquit, "miseriae cuiuspiam bonum aliquid addatur, nonne felicior est eo cuius pura ac solitaria sine cuiusquam boni admixtione miseria est?" "Sic," inquam, "uidetur." "Quid si eidem misero qui cunctis careat bonis, praeter ea quibus miser est malum aliud fuerit adnexum, nonne multo infelicior eo censendus est cuius infortunium boni participatione releuatur? "Quidni? inquam. "Sed puniri improbos iustum, impunitos uero elabi iniquum esse manifestum est." "Quis id neget? "Sed ne illud quidem," ait, "quisquam negabit bonum esse omne quod iustum est contraque quod iniustum est malum." Liquere, respondi.

"Habent igitur improbi, cum puniuntur, quidem boni aliquid adnexum poenam ipsam scilicet quae ratione iustitiae bona est, idemque cum supplicio carent, inest eis aliquid ulterius mali ipsa impunitas quam iniquitatis merito malum esse confessus es." "Negare non possum."

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clusions about the misfortune of depravity are true, it is plain that misery known to be eternal is infinite." Then I said, "That is indeed a remarkable inference, and hard to grant; but I recognize that it agrees only too well with what was granted before." "You judge rightly," she said.

"But whoever thinks it hard to accept a conclusion should, in fairness, either show that something false came before it, or show that the arrangement of the premises does not produce a necessary conclusion; otherwise, once the premises are granted, there is no ground at all to object to the inference. For what I am about to say may seem no less astonishing, yet it follows just as necessarily from what has been assumed." "What is that?" I said. "That the wicked are happier when they pay penalties than if no punishment of justice restrains them. I am not now working toward what might occur to anyone—that depraved characters are corrected by punishment and led to what is right by fear of penalties, and that they serve as an example to others to avoid what deserves blame. I think that the wicked who go unpunished are more unhappy in another way, even if no account is taken of correction and no regard is had to example." "And what other way will there be," I said, "besides these?"

And she said, "Did we not grant that the good are happy and the wicked wretched?" "Yes," I said. "If, then," she said, "something good is added to someone's misery, is he not happier than one whose misery is pure and solitary, with no admixture of any good?" "So it seems," I said. "And what if, to that same wretched man who lacks all goods, some further evil is attached besides those that make him wretched—must he not be judged much unhappier than one whose misfortune is relieved by sharing in some good?" "Of course," I said. "But it is plain that it is just for the wicked to be punished, and unjust for them to escape unpunished." "Who would deny it?" "But no one will deny this either," she said, "that everything just is good, and conversely whatever is unjust is evil." "That is clear," I replied.

"So when the wicked are punished, they have something good attached to them—namely the punishment itself, which is good by reason of justice—and when they escape punishment, they have in them a further evil, impunity itself, which

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"Multo igitur infeliciores improbi sunt iniusta impunitate donati quam iusta ultione puniti." Tum ego: "Ista quidem consequentia sunt eis quae paulo ante conclusa sunt. Sed quaeso," inquam, "te, nullane animarum supplicia post defunctum morte corpus relinquis?" "Et magna quidem, inquit," quorum alia poenali acerbitate, alia uero purgatoria clementia exerceri puto.

Sed nunc de his disserere consilium non est, Id uero hactenus egimus, ut quae indignissima tibi uidebatur malorum potestas eam nullam esse cognosceres quosque impunitos querebare, uideres numquam improbitatis suae carere suppliciis, licentiam quam cito finiri precabaris nec longam esse disceres infelicioremque fore, si diuturnior, infelicissimam uero, si esset aeterna; post haec miseriores esse improbos iniusta impunitate dimissos quam iusta ultione punitos. Cui sententiae consequens est ut tum demum grauioribus suppliciis urgeantur, cum impuniti esse creduntur.

Tum ego: "Cum tuas," inquam, "rationes considero, nihil dici uerius puto. At si ad hominum iudicia reuertar, quis ille est cui haec non credenda modo sed saltem audienda uideantur?" "Ita est," inquit illa. "Nequeunt enim oculos tenebris assuetos ad lucem perspicuae ueritatis attollere, similesque auibus sunt quarum intuitum nox inluminat dies caecat. Dum enim non rerum ordinem, sed suos intuentur affectus, uel licentiam uel impunitatem scelerum putant esse felicem. Vide autem quid aeterna lex sanciat. Melioribus animum conformaueris, nihil opus est iudice praemium deferente tu te ipse excellentioribus addidisti. Studium ad peiora deflexeris, extra ne quaesieris ultorem. Tu te ipse in deteriora trusisti, ueluti si uicibus sordidam humum caelumque respicias, cunctis extra cessantibus ipsa cernendi ratione nunc caeno nunc sideribus interesse uidearis.

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you have admitted is an evil because it is unjust." "I cannot deny it." "Then the wicked are much more unhappy when granted an unjust impunity than when punished by a just penalty." Then I said, "That does follow from what was concluded a little while ago. But I ask you," I said, "do you leave no punishments for souls after the body has died?" "Great ones indeed," she said; "some of them, I think, are exacted with penal severity, others with purifying mercy.

"But it is not my plan to discuss these now. What we have done so far is this: that you should recognize that the power of the wicked, which seemed to you most unworthy, is nothing; that you should see that those whom you complained went unpunished are never without the punishment of their wickedness; that you should learn that the license which you prayed might soon end is not long, and would be unhappier if it lasted longer, and unhappiest of all if it were eternal; and after this, that the wicked are more wretched when let off with an unjust impunity than when punished with a just penalty. And it follows from this conclusion that they are weighed down by heavier punishments precisely when they are believed to go unpunished."

Then I said, "When I consider your arguments, I think nothing truer can be said. But if I turn back to human judgments, who is there who would think these things worth even hearing, let alone believing?" "That is so," she said. "For they cannot lift eyes accustomed to darkness to the light of clear truth, and they are like birds whose sight is lit by night and blinded by day. For while they look not at the order of things but at their own feelings, they think that license and impunity for crimes bring happiness. But see what the eternal law ordains. Shape your mind to better things, and you have no need of a judge to confer the reward: you have yourself added yourself to the more excellent. Turn your efforts to worse things, and do not look for an avenger outside: you have yourself thrust yourself down among the baser—just as, if you looked in turn at the filthy ground and at the sky, then, with everything outside you at rest, by the mere act of seeing you would seem to be now in the mud, now among the stars.

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At uulgus ista non respicit Quid igitur? Hisne accedamus quos beluis similes esse monstrauimus? Quid si quis amisso penitus uisu ipsum etiam se habuisse obliuisceretur intuitum nihilque sibi ad humanam perfectionem deesse arbitraretur, num uidentes eadem caecos putaremus? Nam ne illud quidem adquiescent quod aeque ualidis rationum nititur firmamentis: infeliciores eos esse qui faciant quam qui patiantur iniuriam." "Vellem," inquam, "has ipsas audire rationes." "Omnem," inquit, "improbum num supplicio dignum negas? "Minime. "Infelices uero esse qui sint improbi multipliciter liquet." "Ita," inquam. "Qui igitur supplicio digni sunt miseros esse non dubitas?" "Conuenit," inquam. "Si igitur cognitor," ait, "resideres, cui supplicium inferendum putares, eine qui fecisset an qui pertulisset iniuriam?" "Nec ambigo," inquam, "quin perpesso satisfacerem dolore facientis."

"Miserior igitur tibi iniuriae inlator quam acceptor esse uideretur." "Consequitur," inquam. "Hinc igitur aliis de causis ea radice nitentibus, quod turpitudo suapte natura miseros faciat, apparet inlatam cuilibet iniuriam non accipientis sed inferentis esse miseriam." "Atqui nunc," ait, "contra faciunt oratores. Pro his enim qui graue quid acerbumque perpessi sunt miserationem iudicum excitare conantur, cum magis admittentibus iustior miseratio debeatur; quos non ab iratis sed a propitiis potius miserantibusque accusatoribus ad iudicium ueluti aegros ad medicum duci oportebat, ut culpae morbos supplicio resecarent. Quo pacto defensorum opera uel tota frigeret, uel si prodesse hominibus mallet, in accusationis habitum uerteretur.

Ipsi quoque improbi, si eis aliqua rimula uirtutem relictam fas esset aspicere uitiorumque sordes poenarum cruciatibus se deposituros uiderent compensatione adipiscendae probitatis, nec hos cruciatus esse ducerent defensorumque operam repudiarent ac se totos accusatoribus iudicibusque permitterent. Quo fit ut apud sapientes nullus prorsus odio locus relinquatur. Nam

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"But the common crowd does not consider these things. What then? Should we side with those whom we have shown to be like beasts? What if someone who had wholly lost his sight even forgot that he had ever had vision, and thought he lacked nothing of human perfection—would we who can see therefore think as the blind do? For they will not accept this either, which rests on equally strong supports of argument: that those who do wrong are more unhappy than those who suffer it." "I would like to hear these very arguments," I said. "Do you deny," she said, "that every wicked person deserves punishment?" "Not at all." "And it is plain in many ways that those who are wicked are unhappy." "Yes," I said. "Then you do not doubt that those who deserve punishment are wretched?" "Agreed," I said. "If, then, you sat as judge," she said, "on whom would you think punishment should be inflicted—the one who had done the wrong, or the one who had suffered it?" "I have no hesitation," I said, "that I would make amends to the one who suffered by the pain of the one who did it."

"Then the one who inflicts a wrong would seem to you more wretched than the one who receives it." "That follows," I said. "From this, then, and for other reasons resting on the same root—that wickedness by its own nature makes people wretched—it is clear that a wrong done to anyone is the misery not of the one who receives it but of the one who does it." "And yet," she said, "orators nowadays do the opposite. For they try to rouse the judges' pity for those who have suffered something grave and bitter, when a juster pity is owed rather to those who commit it. They ought to be brought to trial, like the sick to a doctor, not by angry accusers but rather by kind and compassionate ones, so that the diseases of guilt might be cut away by punishment. In that way the work of defense counsel would either go entirely cold, or, if it preferred to benefit people, would turn into the role of prosecution.

"The wicked themselves, too, if they were allowed to glimpse through some little crack the virtue they have abandoned, and saw that through the torments of punishment they would lay aside the filth of their vices in exchange for gaining goodness, would not consider these torments at all; they would refuse the help of their defenders and

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	bonos quis nisi stultissimus oderit? Malos uero odisse ratione caret. Nam si, uti corporum languor, ita uitiositas quidam est quasi morbus animorum, cum aegros corpore minime dignos odio sed potius miseratione iudicemus, multo magis non insequendi sed miserandi sunt quorum mentes omni languore atrocior urget improbitas."	hand themselves over wholly to their accusers and judges. So it is that among the wise no place at all is left for hatred. For who but the greatest fool would hate the good? And to hate the wicked is without reason. For if, just as sickness is of the body, so vice is a kind of disease of the soul, then since we judge those sick in body to deserve not hatred but pity, much more are they to be pitied, not persecuted, whose minds are oppressed by wickedness, which is fiercer than any sickness."

POEM 4: LOVE THE GOOD, PITY THE WICKED

Why hasten death with war? Love the good and pity the wicked.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.M4	Quod tantos iuuat excitare motus Et propria fatum sollicitare manu? Si mortem petitis, propinquat ipsa Sponte sua uolucres nec remoratur equos. Quos serpens leo tigris ursus aper Dente petunt, idem se tamen ense petunt. An distant quia dissidentque mores, Iniustas acies et fera bella mouent Alternisque uolunt perire telis? Non est iusta satis saeuitiae ratio. Vis aptam meritis uicem referre? Dilige iure bonos et miseresce malis.	What joy is there in stirring up such great commotion and provoking fate with your own hand? If you seek death, it draws near of itself, of its own will, and does not slow its winged horses. Those whom serpent, lion, tiger, bear and boar attack with their teeth still attack one another with the sword. Is it because their ways differ and are at odds that they stir up unjust battle lines and savage wars and wish to perish by each other's weapons? That is not reason enough to justify cruelty. Do you wish to give a fitting return to merit? Love the good, as is right, and pity the wicked.

PROSE 5: REWARDS REVERSED

Boethius asks why rewards and punishments so often seem reversed.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.P5	Hic ego: "Video," inquam, "quae sit uel felicitas uel miseria in ipsis proborum atque improborum meritis constituta. Sed in hac ipsa fortuna populari non nihil boni maliue inesse perpendo. Neque enim sapientum quisquam exul inops ignominiosusque esse malit, potius quam pollens opibus, honore reuerendus, potentia ualidus, in sua permanens urbe florere. Sic enim clarius testatiusque sapientiae tractatur officium, cum in contingentes populos regentium quodam modo beatitudo transfunditur, cum praesertim carcer, nex ceteraque legalium tormenta poenarum perniciosis potius ciuibus propter quos etiam constituta sunt debeantur. Cur haec igitur uersa uice mutentur scelerumque supplicia bonos	Here I said, "I see what happiness or misery is established in the very deserts of the good and the wicked. But I judge that there is something good or bad in this popular fortune too. For no wise man would rather be an exile, poor and disgraced, than flourish, remaining in his own city, powerful in wealth, respected for his office, strong in power. For the task of wisdom is carried out more brilliantly and more conspicuously when the happiness of those who rule is in some way passed on to the peoples in their care—especially since prison, execution and the other tortures of legal punishment are owed rather to harmful citizens, for

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premant, praemia uirtutum mali rapiant, uehementer admiror, quaeque tam iniustae confusionis ratio uideatur ex te scire desidero. Minus etenim mirarer, si misceri omnia fortuitis casibus crederem.	whom indeed they were established. Why, then, these things should be reversed—why the punishments of crimes should weigh on the good, while the wicked seize the rewards of virtue—I wonder greatly, and I want to learn from you what reason there seems to be for such unjust confusion. For I would wonder less if I believed that all things were thrown together by chance events.
Nunc stuporem meum deus rector exaggerat. Qui cum saepe bonis iucunda, malis aspera contraque bonis dura tribuat, malis optata concedat, nisi causa deprehenditur, quid est quod a fortuitis casibus differre uideatur?" "Nec mirum," inquit, "si quid ordinis ignorata ratione temerarium confusumque credatur. Sed tu quamuis causam tantae dispositionis ignores, tamen quoniam bonus mundum rector temperat, recte fieri cuncta ne dubites."	"As it is, God as ruler heightens my bewilderment. Since he often gives pleasant things to the good and harsh things to the wicked, and conversely gives hard things to the good and grants the wicked what they wish for, unless the cause is discovered, what is there that seems to differ from chance events?" "It is no wonder," she said, "if something is believed to be random and confused when the principle of its order is unknown. But though you do not know the cause of so great an arrangement, still, since a good ruler governs the world, do not doubt that all things are done rightly."

POEM 5: HIDDEN CAUSES

People marvel at eclipses only because they do not know the causes.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.M5	Si quis Arcturi sidera nescit Propinqua summo cardine labi, Cur legat tardus plaustra Bootes Mergatque seras aequore flammas, Cum nimis celeres explicet ortus, Legem stupebit aetheris alti. Palleant plenae cornua lunae Infecta metis noctis opacae Quaeque fulgenti texerat ore Confusa Phoebe detegat astra, Commouet gentes publicus error Lassantque crebris pulsibus aera. Nemo miratur flamina Cori Litus frementi tundere fluctu Nec niuis duram frigore molem Feruente Phoebi soluier aestu. Hic enim causas cernere promptum est, Illic latentes pectora turbant. Cuncta quae rara prouehit aetas Stupetque subitis mobile uulgus, Cedat inscitiae nubilus error, Cessent profecto mira uideri.	If someone does not know that the stars of Arcturus glide near the highest pole, why slow Bootes follows his Wagon and plunges his late flames into the sea, though he unfolds his rising all too quickly, he will be amazed at the law of the high heavens. Let the horns of the full moon grow pale, stained by the boundaries of dark night, and let Phoebe, confused, reveal the stars she had covered with her shining face: a public error stirs up the nations, and they weary the bronze with frequent blows. No one wonders that the blasts of the northwest wind pound the shore with roaring waves, or that the mass of snow, hard with frost, melts in the burning heat of Phoebus. For here the causes are easy to see; there, hidden ones trouble the heart. All things that time brings forth but rarely, and that stun the fickle crowd by their suddenness —

	LATIN	ENGLISH
		let the cloudy error of ignorance give way, and they will surely cease to seem wonders.[5]

PROSE 6: PROVIDENCE AND FATE

Philosophy distinguishes providence from fate and explains why the good suffer and the wicked prosper.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.P6	"Ita est," inquam; "sed cum tui muneris sit latentium rerum causas euoluere uelatasque caligine explicare rationes, quaeso uti quae hinc decernas, quoniam hoc me miraculum maxime perturbat, edisseras." Tum illa paulisper arridens; "Ad rem me," inquit, "omnium quaesitu, maximam uocas, cui uix exhausti quicquam satis sit. Talis namque materia est ut una dubitatione succisa innumerabiles aliae uelut hydrae capita succrescant, nec ullus fuerit modus, nisi quis eas uiuacissimo mentis igne coerceat. In hac enim de prouidentiae simplicitate, de fati serie, de repentinis casibus, de cognitione ac praedestinatione diuina, de arbitrii libertate quaeri solet, quae quanti oneris sint ipse perpendis. Sed quoniam haec quoque te nosse quaedam medicinae tuae portio est, quamquam angusto limite temporis saepti tamen aliquid delibare conabimur.	"That is so," I said; "but since it is your office to unfold the causes of hidden things and to explain reasons veiled in darkness, I beg you to tell me what you decide on this matter, since this marvel troubles me most of all." Then, smiling a little, she said, "You are calling me to the greatest of all questions to investigate, one which can scarcely be exhausted by anything. For its subject matter is such that when one doubt is cut away, countless others grow in its place like the heads of the Hydra, and there would be no end unless one held them in check with the most vigorous fire of the mind. For in this question people usually ask about the simplicity of providence, the chain of fate, sudden chance events, divine knowledge and predestination, and free will; and you yourself can weigh how heavy these are. But since knowing these things too is part of your cure, although we are hemmed in by a narrow limit of time, we will still try to touch on something of it.[6]
	Quod si te musici carminis oblectamenta delectant, hanc oportet paulisper differas uoluptatem, dum nexas sibi ordine contexo rationes." "Vt libet," inquam, Tunc uelut ab alio orsa principio ita disseruit: "Omnium generatio rerum cunctusque mutabilium naturarum progressus et quidquid aliquo mouetur modo, causas, ordinem, formas ex diuinae mentis stabilitate sortitur. Haec in suae simplicitatis arce composita multiplicem rebus regendis modum statuit. Qui modus cum in ipsa diuinae intellegentiae puritate conspicitur, prouidentia nominatur; cum uero ad ea quae mouet atque disponit refertur, fatum a ueteribus appellatum est. Quae diuersa esse facile liquebit, si quis utriusque uim mente conspexerit. Nam prouidentia est ipsa illa diuina ratio in summo omnium principe constituta quae cuncta disponit; fatum uero inhaerens rebus mobilibus dispositio per quam prouidentia suis quaeque nectit ordinibus.	"But if the delights of musical song please you, you must put off that pleasure a little, while I weave together arguments linked to one another in order." "As you like," I said. Then, as if starting from another beginning, she argued as follows: The coming-to-be of all things, the whole progress of changeable natures, and whatever is moved in any way, receive their causes, order and forms from the stability of the divine mind. This mind, set in the citadel of its own simplicity, has established a manifold way of ruling things. When this way is seen in the very purity of the divine intelligence, it is called providence; but when it is referred to the things it moves and orders, it was called fate by the ancients. That these are different will easily become clear if one considers the force of each in the mind. For providence is that divine reason itself, established in the supreme ruler of

5 Bootes, the Herdsman, rises quickly and sets slowly near the Wagon (the Great Bear). During eclipses of the moon people beat bronze to help her.

6 The Hydra, a many-headed serpent killed by Hercules; when one head was cut off, others grew, until the stumps were seared with fire.

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all, which orders all things; fate, on the other hand, is the ordering inherent in movable things, through which providence binds each thing in its own order.

Prouidentia namque cuncta pariter quamuis diuersa quamuis infinita complectitur; fatum uero singula digerit in motum locis formis ac temporibus distributa, ut haec temporalis ordinis explicatio in diuinae mentis adunata prospectum prouidentia sit, eadem uero adunatio digesta atque explicata temporibus fatum uocetur. Quae licet diuersa sint, alterum tamen pendet ex altero. Ordo namque fatalis ex prouidentiae simplicitate procedit. Sicut enim artifex faciendae rei formam mente praecipiens mouet operis effectum, et quod simpliciter praesentarieque prospexerat, per temporales ordines ducit, ita deus prouidentia quidem singulariter stabiliterque facienda disponit, fato uero haec ipsa quae disposuit multipliciter ac temporaliter administrat.

For providence embraces all things alike, however different, however infinite; but fate sets individual things in motion, distributed in places, forms and times. So this unfolding of temporal order, united in the foresight of the divine mind, is providence; and the same union, distributed and unfolded in time, is called fate. Though they are different, one depends on the other. For the order of fate proceeds from the simplicity of providence. Just as a craftsman, grasping beforehand in his mind the form of the thing to be made, sets the work in motion, and leads through temporal stages what he had foreseen simply and all at once, so God by providence orders what is to be done singly and stably, but by fate administers these same things he has ordered in manifold ways and in time.

Siue igitur famulantibus quibusdam prouidentiae diuinis spiritibus fatum exercetur seu anima seu tota inseruiente natura seu caelestibus siderum motibus seu angelica uirtute seu daemonum uaria sollertia seu aliquibus horum seu omnibus fatalis series texitur, illud certe manifestum est immobilem simplicemque gerendarum formam rerum esse prouidentiam, fatum uero eorum quae diuina simplicitas gerenda disposuit mobilem nexum atque ordinem temporalem. Quo fit ut omnia quae fato subsunt prouidentiae quoque subiecta sint cui ipsum etiam subiacet fatum, quaedam uero quae sub prouidentia locata sunt fati seriem superent. Ea uero sunt quae primae propinqua diuinitati stabiliter fixa fatalis ordinem mobilitatis excedunt.

Whether, then, fate is carried out by certain divine spirits serving providence, or whether the chain of fate is woven by a soul, or by the whole of nature serving it, or by the heavenly motions of the stars, or by angelic power, or by the varied cunning of daemons, or by some or all of these, this at least is clear: providence is the unmoving and simple form of things to be done, while fate is the movable interweaving and temporal order of those things which the divine simplicity has arranged to be done. So it is that everything subject to fate is also subject to providence, to which fate itself is subject; but certain things placed under providence rise above the chain of fate. These are the things which, stably fixed near the first divinity, exceed the order of fate's mobility.[7]

Nam ut orbium circa eundem cardinem sese uertentium qui est intimus ad simplicitatem medietatis accedit ceterorumque extra locatorum ueluti cardo quidam circa quem uersentur exsistit, extimus uero maiore ambitu rotatus quanto a puncti media indiuiduitate discedit tanto amplioribus spatiis explicatur, si quid uero illi se medio conectat et societ, in simplicitatem cogitur diffundique ac diffluere cessat, simili ratione quod longius a prima mente discedit maioribus fati nexibus implicatur ac tanto aliquid fato liberum est quanto illum rerum cardinem uicinius petit. Quod si supernae mentis

For consider spheres turning about the same pivot: the innermost comes close to the simplicity of the center and becomes a kind of pivot for the others placed outside it, around which they turn; the outermost, turning in a wider circuit, is spread over larger spaces the further it departs from the indivisible middle point; and if anything connects and joins itself to that middle, it is drawn together into simplicity and ceases to spread out and flow apart. In the same way, whatever departs further from the first mind is entangled in tighter bonds

7 Daemons: in late ancient thought, spirits intermediate between gods and humans, not necessarily evil.

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haeserit firmitati, motu carens fati quoque supergreditur necessitatem. Igitur uti est ad intellectum ratiocinatio, ad id quod est id quod gignitur, ad aeternitatem tempus, ad punctum medium circulus, ita est fati series mobilis ad prouidentiae stabilem simplicitatem.

Ea series caelum ac sidera mouet, elementa in se inuicem temperat et alterna commutatione transformat; eadem nascentia occidentiaque omnia per similes fetuum seminumque renouat progressus. Haec actus etiam fortunasque hominum indissolubili causarum conexione constringit, quae cum ab immobilis prouidentiae proficiscatur exordiis, ipsas quoque immutabiles esse necesse est. Ita enim res optime reguntur, si manens in diuina mente simplicitas indeclinabilem causarum ordinem premat. Hic uero ordo res mutabiles et alioquin temere fluituras propria incommutabilitate coerceat. Quo fit ut tametsi uobis hunc ordinem minime considerare ualentibus confusa omnia perturbataque uideantur, nihilo minus tamen suus modus ad bonum dirigens cuncta disponat.

Nihil est enim quod mali causa ne ab ipsis quidem improbis fiat; quos, ut uberrime demonstratum est, bonum quaerentes prauus error auertit, nedum ordo de summi boni cardine proficiscens a suo quoquam deflectat exordio. Quae uero, inquies, potest ulla iniquior esse confusio, quam ut bonis tum aduersa tum prospera, malis etiam tum optata tum odiosa contingant? Num igitur ea mentis integritate homines degunt, ut quos probos improbosue censuerunt eos quoque uti existimant esse necesse sit? Atqui in hoc hominum iudicia depugnant, et quos alii praemio alii supplicio dignos arbitrantur. Sed concedamus ut aliquis possit bonos malosque discernere; num igitur poterit intueri illam intimam temperiem, uelut in corporibus dici solet, animorum?

Non enim dissimile est miraculum nescienti cur sanis corporibus his quidem dulcia illis uero amara

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of fate, and a thing is freer from fate the nearer it approaches that pivot of things. And if it clings to the firmness of the supreme mind, it is free of motion and rises above the necessity of fate as well. So as reasoning is to understanding, as what comes to be is to what is, as time is to eternity, as the circle is to its center, so is the moving chain of fate to the stable simplicity of providence.

This chain moves the heaven and the stars, blends the elements with one another and transforms them by alternating exchange; it likewise renews all things that are born and die through the like progression of offspring and seeds. It also binds the actions and fortunes of human beings by an indissoluble connection of causes; and since these causes set out from the beginnings of unmoving providence, they too must be unchangeable. For things are best ruled in this way: if the simplicity abiding in the divine mind imposes an unswerving order of causes, and this order by its own unchangeableness restrains things that are changeable and would otherwise drift at random. So it happens that although to you, who are not at all able to contemplate this order, all things seem confused and disordered, nonetheless their own proper measure orders all things, directing them toward the good.

For there is nothing that is done for the sake of evil, even by the wicked themselves, whom, as has been most fully shown, a depraved error turns aside while they seek the good—still less could an order that proceeds from the pivot of the highest good turn aside anywhere from its beginning. “But what confusion,” you will say, “could be more unjust than that sometimes adversity and sometimes prosperity should befall the good, and to the wicked too sometimes what they want and sometimes what they hate?” Do human beings, then, live with such soundness of mind that those whom they judge good or wicked must necessarily be as they think? Yet human judgments clash on this very point, and some think those deserving of reward whom others think deserving of punishment. But let us grant that someone could distinguish the good from the wicked; will he then be able to see that inmost temperament of souls, as people usually speak of it in bodies?

For it is no less a wonder, to one who does not know the reason, why among healthy bodies

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conueniant, cur aegri etiam quidam lenibus quidam uero acribus adiuuentur? At hoc medicus, qui sanitatis ipsius atque aegritudinis modum temperamentumque dinoscit, minime miratur. Quid uero aliud animorum salus uidetur esse quam probitas? Quid aegritudo quam uitia? Quis autem alius uel seruator bonorum uel malorum depulsor quam rector ac medicator mentium deus? Qui cum ex alta prouidentiae specula respexit, quid unicuique conueniat agnoscit et quod conuenire nouit accommodat. Hic iam fit illud fatalis ordinis insigne miraculum, cum ab sciente geritur quod stupeant ignorantes.

Nam ut pauca quae ratio ualet humana de diuina profunditate perstringam, de hoc quem tu iustissimum et aequi seruantissimum putas omnia scienti prouidentiae diuersum uidetur; et uictricem quidem causam dis, uictam uero Catoni placuisse familiaris noster Lucanus admonuit. Hic igitur quidquid citra spem uideas geri, rebus quidem rectus ordo est, opinioni uero tuae peruersa confusio. Sed sit aliquis ita bene moratus ut de eo diuinum iudicium pariter et humanum consentiat, sed est animi uiribus infirmus; cui si quid eueniat aduersi, desinet colere forsitan innocentiam per quam non potuit retinere fortunam. Parcit itaque sapiens dispensatio ei quem deteriorem facere possit aduersitas, ne cui non conuenit laborare patiatur.

Est alius cunctis uirtutibus absolutus sanctusque ac deo proximus; hunc contingi quibuslibet aduersis nefas prouidentia iudicat adeo ut ne corporeis quidem morbis agitari sinat. Nam ut quidam me quoque excellentior: ἀνδρὸς δὴ ἱεροῦ δέμας αἰθέρες ᾠκοδόμησαν Fit autem saepe, uti bonis summa rerum regenda deferatur, ut exuberans retundatur improbitas. Aliis mixta quaedam pro animorum qualitate distribuit; quosdam remordet ne longa felicitate luxurient, alios duris agitari ut uirtutes animi patientiae usu atque exercitatione confirment. Alii plus aequo metuunt quod ferre possunt, alii plus aequo despiciunt quod ferre non possunt; hos in experimentum sui tristibus ducit. Nonnulli uenerandum saeculi nomen gloriosae pretio mortis emerunt: quidam suppliciis

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sweet things suit some and bitter things others, and why some sick people are helped by mild remedies and others by sharp ones. But the doctor, who knows the measure and balance of health itself and of sickness, does not wonder at this at all. And what else does the health of souls seem to be but goodness? What else their sickness but vices? And who else is either the preserver of the good or the banisher of evils but God, the ruler and healer of minds? When he looks out from the high watchtower of providence, he recognizes what suits each person, and assigns what he knows to be suitable. Here, then, is that remarkable wonder of the order of fate: something is done by one who knows, at which those who do not know are astonished.

For, to touch briefly on the few things human reason can grasp of the divine depth: the man whom you think most just and most observant of fairness seems otherwise to providence, which knows all things. And our friend Lucan reminded us that the victorious cause pleased the gods, but the defeated cause pleased Cato. So whatever you see done here contrary to your expectation is right order in the things themselves, but perverse confusion in your opinion. But suppose there is someone so good in character that divine and human judgment agree about him, yet he is weak in strength of mind; if anything adverse happened to him, he might perhaps stop practicing the innocence by which he could not keep his fortune. So a wise dispensation spares one whom adversity could make worse, so as not to let one suffer for whom hardship is not suitable.[8]

There is another, perfect in all virtues, holy and close to God; providence judges it wrong that he should be touched by any adversity at all, so much so that it does not allow him to be troubled even by bodily illness. For as someone more excellent than I has said, ἀνδρὸς δὴ ἱεροῦ δέμας αἰθέρες ᾠκοδόμησαν [the heavens have built the body of a holy man]. Often, too, it happens that the supreme direction of affairs is given to the good, so that overflowing wickedness may be beaten back. To others providence distributes a certain mixture, according to the quality of their souls: some it stings, so that they may not grow wanton through

8 Lucan, *Pharsalia* 1.128: Cato the Younger stood with the losing republican side against Caesar in the civil war.

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inexpugnabiles exemplum ceteris praetulerunt inuictam malis esse uirtutem.

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long prosperity; others it lets be tossed by hardships, so that they may strengthen the virtues of the soul by the use and exercise of patience. Some fear more than they should what they can bear; others despise more than they should what they cannot bear; these it leads into sorrows, to test themselves. Some have bought a name revered by the ages at the price of a glorious death; some, unconquerable under torture, have shown others by their example that virtue cannot be defeated by evils.[9]

Quae quam recte atque disposite et ex eorum bono quibus accedere uidentur fiant, nulla dubitatio est. Nam illud quoque, quod improbis nunc tristia nunc optata proueniunt, ex eisdem ducitur causis; ac de tristibus quidem nemo miratur, quod eos male meritos omnes existimant. Quorum quidem supplicia tum ceteros ab sceleribus deterrent, tum ipsos quibus inuehuntur emendant; laeta uero magnum bonis argumentum loquuntur, quid de huiusmodi felicitate debeant iudicare quam famulari saepe improbis cernant. In qua re illud etiam dispensari credo, quod est forsitan alicuius tam praeceps atque inportuna natura ut eum in scelera potius exacerbare possit rei familiaris inopia; huius morbo prouidentia collatae pecuniae remedio medetur.

There is no doubt how rightly and in what good order these things are done, and for the good of those to whom they seem to happen. For that other fact, too—that the wicked meet now with sorrows, now with what they desire—derives from the same causes. As for their sorrows, no one wonders, since everyone thinks they deserve ill. Their punishments both deter others from crimes and correct the very people on whom they are inflicted. Their joys, on the other hand, speak a great lesson to the good about what they should think of this kind of prosperity, which they often see serving the wicked. In this I believe something else is also being arranged: perhaps someone's nature is so headlong and unruly that poverty at home might rather provoke him into crime; providence cures this man's disease with the remedy of money bestowed on him.

Hic foedatam probris conscientiam exspectans et se cum fortuna sua comparans, forsitan pertimescit ne cuius ei iucundus usus est, sit tristis amissio. Mutabit igitur mores ac dum fortunam metuit amittere, nequitiam derelinquit. Alios in cladem meritam praecipitauit indigne acta felicitas; quibusdam permissum puniendi ius, ut exercitii bonis et malis esset causa supplicii. Nam ut probis atque improbis nullum foedus est, ita ipsi inter se improbi nequeunt conuenire. Quidni, cum a semet ipsis discerpentibus conscientiam uitiis quisque dissentiat faciantque saepe, quae cum gesserint non fuisse gerenda decernant? Ex quo saepe summa illa prouidentia protulit insigne miraculum, ut malos mali bonos facerent. Nam dum iniqua sibi a pessimis quidam perpeti uidentur, noxiorum odio flagrantes ad uirtutis frugem rediere, dum se eis dissimiles student esse quos oderant. Sola

This man, looking at his conscience stained with disgrace and comparing himself with his fortune, perhaps grows afraid that the loss of what he enjoys using may be painful. So he will change his ways and, while he fears to lose his fortune, he abandons his wickedness. Others have been thrown headlong into a deserved disaster by prosperity they did not deserve. To some the right of punishing has been granted, so that it might be a cause of exercise for the good and of punishment for the wicked. For just as there is no treaty between the good and the wicked, so the wicked cannot agree even among themselves. How could they, when each is at odds with himself, as his vices tear his conscience apart, and they often do things which, once done, they decide should not have been done? From this that highest providence has often produced a remarkable wonder:

9 The source of this Greek verse is unidentified.

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	that the wicked have made wicked men good. For some, when they think they are suffering injustice at the hands of the worst people, burn with hatred of the guilty and return to the fruit of virtue, striving to be unlike those they hated.
est enim diuina uis cui mala quoque bona sint, cum eis competenter utendo alicuius boni elicit effectum. Ordo enim quidam cuncta complectitur, ut quod adsignata ordinis ratione decesserit, hoc licet in alium, tamen ordinem relabatur, ne quid in regno prouidentiae liceat temeritati. ἀργαλέον δέ με ταῦτα θεὸν ὥς πάντ' ἀγορεύειν Neque enim fas est homini cunctas diuinae operae machinas uel ingenio conprehendere uel explicare sermone. Hoc tantum perspexisse sufficiat, quod naturarum omnium proditor deus idem ad bonum dirigens cuncta disponat, dumque ea quae protulit in sui similitudinem retinere festinat, malum omne de reipublicae suae terminis per fatalis seriem necessitatis eliminet. Quo fit ut quae in terris abundare creduntur, si disponentem prouidentiam spectes, nihil usquam mali esse perpendas.	For it is only divine power for which even evils are good, since by using them fittingly it draws out the effect of some good. For a certain order embraces all things, so that whatever departs from the principle of order assigned to it slips back into order—another order, perhaps, but order—so that nothing in the kingdom of providence may be left to chance. ἀργαλέον δέ με ταῦτα θεὸν ὥς πάντ' ἀγορεύειν [but it is hard for me to tell all this as if I were a god]. For it is not right for a human being either to grasp with his intellect or to set out in words all the machinery of the divine work. Let it be enough to have seen only this: that God, the maker of all natures, also orders all things, directing them to the good; and while he hastens to keep the things he has brought forth in his own likeness, he banishes all evil from the boundaries of his commonwealth through the chain of fated necessity. So it is that, although evils are believed to abound on earth, if you look at the providence that orders them, you will judge that there is no evil anywhere.[10]
Sed uideo te iam dudum et pondere quaestionis oneratum et rationis prolixitate fatigatum aliquam carminis exspectare dulcedinem. Accipe igitur haustum quo refectus firmior in ulteriora, contendas."	But I see that you have long been weighed down by the weight of the question and wearied by the length of the argument, and are waiting for some sweetness of song. Take, then, a draught, so that, refreshed by it, you may press on more firmly to what lies further.

POEM 6: THE CONCORD OF THE UNIVERSE

Love holds the stars, seasons and elements in order under their maker.

LATIN	ENGLISH
4.M6 Si uis celsi iura tonantis Pura sollers cernere mente, Aspice summi culmina caeli. Illic iusto foedere rerum Veterem seruant sidera pacem. Non sol rutilo concitus igne Gelidum Phoebes impedit axem Nec quae summo uertice mundi Flectit rapidos Vrsa meatus.	If you would discern the laws of the Thunderer on high with a pure and skillful mind, look up at the summits of highest heaven. There, by a just covenant of things, the stars keep their ancient peace. The sun, driven by its ruddy fire, does not hinder Phoebe's cold axle; nor does the Bear, which at the topmost height of

10 Homer, *Iliad* 12.176.

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Numquam occiduo lota profundo Cetera cernens sidera mergi Cupit oceano tingere flammas. Semper uicibus temporis aequis Vesper seras nuntiat umbras Reuehitque diem Lucifer almum. Sic aeternos reficit cursus Alternus amor, sic astrigeris Bellum discors exulat oris. Haec concordia temperat aequis Elementa modis, ut pugnantia Vicibus cedant umida siccis Iungantque fidem frigora flammis Pendulus ignis surgat in altum Terraeque graues pondere sidant.	the world turns its swift courses, never bathed in the western deep, though it sees the other stars sink, long to dip its flames in Ocean. Always, at equal turns of time, the Evening Star announces the late shadows and the Morning Star brings back the kindly day. So mutual love renews their eternal courses; so from the starry regions warring discord is banished. This concord tempers the elements in equal measures, so that, though they fight, wet things yield in turn to dry, cold keeps faith with flame, hovering fire rises on high, and heavy earth sinks down by its weight.[11]
/ Isdem causis uere tepenti Spirat florifer annus odores, Aestas Cererem feruida siccat, Remeat pomis grauis autumnus, Hiemem defluus inrigat imber Haec temperies alit ac profert Quidquid uitam spirat in orbe. Eadem rapiens condit et aufert Obitu mergens orta supremo. Sedet interea conditor altus Rerumque regens flectit habenas Rex et dominus fons et origo Lex et sapiens arbiter aequi Et quae motu concitat ire. Sistit retrahens ac uaga firmat. Nam nisi rectos reuocans itus Flexos iterum cogat in orbes, Quae nunc stabilis continet ordo Dissaepta suo fonte fatiscant.	/ By the same causes, in warm spring the flower-bearing year breathes out its scents, burning summer parches Ceres' grain, autumn returns heavy with fruit, and falling rain waters the winter. This tempering feeds and brings forth whatever breathes life in the world; the same, seizing, hides and takes away, drowning in final death all that has risen. Meanwhile the Maker sits on high, and, ruling all things, steers them by the reins: king and lord, fountain and origin, law and wise judge of what is right. What he stirs to go in motion he halts, drawing it back, and steadies what wanders. For unless he called back their straight paths and forced them again into curving orbits, the things a stable order now holds together would fall apart, cut off from their source.
/ Hic est cunctis communis amor Repetuntque boni fine teneri, Quia non aliter durare queant, Nisi conuerso rursus amore Refluant causae quae dedit esse.	/ This is the love shared by all things: they seek to be held by the goal of the good, since they could not otherwise endure unless, turning back in love, they flowed again to the cause that gave them being.

11 The Thunderer is a classical title of Jupiter, here used of God. The Bear (Ursa Major) never sets below the horizon in Mediterranean latitudes.

PROSE 7: ALL FORTUNE IS GOOD

Every fortune rewards, trains, corrects or punishes, so all fortune is good.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
4.P7	"Iamne igitur uides quid haec omnia quae diximus consequatur? "Quidnam? inquam. "Omnem," inquit, "bonam prorsus esse fortunam." "Et qui id," inquam, "fieri potest?" "Attende," inquit. "Cum omnis fortuna uel iucunda uel aspera tum remunerandi exercendiue bonos tum puniendi corrigendiue improbos causa deferatur, omnis bona quam uel iustam constat esse uel utilem." "Nimis quidem," inquam, "uera ratio et si quam paulo ante docuisti prouidentiam fatumue considerem, firmis uiribus nixa sententia. Sed eam si placet inter eas quas inopinabiles paulo ante posuisti numeremus. "Qui? inquit. "Quia id hominum sermo communis usurpat et quidem crebro quorundam malam esse fortunam." "Visne igitur," inquit, "paulisper uulgi sermonibus accedamus, ne nimium uelut ab humanitatis usu recessisse uideamur?" "Vt placet," inquam. "Nonne igitur bonum censes esse quod prodest?	"Do you see, then, what follows from all that we have said?" "What?" I asked. "That all fortune," she said, "is entirely good." "And how," I said, "can that be?" "Pay attention," she said. "Since all fortune, whether pleasant or harsh, is bestowed either to reward or to exercise the good, or to punish or correct the wicked, all fortune is good, since it is plainly either just or useful." "Your reasoning is very true indeed," I said, "and if I consider the providence and fate you taught me a little while ago, it is a view that rests on firm strength. But, if you please, let us count it among those you set down a little earlier as contrary to opinion." "Why?" she asked. "Because ordinary human speech says, and says often, that some people have bad fortune." "Would you like us, then," she said, "to draw near to the language of the crowd for a little, so that we do not seem to have withdrawn too far from human usage?" "As you please," I said. "Do you not judge that what is beneficial is good?"[12]
	"Ita est," inquam, "Quae uero aut exercet aut corrigit, prodest?" "Fateor," inquam. "Bona igitur? "Quidni? "Sed haec eorum est qui uel in uirtute positi contra aspera bellum gerunt, uel a uitiis declinantes uirtutis iter arripiunt." "Negare," inquam, "nequeo." "Quid uero iucunda, quae in praemium tribuitur bonis, num uulgus malam esse decernit?" "Nequaquam; uerum uti est ita quoque esse optimam censet." "Quid reliqua, quae cum sit aspera, iusto supplicio malos coercet, num bonam populus putat?" "Immo omnium," inquam, "quae excogitari possunt, iudicat esse miserrimam." "Vide igitur ne opinionem populi sequentes quiddam ualde inopinabile confecerimus. "Quid? inquam.	"That is so," I said. "And what exercises or corrects is beneficial?" "I admit it," I said. "Good, then?" "Of course." "But this is the fortune of those who, either established in virtue, are waging war against hardship, or, turning away from vices, are setting out on the road of virtue." "I cannot deny it," I said. "And what of pleasant fortune, which is given as a reward to the good—surely the crowd does not judge it bad?" "Not at all; rather, it thinks it the best, as indeed it is." "And the rest—the fortune which, being harsh, restrains the wicked with just punishment—surely the people do not think that good?" "On the contrary," I said, "it judges it the most miserable of all that can be imagined." "Take care, then, that by following the opinion of the people we have not arrived at something very contrary to opinion." "What?" I asked.
	"Ex his enim," ait, "quae concessa sunt, euenit eorum quidem qui uel sunt uel in possessione uel in prouectu uel in adeptione uirtutis, omnem quaecumque sit bonam, in improbitate uero manentibus omnem pessimam esse fortunam." "Hoc," inquam, "uerum est, tametsi nemo	"From what has been granted," she said, "it follows that for those who are in possession of virtue, or advancing in it, or attaining it, all fortune, whatever it may be, is good; while for those who remain in wickedness, all fortune is the very

12 Latin *inopinabilis*, Cicero's word for the Greek *paradoxa*: the surprising conclusions of 4.P4.

LATIN	ENGLISH
audeat confiteri." "Quare," inquit, "ita uir sapiens moleste ferre non debet, quotiens in fortunae certamen adducitur, ut uirum fortem non decet indignari, quotiens increpuit bellicus tumultus; utrique enim, huic quidem gloriae propagandae illi uero conformandae sapientiae, difficultas ipsa materia est. Ex quo etiam uirtus uocatur quod suis uiribus nitens non superetur aduersis. Neque enim uos in prouectu positi uirtutis diffluere deliciis et emarcescere uoluptate uenistis. Proelium cum omni fortuna nimis acre conseritis, ne uos aut tristis opprimat aut iucunda corrumpat. Firmis medium uiribus occupate!	worst." "That is true," I said, "though no one would dare to admit it." "Therefore," she said, "the wise man should not be aggrieved whenever he is brought into a contest with fortune, just as it does not befit a brave man to be indignant whenever the din of war resounds. For both of them, difficulty itself is the material: for the brave man, of spreading his glory; for the wise man, of shaping his wisdom. That is also why virtue is so called: because, relying on its own strength, it is not overcome by adversity. For you who are set on the path of progress in virtue have not come here to dissolve in luxuries and wither away in pleasure. You join a very fierce battle with every kind of fortune, so that harsh fortune does not crush you nor pleasant fortune corrupt you. Hold the middle ground with firm strength![13]
Quidquid aut infra subsistit aut ultra progreditur, habet contemptum felicitatis, non habet praemium laboris. In uestra enim situm manu qualem uobis fortunam formare malitis; omnis enim quae uidetur aspera nisi aut exercet aut corrigit punit."	"Whatever falls short of it or goes beyond it shows contempt for happiness but gains no reward for its toil. For it lies in your own hands what kind of fortune you prefer to shape for yourselves; for all fortune that seems harsh, unless it exercises or corrects, punishes."

POEM 7: THE LABORS OF HEROES

Agamemnon, Ulysses and Hercules won glory through hardship.

LATIN	ENGLISH
4.M7 Bella bis quinis operatus annis Vltor Atrides Phrygiae ruinis Fratris amissos thalamos piauit; Ille dum Graiae dare uela classi Optat et uentos redimit cruore, Exuit patrem miserumque tristis Foederat natae iugulum sacerdos, Fleuit amissos Ithacus sodales Quos ferus uasto recubans in antro Mersit inmani Polyphemus aluo; Sed tamen caeco furibundus ore Gaudium maestis lacrimis rependit. Herculem duri celebrant labores. Ille Centauros domuit superbos, Abstulit saeuo spolium leoni Fixit et certis uolucres sagittis. Poma cernenti rapuit draconi Aureo laeuam grauior metallo, Cerberum traxit triplici catena.	Waging wars for twice five years, the avenger, Atreus' son, by the ruin of Phrygia atoned for his brother's lost marriage bed. When he wished to give sails to the Greek fleet and bought the winds with blood, he put off the father, and, a grim priest, made a pact with his poor daughter's throat. The Ithacan wept for his lost comrades, whom savage Polyphemus, lying in his vast cave, buried in his monstrous belly; but, raging with his blinded face, the Cyclops paid for that joy with mournful tears. Hercules is famed for his hard labors. He tamed the proud Centaurs, took the spoil from the savage lion, and pierced the birds with unerring arrows. He snatched the apples from the watching dragon, his left hand heavier with the golden metal; he dragged Cerberus on a triple chain.

13 The pun links Latin virtus (virtue, originally manly courage) with vires, "strength".

LATIN	ENGLISH
Victor immitem posuisse fertur Pabulum saeuis dominum quadrigis.	Victorious, he is said to have set their cruel master as fodder before the fierce team of horses.[14]
/ Hydra combusto periit ueneno, Fronte turpatus Achelous amnis Ora demersit pudibunda ripis. Strauit Antaeum Libycis harenis, Cacus Euandri satiauit iras Quosque pressurus foret altus orbis Saetiger spumis umeros notauit. Vltimus caelum labor inreflexo Sustulit collo pretiumque rursus Vltimi caelum meruit laboris. Ite nunc fortes ubi celsa magni Ducit exempli uia! Cur inertes Terga nudatis? Superata tellus Sidera donat.	/ The Hydra perished, its poison burned away; the river Achelous, his brow disfigured, sank his shamed face into his banks. He laid Antaeus low on the Libyan sands; Cacus sated the wrath of Evander; and the bristling boar flecked with foam the shoulders on which the high heavens were to press. His last labor: on his unbending neck he held up the sky, and in return won the sky as the prize of that last labor. Go now, you brave, where the lofty road of a great example leads! Why, idle, do you turn and bare your backs? The earth, once overcome, gives you the stars.[15]

14 Agamemnon, son of Atreus, led the Trojan War to recover Helen, wife of his brother Menelaus, and sacrificed his daughter Iphigenia for a fair wind; the Ithacan is Ulysses. Hercules fed the Thracian king Diomedes to his own man-eating mares.
15 Episodes from the labors of Hercules: the river-god Achelous lost a horn to him, the giant Antaeus was crushed, the thief Cacus killed at the site of Evander's Rome, and the Erymanthian boar carried off; he held up the sky for Atlas and was finally deified.

Book V

Foreknowledge and freedom
Chance, free will, and how God knows the future without compelling it.

PROSE 1: CHANCE

Philosophy defines chance as the unexpected meeting of causes set in motion for other ends.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
5.P1	DIXERAT orationisque cursum ad alia quaedam tractanda atque expedienda uertebat. Tum ego: "Recta quidem," inquam, "exhortatio tuaque prorsus auctoritate dignissima, sed quod tu dudum de prouidentia quaestionem pluribus aliis implicitam esse dixisti, re experior. Quaero enim an esse aliquid omnino et quidnam esse casum arbitrere." Tum illa "Festino," inquit, "debitum promissionis absoluere uiamque tibi qua patriam reueharis aperire. Haec autem etsi perutilia cognitu tamen a propositi nostri tramite paulisper auersa sunt, uerendumque est ne deuiis fatigatus ad emetiendum rectum iter sufficere non possis." "Ne id," inquam, "prorsus uereare. Nam quietis mihi loco fuerit ea quibus maxime delector agnoscere, simul cum omne disputationis tuae latus indubitata fide constiterit, nihil de sequentibus ambigatur. Tum illa.	She had finished, and was turning the course of her speech to treat and settle certain other matters. Then I said: "Your exhortation is right, and wholly worthy of your authority. But what you said a while ago—that the question of providence is entangled with many others—I am finding true in practice. For I ask whether you think chance is anything at all, and if so, what it is." Then she said: "I am hurrying to pay the debt of my promise and to open for you the road by which you may be carried back to your homeland. These matters, though very useful to know, turn aside a little from the path of our purpose, and it is to be feared that, worn out by detours, you may not have the strength to travel the straight road to its end." "Do not be afraid of that at all," I said. "For it will be a rest for me to come to know the things in which I most delight; and at the same time, once every side of your argument stands firm with undoubted certainty, nothing that follows will be in doubt." Then she replied.
	"Morem," inquit, "geram tibi," simulque sic orsa est: "Si quidem," inquit, "aliquis euentum temerario motu nullaque causarum conexione productum casum esse definiat, nihil omnino casum esse confirmo et praeter subiectae rei significationem inanem prorsus uocem esse decerno. Quis enim coercente in ordinem cuncta deo locus esse ullus temeritati reliquus potest? Nam nihil ex nihilo exsistere uera sententia est, cui nemo umquam ueterum refragatus est, quamquam id illi non de operante principio, sed de materiali subiecto hoc omnium de natura rationum quasi quoddam iecerint fundamentum. At si nullis ex causis aliquid oriatur, id de nihilo ortum esse uidebitur. Quod si hoc fieri nequit, ne casum quidem huiusmodi esse possibile est qualem paulo ante definiuimus."	"I will do as you wish," she said, and at once began thus: "If someone defines chance as an event produced by random motion and by no chain of causes, I affirm that chance is nothing at all, and I judge it to be an utterly empty word, signifying no real thing beneath it. For what place can be left for randomness when God constrains all things into order? That nothing comes from nothing is a true saying, which none of the ancients ever contradicted—although they laid it down, as a kind of foundation for all their reasoning about nature, with reference not to the active principle but to the material substrate. But if something arises from no causes, it will seem to have arisen from nothing. And if this cannot happen, then chance

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	of the kind we defined a moment ago cannot exist either."
"Quid igitur," inquam, "nihilne est quod uel casus uel fortuitum iure appellari queat? An est aliquid, tametsi uulgus lateat, cui uocabula ista conueniant?" "Aristoteles meus id," inquit, "in Physicis et breui et ueri propinqua ratione definiuit." "Quonam," inquam "modo?" "Quotiens," ait, "aliquid cuiuspiam rei gratia geritur aliudque quibusdam de causis quam quod intendebatur obtingit, casus uocatur, ut si quis colendi agri causa fodiens humum defossi auri pondus inueniat. Hoc igitur fortuito quidem creditur accidisse, uerum non de nihilo est; nam proprias causas habet quarum inprouisus inopinatusque concursus casum uidetur operatus. Nam nisi cultor agri humum foderet, nisi eo loci pecuniam suam depositor obruisset, aurum non esset inuentum. Haec sunt igitur fortuiti causa compendii, quod ex obuiis sibi et confluentibus causis, non ex gerentis intentione prouenit.	"What then," I said, "is there nothing that can rightly be called chance or accident? Or is there something, though hidden from the crowd, to which these words apply?" "My Aristotle," she said, "defined it in his *Physics*, with an account both brief and close to the truth." "In what way?" I asked. "Whenever," she said, "something is done for the sake of some end, and, for certain reasons, something other than what was intended occurs, it is called chance: as if someone, digging the ground in order to till a field, were to find a buried mass of gold. This is believed to have happened by chance, yet it does not come from nothing; for it has its own causes, whose unforeseen and unexpected coming-together seems to have produced the chance. For if the farmer had not dug the ground, and if the one who hid his money had not buried it in that spot, the gold would not have been found. These, then, are the causes of the chance gain, which comes from causes meeting and flowing together, not from the intention of the one acting.[1]
Neque enim uel qui aurum obruit uel qui agrum exercuit ut ea pecunia reperiretur intendit; sed uti dixi, quo ille obruit hunc fodisse conuenit atque concurrit. Licet igitur definire casum esse inopinatum ex confluentibus causis in his quae ob aliquid geruntur euentum; concurrere uero atque confluere causas facit ordo ille ineuitabili conexione procedens, qui de prouidentiae fonte descendens cuncta suis locis temporibusque disponit."	"For neither the man who buried the gold nor the man who worked the field intended that the money should be found; but, as I said, it happened that where one had buried it, the other dug—the two coincided. We may therefore define chance as an unexpected event arising from causes that flow together, among things done for some purpose. And what makes causes meet and flow together is that order which proceeds by an inescapable chain of connection and, descending from the fountain of providence, arranges all things in their places and times."

POEM 1: THE TIGRIS AND EUPHRATES

Even chance follows a hidden law, like rivers flowing together.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
5.M1	Rupis Achaemeniae scopulis ubi uersa sequentum Pectoribus figit spicula pugna fugax, Tigris et Euphrates uno se fonte resoluunt Et mox abiunctis dissociantur aquis. Si coeant cursumque iterum reuocentur in unum, Confluat alterni quod trahit unda uadi;	Among the crags of the Achaemenian rock, where the fleeing fighter turns and fixes his arrows in the breasts of his pursuers, the Tigris and Euphrates spring from a single source

1 Aristotle discusses chance in *Physics*, Book 2, chapters 4–6.

LATIN	ENGLISH
Conuenient puppes et uulsi flumine trunci Mixtaque fortuitos implicet unda modos, Quos tamen ipsa uagos terrae decliuia casus Gurgitis et lapsi defluus ordo regit. Sic quae permissis fluitare uidetur habenis Fors patitur frenos ipsaque lege meat.	and soon part, their waters divided. If they were to meet and be called back again into one course, all that the waters of each stream carry would flow together; ships would meet, and trunks torn up by the flood, and the mingled waters would tangle in chance patterns; yet these wandering chances are governed by the very slope of the land and the downward order of the flowing stream. So chance, which seems to run with slackened reins, submits to the bridle and itself moves by law.[2]

PROSE 2: FREE WILL

Every rational being has free will, freest when it contemplates the divine mind.

LATIN	ENGLISH
5.P2 "Animaduerto," inquam, "idque, uti tu dicis, ita esse consentio. Sed in hac haerentium sibi serie causarum, estne ulla nostri arbitrii libertas an ipsos quoque humanorum motus animorum fatalis catena constringit?" "Est," inquit, "neque enim fuerit ulla rationalis natura quin eidem libertas adsit arbitrii. Nam quod ratione uti naturaliter potest id habet iudicium quo quidque discernat; per se igitur fugienda optandaue dinoscit. Quod uero quis optandum esse iudicat petit; refugit uero quod aestimat esse fugiendum. Quare quibus in ipsis inest ratio, inest etiam uolendi nolendique libertas. Sed hanc non in omnibus aequam esse constituo. Nam supernis diuinisque substantiis et perspicax iudicium et incorrupta uoluntas et efficax optatorum praesto est potestas.	"I see," I said, "and I agree that it is as you say. But in this series of causes bound to one another, do we have any free will, or does the chain of fate bind even the very motions of human minds?" "There is," she said, "for there could be no rational nature without free will being present to it. For whatever can naturally use reason has judgment, by which it discerns each thing; of itself, therefore, it distinguishes what is to be avoided and what desired. What someone judges to be desirable he seeks; what he considers should be avoided he flees. So in those who have reason within them there is also freedom to will and not to will. But I do not hold that this freedom is equal in all. For the higher, divine substances have clear-sighted judgment, uncorrupted will, and power ready at hand to bring about what they desire.
Humanas uero animas liberiores quidem esse necesse est cum se in mentis diuinae speculatione conseruant, minus uero cum dilabuntur ad corpora, minusque etiam, cum terrenis artubus colligantur. Extrema uero est seruitus, cum uitiis deditae rationis propriae possessione ceciderunt. Nam ubi oculos a summae luce ueritatis ad inferiora et tenebrosa deiecerint, mox inscitiae nube caligant, perniciosis turbantur affectibus quibus accedendo consentiendoque quam inuexere sibi adiuuant seruitutem et sunt quodam modo propria libertate captiuae. Quae tamen ille ab aeterno cuncta prospiciens	"Human souls, however, must be freer when they keep themselves in the contemplation of the divine mind, less free when they slip down into bodies, and less still when they are bound in earthly limbs. Their ultimate slavery comes when, given over to vices, they have fallen from possession of their own reason. For once they have cast their eyes down from the light of highest truth to what is lower and dark, they are soon clouded by the fog of ignorance and troubled by destructive passions; by yielding and consenting to these, they

2 Achaemenian means Persian; the fighter who shoots while fleeing is the Parthian horse-archer.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
	prouidentiae cernit intuitus et suis quaeque meritis praedestinata disponit."	add to the slavery they have brought upon themselves, and are, in a certain way, captives of their own freedom. Yet the gaze of providence, which looks forth on all things from eternity, sees these things, and disposes each, predestined according to its merits."

POEM 2: THE TRUE SUN

God sees all things, past, present and future, in one glance.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
5.M2	πάντ᾽ ἐφορᾶν καὶ πάντ᾽ ἐπακούειν Puro clarum lumine Phoebum Melliflui canit oris Homerus: Qui tamen intima uiscera terrae Non ualet aut pelagi radiorum Infirma perrumpere luce. Haud sic magni conditor orbis; Huic ex alto cuncta tuenti Nulla terrae mole resistunt, Non nox atris nubibus obstat. Quae sint, quae fuerint ueniantque Vno mentis cernit in ictu; Quem, quia respicit omnia solus, Verum possis dicere solem.	πάντ᾽ ἐφορᾶν καὶ πάντ᾽ ἐπακούειν ["he sees all things and hears all things"]: so, of Phoebus, bright with pure light, sings Homer of the honeyed voice. Yet he cannot break through to the inmost depths of the earth or the sea with the weak light of his rays. Not so the maker of the great world. As he looks upon all things from on high, no mass of earth resists him, no night with its black clouds stands in his way. What is, what has been, and what is to come he sees in one glance of the mind. Since he alone looks upon all things, you could call him the true sun.[3]

PROSE 3: FOREKNOWLEDGE AND FREEDOM

Boethius argues that divine foreknowledge seems to rule out free will, justice and prayer.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
5.P3	Tum ego: "En," inquam, "difficiliore rursus ambiguitate confundor." "Quaenam," inquit, "ista est? Iam enim quibus perturbere coniecto." "Nimium," inquam, "aduersari ac repugnare uidetur praenoscere uniuersa deum et esse ullum libertatis arbitrium. Nam si cuncta prospicit deus neque falli ullo modo potest, euenire necesse est quod prouidentia futurum esse praeuiderit. Quare si ab aeterno non facta hominum modo sed etiam consilia uoluntatesque praenoscit, nulla erit arbitrii libertas; neque enim uel factum aliud ullum uel quaelibet exsistere poterit uoluntas nisi quam nescia falli prouidentia diuina praesenserit. Nam si aliorsum quam prouisae sunt detorqueri ualent, non iam erit futuri firma praescientia, sed opinio potius incerta, quod de deo credere nefas iudico. Neque enim illam probo rationem	Then I said: "Look—I am thrown again into confusion by a still harder perplexity." "What is it?" she said. "For I already guess what troubles you." And I said: It seems far too contradictory and conflicting that God foreknows all things and that there is any free will. For if God foresees all things and cannot in any way be deceived, then what providence has foreseen will be must necessarily happen. So if from eternity he foreknows not only the deeds of human beings but also their plans and wishes, there will be no free will; for no deed and no wish of any kind can exist except what divine providence, which cannot be deceived, has perceived beforehand. For if things can be twisted in a direction other than the one foreseen, there will no longer be firm foreknowledge of the future, but

3 Homer uses the Greek phrase of the sun (*Iliad* 3.277, *Odyssey* 11.109). The Latin plays on solus, "alone", and sol, "sun".

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qua se quidam credunt hunc quaestionis nodum posse dissoluere.

Aiunt enim non ideo quid esse euenturum, quoniam id prouidentia futurum esse prospexerit, sed e contrario potius, quoniam quid futurum est, id diuinam prouidentiam latere non posse eoque modo necessarium hoc in contrariam relabi partem, neque enim necesse esse contingere quae prouidentur, sed necesse esse quae futura sunt prouideri — quasi uero quae cuius rei causa sit praescientiane futurorum necessitatis an futurorum necessitas prouidentiae laboretur, ac non illud demonstrare nitamur, quoquo modo sese habeat ordo causarum, necessarium esse euentum praescitarum rerum, etiam si praescientia futuris rebus eueniendi necessitatem non uideatur inferre. Etenim si quispiam sedeat, opinionem quae eum sedere coniectat ueram esse necesse est; atque e conuerso rursus, si de quopiam uera sit opinio quoniam sedet, eum sedere necesse est.

In utroque igitur necessitas inest, in hoc quidem sedendi, at uero in altero ueritatis. Sed non idcirco quisque sedet quoniam uera est opinio, sed haec potius uera est quoniam quempiam sedere praecessit. Ita cum causa ueritatis ex altera parte procedat, inest tamen communis in utraque necessitas Similia de prouidentia futurisque rebus ratiocinari patet. Nam etiam si idcirco quoniam futura sunt, prouidentur, non uero ideo quoniam prouidentur eueniunt, nihilo minus tamen ab deo uel uentura prouideri uel prouisa necesse est euenire, quod ad perimendam arbitrii libertatem solum satis est. Iam uero quam praeposterum est ut aeternae praescientiae temporalium rerum euentus causa esse dicatur! Quid est autem aliud arbitrari ideo deum futura quoniam sunt euentura prouidere, quam putare quae olim acciderunt causam summae illius esse prouidentiae?

Ad haec sicuti cum quid esse scio, id ipsum esse necesse est, ita cum quid futurum noui, id ipsum futurum esse necesse est. Sic fit igitur ut euentus praescitae rei nequeat euitari. Postremo si quid aliquis aliorsum atque sese res habet existimet, id non modo scientia non est,

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rather uncertain opinion—and to believe that of God I judge impious. Nor do I approve the argument by which some believe they can untie this knot of the question.

For they say that it is not because providence has foreseen that something will be that it is going to happen, but rather the contrary: because something is going to be, it cannot be hidden from divine providence; and in this way the necessity slips back to the other side. For, they say, it is not necessary that what is foreseen should happen, but it is necessary that what will be should be foreseen—as if the difficulty were which is the cause of which, whether foreknowledge of the future is the cause of its necessity, or the necessity of the future the cause of providence; and as if we were not striving to show that, however the order of causes stands, the outcome of things foreknown is necessary, even if foreknowledge does not seem to impose on future things the necessity of happening. For if someone is sitting, the opinion that supposes he is sitting must be true; and conversely, if the opinion about someone that he is sitting is true, he must be sitting.

In both cases, then, there is necessity: in the one, the necessity of sitting; in the other, of truth. But no one sits because the opinion is true; rather, the opinion is true because someone's sitting came first. So, although the cause of the truth comes from one side, there is nevertheless a necessity common to both. Plainly we can reason in the same way about providence and future things. For even if they are foreseen because they are going to be, and do not happen because they are foreseen, it is nonetheless necessary either that things to come be foreseen by God or that things foreseen happen—and this alone is enough to destroy free will. And how preposterous it is to say that the outcome of temporal things is the cause of eternal foreknowledge! Yet what else is it to think that God foresees future things because they are going to happen, than to suppose that things which happen at some point in time are the cause of that highest providence?

Besides, just as when I know that something is, it must necessarily be, so when I know that something will be, it must necessarily be going to be. So it follows that the outcome of a thing foreknown cannot be avoided. Finally, if anyone thinks a

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sed est opinio fallax ab scientiae ueritate longe diuersa. Quare si quid ita futurum est ut eius certus ac necessarius non sit euentus, id euenturum esse praesciri qui poterit? Sicut enim scientia ipsa impermixta est falsitati, ita id quod ab ea concipitur esse aliter atque concipitur nequit. Ea namque causa est cur mendacio scientia careat, quod se ita rem quamque habere necesse est uti eam sese habere scientia comprehendit. Quid igitur?

Quonam modo deus haec incerta futura praenoscit? Nam si ineuitabiliter euentura censet quae etiam non euenire possibile est, fallitur; quod non sentire modo nefas est, sed etiam uoce proferre, At si ita uti sunt, ita ea futura esse decernit, ut aeque uel fieri ea uel non fieri posse cognoscat, quae est haec praescientia quae nihil certum nihil stabile comprehendit? Aut quid hoc refert uaticinio illo ridiculo Tiresiae? Quidquid dicam, aut erit aut non. Quid etiam diuina prouidentia humana opinione praestiterit si uti homines incerta iudicat quorum est incertus euentus? Quod si apud illum rerum omnium certissimum fontem nihil incerti esse potest, certus eorum est euentus quae futura firmiter ille praescierit.

Quare nulla est humanis consiliis actionibusque libertas quas diuina mens sine falsitatis errore cuncta prospiciens ad unum alligat et constringit euentum. Quo semel recepto quantus occasus humanarum rerum consequatur liquet. Frustra enim bonis malisque praemia poenaeue proponuntur quae nullus meruit liber ac uoluntarius motus animorum. Idque omnium uidebitur iniquissimum quod nunc aequissimum iudicatur uel puniri improbos uel remunerari probos quos ad alterutrum non propria mittit uoluntas, sed futuri cogit certa necessitas. Nec uitia igitur nec uirtutes quidquam fuerint, sed omnium meritorum potius mixta atque indiscreta confusio. Quoque nihil sceleratius excogitari potest, cum ex prouidentia rerum omnis ordo ducatur nihilque consiliis liceat humanis, fit ut uitia quoque nostra ad bonorum omnium referantur auctorem. Igitur nec sperandi aliquid nec deprecandi ulla ratio est.

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thing is otherwise than it is, that is not only not knowledge, but false opinion, far removed from the truth of knowledge. So if something is going to be in such a way that its outcome is not certain and necessary, how could anyone know beforehand that it will happen? For just as knowledge itself is unmixed with falsehood, so what is grasped by it cannot be otherwise than as it is grasped. That is why knowledge is free of falsehood: because each thing must be just as knowledge grasps it to be. What then?

How does God foreknow these uncertain future things? For if he judges that things will inevitably happen which it is possible may not happen, he is deceived—which it is impious not only to think but even to say aloud. But if he decides that they will be just as they are, so that he knows they can equally happen or not happen, what is this foreknowledge, which grasps nothing certain, nothing stable? Or how is it different from that ridiculous prophecy of Tiresias: "Whatever I say will either be or not be"? And how would divine providence surpass human opinion if, like human beings, it judged uncertain those things whose outcome is uncertain? But if there can be nothing uncertain in him, that most certain source of all things, then the outcome of those things which he has firmly foreknown is certain.[4]

Therefore there is no freedom in human plans and actions, since the divine mind, foreseeing all things without the error of falsehood, binds and constrains them to a single outcome. Once this is accepted, it is plain how great a collapse of human affairs follows. For in vain are rewards and punishments set before the good and the wicked, since no free and voluntary movement of their minds has earned them. And what is now judged most just—that the wicked are punished or the good rewarded—will seem the most unjust of all, since it is not their own will that sends them to either, but the fixed necessity of what is to come that compels them. So neither vices nor virtues will be anything at all; rather, there will be a mixed and undistinguished confusion of all deserts. And—nothing more wicked than this can be imagined—since the whole order of things is derived from providence, and nothing is left to hu-

4 The mock-prophecy is put in the mouth of the blind seer Tiresias by Horace (*Satires* 2.5.59).

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	man plans, it follows that even our vices are referred to the author of all good things. So there is no reason either to hope for anything or to pray against anything.
Quid enim uel speret quisque uel etiam deprecetur, quando optanda omnia series indeflexa conectit? Auferetur igitur unicum illud inter homines deumque commercium sperandi scilicet ac deprecandi. Si quidem iustae humilitatis pretio inaestimabilem uicem diuinae gratiae promeremur, qui solus modus est quo cum deo colloqui homines posse uideantur illique inaccessae luci prius quoque quam impetrent ipsa supplicandi ratione coniungi. Quae si recepta futurorum necessitate nihil uirium habere credantur, quid erit quo summo illi rerum principi conecti atque adhaerere possimus? Quare necesse erit humanum genus, uti paulo ante cantabas, dissaeptum atque disiunctum suo fonte fatiscere."	For what could anyone hope for, or even pray against, when an unbending chain links together everything that can be wished for? So that one and only exchange between human beings and God will be taken away: hoping, that is, and praying. For it is by the price of rightful humility that we earn the priceless return of divine grace; this is the only way in which human beings seem able to converse with God, and to be joined, by the very act of supplication, to that unapproachable light even before they obtain what they ask. But if, once the necessity of future things is accepted, hopes and prayers are believed to have no force, what will there be by which we could be connected to that highest principle of all things and cling to it? Therefore the human race must, as you were singing a little while ago, be cut off and separated from its source and fall apart.[5]

POEM 3: THE MIND'S SEARCH FOR TRUTH

How can two truths conflict, and how can the mind seek what it does not know?

LATIN	ENGLISH
5.M3 Quaenam discors foedera rerum Causa resoluit? Quis tanta deus Veris statuit bella duobus, Vt quae carptim singula constent Eadem nolint mixta iugari? An nulla est discordia ueris Semperque sibi certa cohaerent? Sed mens caecis obruta membris Nequit oppressi luminis igne Rerum tenues noscere nexus. Sed cur tanto flagrat amore Veri tectas reperire notas? Scitne quod appetit anxia nosse? Sed quis nota scire laborat? At si nescit, quid caeca petit? Quis enim quidquam nescius optet Aut quis ualeat nescita sequi? Quoue inueniat, quisque repertam Queat ignarus noscere formam? An cum mentem cerneret altam, Pariter summam et singula norat?	What discordant cause has loosed the covenants of things? What god has set such great wars between two truths, so that things that stand firm one by one refuse to be yoked together when combined? Or is there no discord between truths, and do they always hold together, sure of each other? But the mind, buried in blind limbs, cannot, by the fire of its smothered light, know the fine connections of things. But why does it burn with such love to find the hidden marks of truth? Does it know what it anxiously longs to know? But who labors to know what is known? And if it does not know, what does it blindly seek? For who would desire anything he does not know, or who could pursue things unknown? Or where would he find them? And who, in ignorance, could recognize the form he found?

5 Boethius echoes the closing lines of 4.M6.

LATIN	ENGLISH
	Or, when it beheld the lofty mind, did it know the whole and the parts alike?
/ Nunc membrorum condita nube Non in totum est oblita sui Summamque tenet singula perdens. Igitur quisquis uera requirit, Neutro est habitu; nam neque nouit Nec penitus tamen omnia nescit, Sed quam retinens meminit summam Consulit alte uisa retractans, Vt seruatis queat oblitas Addere partes.	/ Now, hidden in the cloud of the limbs, it has not wholly forgotten itself; it keeps the whole, though it loses the parts. So whoever searches for the truth is in neither condition: for he neither knows, nor yet is wholly ignorant of everything; but, keeping hold of the whole which he remembers, he consults it, going back over what he saw on high, so that to what he has kept he may add the parts he has forgotten.

PROSE 4: WAYS OF KNOWING

Things are known according to the power of the knower, not the nature of the thing known.

LATIN	ENGLISH
5.P4 Tum illa: "Vetus," inquit, "haec est de prouidentia querela Marcoque Tullio, cum diuinationem distribuit, uehementer agitata tibique ipsi res diu prorsus multumque quaesita, sed haud quaquam ab ullo uestrum hactenus satis diligenter ac firmiter expedita. Cuius caliginis causa est, quod humanae ratiocinationis motus ad diuinae praescientiae simplicitatem non potest admoueri, quae si ullo modo cogitari queat, nihil prorsus relinquetur ambigui. Quod ita demum patefacere atque expedire temptabo, si prius ea quibus moueris expendero. Quaero enim, cur illam soluentium rationem minus efficacem putes, quae quia praescientiam non esse futuris rebus causam necessitatis existimat, nihil impediri praescientia arbitrii libertatem putat. Num enim tu aliunde argumentum futurorum necessitatis trahis, nisi quod ea quae praesciuntur non euenire non possunt?	Then she said: "This is an old complaint about providence. It was vigorously pursued by Marcus Tullius when he classified the kinds of divination, and you yourself have long and thoroughly investigated it; but so far it has by no means been resolved carefully and firmly enough by any of you. The cause of this obscurity is that the movement of human reasoning cannot be brought close to the simplicity of divine foreknowledge; if that could in any way be conceived, no doubt at all would remain. I shall try to make this plain and resolve it, but only after I have first weighed the things that trouble you. I ask, then, why you think that solution less effective which holds that foreknowledge is not the cause of necessity for future things, and so thinks that free will is in no way hindered by foreknowledge. For do you draw your argument for the necessity of future things from anywhere else than from this: that things foreknown cannot fail to happen?[6]
Si igitur praenotio nullam futuris rebus adicit necessitatem, quod tu etiam paulo ante fatebare, quid est quod uoluntarii exitus rerum ad certum cogantur euentum? Etenim positionis gratia, ut quid consequatur aduertas, statuamus nullam esse praescientiam. Num igitur quantum ad hoc attinet, quae ex arbitrio eueniunt ad necessitatem cogantur? "Minime. "Statuamus iterum esse, sed nihil rebus necessitatis iniungere; manebit ut	"If, then, foreknowledge adds no necessity to future things—as you yourself admitted a little while ago—why should the voluntary outcomes of things be forced to a fixed result? For the sake of argument, so that you may see what follows, let us suppose there is no foreknowledge. Would the things that come about by free will, as far as this goes, be forced into necessity?" "Not at all." "Let us sup-

6 Cicero treated these questions in *On Divination* and *On Fate*.

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opinor eadem uoluntatis integra atque absoluta libertas. Sed praescientia, inquies, tametsi futuris eueniendi necessitas non est, signum tamen est necessario ea esse uentura. Hoc igitur modo, etiam si praecognitio non fuisset, necessarios futurorum exitus esse constaret. Omne etenim signum tantum quid sit ostendit, non uero efficit quod designat. Quare demonstrandum prius est nihil non ex necessitate contingere, ut praenotionem signum esse huius necessitatis appareat.

Alioquin si haec nulla est, ne illa quidem eius rei signum poterit esse quae non est. Iam uero probationem firma ratione subnixam constat non ex signis neque petitis extrinsecus argumentis sed ex conuenientibus necessariisque causis esse ducendam. Sed qui fieri potest ut ea non proueniant quae futura esse prouidentur? Quasi uero nos ea quae prouidentia futura esse praenoscit non esse euentum credamus ac non illud potius arbitremur, licet eueniant, nihil tamen ut euenirent sui natura necessitatis habuisse; quod hinc facile perpendas licebit. Plura etenim dum fiunt subiecta oculis intuemur, ut ea quae in quadrigis moderandis atque flectendis facere spectantur aurigae atque ad hunc modum cetera. Num igitur quidquam illorum ita fieri necessitas ulla compellit?" "Minime. Frustra enim esset artis effectus, si omnia coacta mouerentur."

"Quae igitur cum fiunt carent exsistendi necessitate, eadem prius quam fiant sine necessitate futura sunt. Quare sunt quaedam euentura quorum exitus ab omni necessitate sit absolutus. Nam illud quidem nullum arbitror esse dicturum, quod quae nunc fiunt, prius quam fierent, euentura non fuerint. Haec igitur etiam praecognita liberos habent euentus. Nam sicut scientia praesentium rerum nihil his quae fiunt, ita praescientia futurorum nihil his quae uentura sunt necessitatis importat. Sed hoc, inquis, ipsum dubitatur, an earum rerum quae necessarios exitus non habent ulla possit esse praenotio. Dissonare etenim uidentur putasque si praeuideantur consequi necessitatem, si necessitas desit minime praesciri nihilque scientia comprehendi posse nisi certum; quod si quae incerti sunt exitus ea quasi

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pose, again, that foreknowledge exists, but imposes no necessity on things; the same free will, I think, will remain whole and unconditioned. 'But,' you will say, 'foreknowledge, even if it is not a necessity of happening for future things, is nonetheless a sign that they will necessarily come about.' In that case, then, even if there had been no foreknowledge, it would be established that the outcomes of future things are necessary. For every sign only shows what is; it does not bring about what it signifies. So it must first be shown that nothing happens except by necessity, so that foreknowledge may appear to be a sign of this necessity.

"Otherwise, if there is no such necessity, foreknowledge cannot be a sign of a thing that does not exist. Moreover, it is agreed that a proof resting on firm reasoning must be drawn not from signs, nor from arguments fetched from outside, but from fitting and necessary causes. 'But how can it be that things foreseen as future do not come about?' As if we believed that the things providence foreknows to be future will not happen, and did not rather judge that, although they do happen, they had nothing in their own nature that made it necessary for them to happen. You may easily weigh this from the following. We see many things before our eyes while they are being done, such as what charioteers are seen to do in guiding and turning their four-horse chariots, and other things of that kind. Does any necessity compel any of these to be done as they are?" "Not at all. For the effect of skill would be in vain if everything moved under compulsion."

Then things which, when they happen, lack the necessity of existing, were, before they happened, going to be without necessity. So there are some things going to happen whose outcome is free from all necessity. For I do not think anyone will say that things now happening were not going to happen before they happened. These things, then, even though foreknown, have free outcomes. For just as knowledge of present things imposes no necessity on what is happening, so foreknowledge of the future imposes none on what is to come. "But this," you say, "is the very question—whether there can be any foreknowledge of things that do not have necessary outcomes." For these ideas seem out of tune with each other: you think that if

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certa prouidentur, opinionis id esse caliginem non scientiae ueritatem.

Aliter enim ac sese res habeat arbitrari ab integritate scientiae credis esse diuersum. Cuius erroris causa est, quod omnia quae quisque nouit ex ipsorum tantum ui atque natura cognosci aestimat quae sciuntur; quod totum contra est Omne enim quod cognoscitur non secundum sui uim sed secundum cognoscentium potius comprehenditur facultatem. Nam ut hoc breui liqueat exemplo, eandem corporis rotunditatem aliter uisus aliter tactus agnoscit. Ille eminus manens totum simul iactis radiis intuetur, hic uero cohaerens orbi atque coniunctus circa ipsum motus ambitum rotunditatem partibus comprehendit. Ipsum quoque hominem aliter sensus, aliter imaginatio, aliter ratio, aliter intellegentia contuetur. Sensus enim figuram in subiecta materia constitutam, imaginatio uero solam sine materia iudicat figuram. Ratio uero hanc quoque transcendit speciemque ipsam quae singularibus inest uniuersali consideratione perpendit.

Intellegentiae uero celsior oculus exsistit; supergressa namque uniuersitatis ambitum ipsam illam simplicem formam pura mentis acie contuetur. In quo illud maxime considerandum est: nam superior comprehendendi uis amplectitur inferiorem, inferior uero ad superiorem nullo modo consurgit. Neque enim sensus aliquid extra materiam ualet uel uniuersales species imaginatio contuetur uel ratio capit simplicem formam, sed intellegentia quasi desuper spectans concepta forma quae subsunt etiam cuncta diiudicat, sed eo modo quo formam ipsam, quae nulli alii nota esse poterat, comprehendit. Nam et rationis uniuersum et imaginationis figuram et materiale sensibile cognoscit nec ratione utens nec imaginatione nec sensibus, sed illo uno ictu mentis formaliter, ut ita dicam, cuncta prospiciens. Ratio quoque cum quid uniuersale respicit, nec imaginatione nec sensibus utens imaginabilia uel sensibilia comprehendit.

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things are foreseen, necessity follows; that if necessity is lacking, they are not foreknown at all; and that nothing can be grasped by knowledge unless it is certain; and that if things of uncertain outcome are foreseen as though certain, this is the fog of opinion, not the truth of knowledge.

For you believe that to judge a thing otherwise than as it is falls short of the integrity of knowledge. The cause of this error is that everyone supposes that all the things he knows are known solely by the power and nature of the things known. But the very opposite is true. For everything that is known is grasped not according to its own power but rather according to the capacity of those who know it. To make this clear with a brief example: sight recognizes the same roundness of a body in one way, touch in another. Sight, remaining at a distance, takes in the whole at once by the rays it casts; touch, clinging and joined to the sphere, moving around its very circumference, grasps the roundness part by part. Man himself, too, is viewed in one way by the senses, in another by imagination, in another by reason, in another by intelligence. The senses judge the shape as constituted in its underlying matter; imagination judges the shape alone, without matter. Reason goes beyond this too, and examines, by a universal consideration, the species itself that is present in individual things.[7]

But the eye of intelligence stands higher still; for, passing beyond the compass of the universal, it beholds with the pure gaze of the mind that simple form itself. Here the chief point to consider is this: the higher power of comprehension embraces the lower, but the lower in no way rises to the higher. For the senses have no power beyond matter, nor does imagination behold universal species, nor does reason grasp the simple form; but intelligence, looking as it were from above, having conceived the form, discerns also all the things that lie beneath it—but in the same way in which it grasps that form itself, which could be known to no other power. For it knows the universal of reason, the shape of imagination, and the material object of sense, without using reason or imagination or the senses, but seeing all things beforehand, so to speak, formally, in that single

7 Intelligence (intellegentia) is the highest mode of knowing, the mind's direct intuition, above step-by-step reasoning (ratio).

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	glance of the mind. Reason too, when it looks at something universal, grasps what is imaginable and sensible without using imagination or the senses.
Haec est enim quae conceptionis suae uniuersale ita definiuit: homo est animal bipes rationale. Quae cum uniuersalis notio sit, tum imaginabilem sensibilemque esse rem nullus ignorat, quod illa non imaginatione uel sensu sed in rationali conceptione considerat. Imaginatio quoque tametsi ex sensibus uisendi formandique figuras sumpsit exordium, sensu tamen absente sensibilia quaeque conlustrat non sensibili sed imaginaria ratione iudicandi. Videsne igitur ut in cognoscendo cuncta sua potius facultate quam eorum quae cognoscuntur utantur? Neque id iniuria; nam cum omne iudicium iudicantis actus exsistat, necesse est ut suam quisque operam non ex aliena sed ex propria potestate perficiat."	For it is reason that has defined the universal of its conception thus: man is a two-footed rational animal. Although this is a universal notion, no one is unaware that the thing is imaginable and sensible; yet reason considers it not by imagination or sense, but in a rational conception. Imagination, too, although it took its start from the senses in seeing and forming shapes, nevertheless surveys all sensible things when the senses are absent, by a way of judging that is not sensory but imaginative. Do you see, then, how in knowing, all things use their own capacity rather than that of the things known? And rightly so; for since every judgment is the act of the one who judges, each must accomplish its work by its own power, not another's.

POEM 4: THE ACTIVE MIND

Against the Stoics: the mind is not a blank page but actively judges.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
5.M4	Quondam porticus attulit Obscuros nimium senes Qui sensus et imagines E corporibus extimis Credant mentibus imprimi, Vt quondam celeri stilo Mos est aequore paginae. Quae nullas habeat notas, Pressas figere litteras. Sed mens si propriis uigens Nihil motibus explicat, Sed tantum patiens iacet Notis subdita corporum Cassasque in speculi uicem Rerum reddit imagines, Vnde haec sic animis uiget Cernens omnia notio? Quae uis singula perspicit Aut quae cognita diuidit? Quae diuisa recolligit Alternumque legens iter Nunc summis caput inserit, Nunc decedit in infima, Tum sese referens sibi Veris falsa redarguit?	The Porch once brought forth old men, obscure beyond measure, who believed that sensations and images from bodies outside are stamped upon minds, just as it is the custom, with a quick stylus, on the smooth surface of a page that as yet bears no marks, to press and fix letters. But if the mind, strong in its own motions, unfolds nothing, but only lies passive, subject to the marks of bodies, and like a mirror gives back the empty images of things, where does this notion come from that thrives in minds and sees all things? What power perceives particulars, or divides what it has come to know? What gathers again what was divided, and, choosing now one path, now the other, now lifts its head among the highest things, now descends to the lowest,

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	then, returning to itself, refutes falsehood with truth?[8]
/ Haec est efficiens magis Longe causa potentior Quam quae materiae modo Impressas patitur notas. Praecedit tamen excitans Ac uires animi mouens Viuo in corpore passio. Cum uel lux oculos ferit Vel uox auribus instrepit, Tum mentis uigor excitus Quas intus species tenet Ad motus similes uocans Notis applicat exteris Introrsumque reconditis Formis miscet imagines.	/ This is a cause more active, far more powerful than one that, like matter, passively receives impressed marks. And yet there comes first, arousing and stirring the powers of the mind, a sensation in the living body, when light strikes the eyes or a voice sounds in the ears. Then the mind's vigor, aroused, calling the forms it holds within to similar motions, applies them to the marks from outside and mingles the images with the forms hidden within.

PROSE 5: REASON AND INTELLIGENCE

Human reason should yield to divine intelligence, as sense and imagination yield to reason.

LATIN	ENGLISH
5.P5 Quod si in corporibus sentiendis, quamuis afficiant instrumenta sensuum forinsecus obiectae qualitates animique agentis uigorem passio corporis antecedat quae in se actum mentis prouocet excitetque interim quiescentes intrinsecus formas, si in sentiendis, inquam, corporibus animus non passione insignitur, sed ex sua ui subiectam corpori iudicat passionem, quanto magis ea quae cunctis corporum affectionibus absoluta sunt, in discernendo non obiecta extrinsecus sequuntur, sed actum suae mentis expediunt? Hac itaque ratione multiplices cognitiones diuersis ac differentibus cessere substantiis. Sensus enim solus cunctis aliis cognitionibus destitutus immobilibus animantibus cessit quales sunt conchae maris quaeque alia saxis haerentia nutriuntur, imaginatio uero mobilibus beluis quibus iam inesse fugiendi appetendiue aliquis uidetur affectus, ratio uero humani tantum generis est sicut intellegentia sola diuini.	But if, in perceiving bodies—although qualities presented from outside affect the organs of sense, and the body's being affected comes before the vigor of the active mind, calling forth the mind's act upon itself and arousing the forms that until then lay quiet within—if, I say, in perceiving bodies the mind is not stamped by that affection but judges by its own power the affection undergone by the body, how much more do those beings that are free from all bodily affections, in their discerning, not follow what is presented from outside, but set free the act of their own mind? For this reason, then, many kinds of knowledge have fallen to diverse and differing substances. Sense alone, without any other kind of knowledge, has fallen to living things that cannot move, such as the shellfish of the sea and other creatures that cling to rocks and are nourished there; imagination to beasts that move, in which some impulse to flee or to seek already seems present; reason belongs to the human race alone, as intelligence to the divine alone.
Quo fit ut ea notitia ceteris praestet quae suapte natura non modo proprium sed ceterarum quoque notitiarum subiecta cognoscit. Quid igitur, si ratiocinationi sensus	So it is that the kind of knowledge which, by its own nature, knows not only its proper object but also the objects of the other kinds, surpasses the

8 The Porch (Greek Stoa) is the Stoic school, named after the painted colonnade in Athens where it met.

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imaginatioque refragentur, nihil esse illud uniuersale dicentes quod sese intueri ratio putet? Quod enim sensibile uel imaginabile est, id uniuersum esse non posse; aut igitur rationis uerum esse iudicium nec quidquam esse sensibile, aut quoniam sibi notum sit plura sensibus et imaginationi esse subiecta, inanem conceptionem esse rationis quae quod sensibile sit ac singulare quasi quiddam uniuersale consideret.	rest. What, then, if sense and imagination were to oppose reasoning, saying that the universal which reason thinks it beholds is nothing? For, they would say, what is sensible or imaginable cannot be universal; so either the judgment of reason is true and nothing is sensible, or, since reason knows that many things are subject to the senses and imagination, the conception of reason, which considers what is sensible and particular as if it were something universal, is empty.
Ad haec, si ratio contra respondeat se quidem et quod sensibile et quod imaginabile sit in uniuersitatis ratione conspicere, illa uero ad uniuersitatis cognitionem adspirare non posse, quoniam eorum notio corporales figuras non possit excedere, de rerum uero cognitione firmiori potius perfectiorique iudicio esse credendum, in huiusmodi igitur lite nos quibus tam ratiocinandi quam imaginandi etiam sentiendique uis inest nonne rationis potius causam probaremus? Simile est quod humana ratio diuinam intellegentiam futura, nisi ut ipsa cognoscit, non putat intueri. Nam ita disseris: Si qua certos ac necessarios habere non uideantur euentus, ea certo euentura praesciri nequeunt. Harum igitur rerum nulla est praescientia, quam si etiam in his esse credamus, nihil erit quod non ex necessitate proueniat.	If, in reply, reason were to answer that it does indeed view both the sensible and the imaginable under the aspect of the universal, whereas they cannot aspire to knowledge of the universal, since their knowledge cannot go beyond bodily shapes; and that, in the knowledge of things, one should rather trust the firmer and more perfect judgment —in a dispute of this kind, should not we, who possess the power of reasoning as well as of imagining and perceiving, rather take reason's side? It is just the same when human reason does not think that divine intelligence beholds future things except as reason itself knows them. For this is how you argue: if some things do not seem to have certain and necessary outcomes, they cannot be known beforehand as certainly going to happen. So there is no foreknowledge of these things; and if we believe there is foreknowledge even of them, there will be nothing that does not come about of necessity.
Si igitur uti rationis participes sumus, ita diuinae iudicium mentis habere possemus, sicut imaginationem sensumque rationi cedere oportere iudicauimus, sic diuinae sese menti humanam submittere rationem iustissimum censeremus. Quare in illius summae intellegentiae cacumen, si possumus, erigamur; illic enim ratio uidebit quod in se non potest intueri, id autem est, quonam modo etiam quae certos exitus non habent, certa tamen uideat ac definita praenotio neque id sit opinio sed summae potius scientiae nullis terminis inclusa simplicitas.	If, then, just as we share in reason, we could also have the judgment of the divine mind, then, just as we have judged that imagination and sense ought to yield to reason, so we would think it most just that human reason should submit itself to the divine mind. Therefore let us be raised up, if we can, to the summit of that highest intelligence; for there reason will see what it cannot behold in itself: that is, how even things that have no certain outcomes are nonetheless seen by a certain and definite foreknowledge, and how this is not opinion but rather the simplicity of highest knowledge, enclosed by no limits.

POEM 5: UPRIGHT HUMANITY

Human beings stand upright so that they may lift their minds to heaven.

LATIN	ENGLISH

5.M5

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	Quam uariis terras animalia permeant figuris! Namque alia extento sunt corpore pulueremque uerrunt Continuumque trahunt ui pectoris incitata sulcum, Sunt quibus alarum leuitas uaga uerberetque uentos Et liquido longi spatia aetheris enatet uolatu, Haec pressisse solo uestigia gressibusque gaudent Vel uirides campos transmittere uel subire siluas. Quae uariis uideas licet omnia discrepare formis, Prona tamen facies hebetes ualet ingrauare sensus. Vnica gens hominum celsum leuat altius cacumen Atque leuis recto stat corpore despicitque terras. Haec nisi terrenus male desipis, admonet figura, Qui recto caelum uultu petis exserisque frontem, In sublime feras animum quoque, ne grauata pessum Inferior sidat mens corpore celsius leuato.	In how many varied shapes living creatures move across the lands! For some have long-stretched bodies and sweep the dust, and, driven by the strength of their breast, drag an unbroken furrow; some have wings whose roaming lightness beats the winds, and they swim through the spaces of the long sky in liquid flight; others delight to press their footprints on the ground as they walk, to cross green fields or pass beneath the woods. Though you may see that all of them differ in varied forms, yet their downturned faces can weigh down their dull senses. The human race alone lifts its lofty head higher, and stands light, with upright body, and looks down on the earth. This shape admonishes you, unless, earthbound, you have foolishly lost your wits: you who seek the sky with upright face and lift your brow, carry your mind aloft as well, lest, weighed down, the mind sink lower while the body is raised higher.

PROSE 6: ETERNITY

God is eternal and sees all things as present, so his foreknowledge imposes no necessity.

	LATIN	ENGLISH
5.P6	"Quoniam igitur, uti paulo ante monstratum est, omne quod scitur non ex sua sed ex conprehendentium natura cognoscitur, intueamur nunc quantum fas est, quis sit diuinae substantiae status, ut quaenam etiam scientia eius sit, possimus agnoscere. Deum igitur aeternum esse cunctorum ratione degentium commune iudicium est. Quid sit igitur aeternitas consideremus; haec enim nobis naturam pariter diuinam scientiamque patefacit. Aeternitas igitur est interminabilis uitae tota simul et perfecta possessio, quod ex collatione temporalium clarius liquet. Nam quidquid uiuit in tempore id praesens a praeteritis in futura procedit nihilque est in tempore constitutum quod totum uitae suae spatium pariter possit amplecti. Sed crastinum quidem nondum adprehendit, hesternum uero iam perdidit; in hodierna quoque uita non amplius uiuitis quam in illo mobili transitorioque momento.	Since, then, as was shown a little while ago, everything that is known is known not from its own nature but from that of those who comprehend it, let us now consider, as far as is permitted, what the state of the divine substance is, so that we may also recognize what its knowledge is. That God is eternal is the common judgment of all who live by reason. Let us consider, then, what eternity is; for this will make plain to us both the divine nature and divine knowledge. Eternity, then, is the whole, simultaneous and perfect possession of unending life. This becomes clearer by comparison with temporal things. For whatever lives in time proceeds, in the present, from the past into the future, and nothing placed in time can embrace the whole extent of its life at once. It has not yet grasped tomorrow, and it has already lost yester-

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day; and even in today's life you live no more than in that moving, passing moment.

Quod igitur temporis patitur condicionem, licet illud, sicuti de mundo censuit Aristoteles, nec coeperit umquam esse nec desinat uitaque eius cum temporis infinitate tendatur, nondum tamen tale est ut aeternum esse iure credatur. Non enim totum simul infinitae licet uitae spatium comprehendit atque complectitur, sed futura nondum transacta iam non habet. Quod igitur interminabilis uitae plenitudinem totam pariter comprehendit ac possidet, cui neque futuri quidquam absit nec praeteriti fluxerit, id aeternum esse iure perhibetur, idque necesse est et sui compos praesens sibi semper adsistere et infinitatem mobilis temporis habere praesentem. Vnde non recte quidam, qui cum audiunt uisum Platoni mundum hunc nec habuisse initium temporis nec habiturum esse defectum, hoc modo conditori conditum mundum fieri coaeternum putant.

So whatever undergoes the condition of time, even if—as Aristotle held of the world—it never began to be and never ceases, and its life extends with the infinity of time, is still not such that it may rightly be thought eternal. For it does not comprehend and embrace the whole extent of its life, infinite though it be, all at once; it does not yet have the future, and no longer has what is past. What, therefore, comprehends and possesses at once the whole fullness of unending life, to which nothing of the future is lacking and nothing of the past has flowed away, is rightly held to be eternal; and it must both be present to itself, always in possession of itself, and have the infinity of moving time present to it. Hence some are wrong who, when they hear that Plato thought this world had no beginning in time and will have no end, suppose that in this way the created world is made co-eternal with its creator.[9]

Aliud est enim per interminabilem duci uitam, quod mundo Plato tribuit, aliud interminabilis uitae totam pariter complexum esse praesentiam, quod diuinae mentis proprium esse manifestum est. Neque deus conditis rebus antiquior uideri debet temporis quantitate sed simplicis potius proprietate naturae. Hunc enim uitae immobilis praesentarium statum infinitus ille temporalium rerum motus imitatur cumque eum effingere atque aequare non possit, ex immobilitate deficit in motum, ex simplicitate praesentiae decrescit in infinitam futuri ac praeteriti quantitatem; et cum totam pariter uitae suae plenitudinem nequeat possidere, hoc ipso quod aliquo modo numquam esse desinit, illud quod implere atque exprimere non potest, aliquatenus uidetur aemulari alligans se ad qualemcumque praesentiam huius exigui uolucrisque momenti, quae, quoniam manentis illius praesentiae quandam gestat imaginem, quibuscumque contigerit id praestat ut esse uideantur.

For it is one thing to be led through unending life, which Plato attributed to the world; it is another to have embraced the whole presence of unending life all at once, which is clearly proper to the divine mind. Nor should God seem older than created things by a quantity of time, but rather by the property of his simple nature. For the infinite motion of temporal things imitates this present state of unmoving life; and since it cannot reproduce or equal it, it falls from immobility into motion and dwindles from the simplicity of presence into the infinite quantity of future and past. And since it cannot possess the whole fullness of its life at once, by the very fact that in a certain way it never ceases to be, it seems to some extent to rival what it cannot fulfill and express, binding itself to whatever presence belongs to this tiny, fleeting moment—a presence which, because it bears a certain image of that abiding presence, grants to whatever it touches that they seem to be.

Quoniam uero manere non potuit, infinitum temporis iter arripuit eoque modo factum est ut continuaret eundo uitam cuius plenitudinem complecti non ualuit permanendo. Itaque si digna rebus nomina uelimus imponere, Platonem sequentes deum quidem aeternum,

But since it could not stay still, it seized on the infinite journey of time, and so it came about that by going it continued the life whose fullness it could not embrace by staying. So if we wish to give things fitting names, let us follow Plato and say

9 Aristotle argued that the world has no beginning or end (*On the Heavens*); the reading of Plato's *Timaeus* referred to here was debated in antiquity.

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mundum uero dicamus esse perpetuum. Quoniam igitur omne iudicium secundum sui naturam quae sibi subiecta sunt comprehendit, est autem deo semper aeternus ac praesentarius status; scientia quoque eius omnem temporis supergressa motionem in suae manet simplicitate praesentiae infinitaque praeteriti ac futuri spatia complectens omnia quasi iam gerantur in sua simplici cognitione considerat.

Itaque si praesentiam pensare uelis qua cuncta dinoscit, non esse praescientiam quasi futuri sed scientiam numquam deficientis instantiae rectius aestimabis; unde non praeuidentia sed prouidentia potius dicitur, quod porro ab rebus infimis constituta quasi ab excelso rerum cacumine cuncta prospiciat. Quid igitur postulas ut necessaria fiant quae diuino lumine lustrentur, cum ne homines quidem necessaria faciant esse quae uideant? Num enim quae praesentia cernis, aliquam eis necessitatem tuus addit intuitus? "Minime. "Atqui si est diuini humanique praesentis digna collatio, uti uos uestro hoc temporario praesenti quaedam uidetis, ita ille omnia suo cernit aeterno. Quare haec diuina praenotio naturam rerum proprietatemque non mutat taliaque apud se praesentia spectat qualia in tempore olim futura prouenient.

Nec rerum iudicia confundit unoque suae mentis intuitu tam necessarie quam non necessarie uentura dinoscit; sicuti uos cum pariter ambulare in terra hominem et oriri in caelo solem uidetis, quamquam simul utrumque conspectum tamen discernitis et hoc uoluntarium illud esse necessarium iudicatis, ita igitur cuncta despiciens diuinus intuitus qualitatem rerum minime perturbat apud se quidem praesentium, ad condicionem uero temporis futurarum. Quo fit ut hoc non sit opinio sed ueritate potius nixa cognitio, cum exstaturum quid esse cognoscit quod idem exsistendi necessitate carere non nesciat.

Hic si dicas quod euenturum deus uidet id non euenire non posse, quod autem non potest non euenire id ex necessitate contingere, meque ad hoc nomen necessitatis adstringas, fatebor rem quidem solidissimae ueritatis sed

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that God is eternal, but the world perpetual. Since, then, every judgment comprehends what is subject to it according to its own nature, and the state of God is always eternal and present, his knowledge too, surpassing all the motion of time, abides in the simplicity of its presence, and, embracing the infinite spaces of past and future, considers all things in its simple act of knowing as though they were happening now.

So, if you wish to weigh the presence by which he discerns all things, you will more rightly judge it to be not foreknowledge, as of something future, but knowledge of a never-failing present. Hence it is called not foresight but providence, because, set far above the lowest things, it looks forth on all things as if from the lofty summit of the world. Why, then, do you demand that things lit by the divine light become necessary, when not even human beings make necessary the things they see? For does your gaze add any necessity to the things you see present? "Not at all," I said. And yet, if a comparison of the divine present and the human is fitting, just as you see certain things in this temporal present of yours, so he sees all things in his eternal present. So this divine foreknowledge does not change the nature and property of things; it sees them present before it just as they will turn out in time at some future point.[10]

Nor does it confuse its judgments of things; with one glance of its mind it discerns both what will come about necessarily and what will not. Just as when you see at the same time a man walking on the earth and the sun rising in the sky—though you see both at once, you nevertheless distinguish them, and judge the one voluntary and the other necessary—so the divine gaze, looking down on all things, in no way disturbs the quality of things that are present to it but, with respect to the condition of time, are future. So it comes about that this is not opinion but knowledge resting on truth, since it knows that something will come to be which, as it is well aware, lacks the necessity of existing.

At this point, if you say that what God sees will happen cannot fail to happen, and that what cannot fail to happen happens of necessity, and so tie me to this word "necessity," I will admit that this is

10 The Latin contrasts praevidentia, "seeing beforehand", with providentia, read as "seeing forth" from a height.

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cui uix aliquis nisi diuini speculator accesserit. Respondebo namque idem futurum, cum ad diuinam notionem refertur, necessarium, cum uero in sua natura perpenditur, liberum prorsus atque absolutum uideri. Duae sunt etenim necessitates, simplex una, ueluti quod necesse est omnes homines esse mortales, altera condicionis, ut si aliquem ambulare scias, eum ambulare necesse est; quod enim quisque nouit, id esse aliter ac notum est nequit, sed haec condicio minime secum illam simplicem trahit.

Hanc enim necessitatem non propria facit natura sed condicionis adiectio; nulla enim necessitas cogit incedere uoluntate gradientem, quamuis eum tum cum graditur incedere necessarium sit. Eodem igitur modo, si quid prouidentia praesens uidet, id esse necesse est, tametsi nullam naturae habeat necessitatem. Atqui deus ea futura quae ex arbitrii libertate proueniunt praesentia contuetur. Haec igitur ad intuitum relata diuinum necessaria fiant per condicionem diuinae notionis; per se uero considerata ab absoluta naturae suae libertate non desinunt. Fient igitur procul dubio cuncta quae futura deus esse praenoscit, sed eorum quaedam de libero proficiscuntur arbitrio, quae quamuis eueniant, exsistendo tamen naturam propriam non amittunt, qua priusquam fierent etiam non euenire potuissent.

Quid igitur refert non esse necessaria, cum propter diuinae scientiae condicionem modis omnibus necessitatis instar eueniet? Hoc scilicet quod ea quae paulo ante proposui, sol oriens et gradiens homo. Quae dum fiunt, non fieri non possunt; eorum tamen unum prius quoque quam fieret, necesse erat exsistere, alterum uero minime. Ita etiam quae praesentia deus habet, dubio procul exsistent, sed eorum hoc quidem de rerum necessitate descendit, illud uero de potestate facientium. Haud igitur iniuria diximus haec si ad diuinam notitiam referantur necessaria, si per se considerentur necessitatis esse nexibus absoluta; sicuti omne quod sensibus patet, si ad rationem referas, uniuersale est, si ad se ipsa respicias, singulare.

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a matter of the most solid truth, but one which scarcely anyone but a contemplator of the divine has reached. For I will reply that the same future thing, when referred to divine knowledge, is necessary, but when considered in its own nature, seems entirely free and unconditioned. For there are two necessities: one simple, as that it is necessary that all human beings are mortal; the other conditional, as, if you know that someone is walking, it is necessary that he is walking. For what anyone knows cannot be otherwise than as it is known; but this conditional necessity by no means carries the simple one along with it.

For this necessity is produced not by a thing's own nature but by the addition of a condition; no necessity compels a man who is walking of his own will to go forward, although, at the time he is walking, it is necessary that he goes forward. In the same way, then, if providence sees something as present, it must be, though it has no necessity of nature. But God beholds as present those future things that come about from free will. These things, then, referred to the divine gaze, become necessary through the condition of divine knowledge; but considered in themselves, they do not lose the absolute freedom of their nature. All things, then, that God foreknows will be will undoubtedly come to pass; but some of them proceed from free will, and these, though they come to pass, do not by coming into existence lose their own nature, by which, before they happened, they could also have not happened.

What does it matter, then, that they are not necessary, since, because of the condition of divine knowledge, they will in every way come about as if by necessity? It matters in just the way that the examples I set out a little while ago differ: the rising sun and the walking man. While these are happening, they cannot fail to happen; yet one of them, even before it happened, had to come to be, while the other did not. So too the things God has present will undoubtedly come to be; but one kind comes down from the necessity of things, the other from the power of those who act. Not wrongly, then, did we say that these things, if referred to divine knowledge, are necessary, and if considered in themselves, are free from the bonds of necessity; just as everything that lies open to the senses

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is universal if you refer it to reason, and particular if you look at it in itself.

' Sed si in mea,' inquies,' potestate situm est mutare propositum, euacuabo prouidentiam, cum quae illa praenoscit forte mutauero.' Respondebo: propositum te quidem tuum posse deflectere, sed quoniam et id te posse et an facias quoue conuertas praesens prouidentiae ueritas intuetur, diuinam te praescientiam non posse uitare, sicuti praesentis oculi effugere non possis intuitum, quamuis te in uarias actiones libera uoluntate conuerteris. Quid igitur inquies? Ex meane dispositione scientia diuina mutabitur, ut cum ego nunc hoc nunc aliud uelim, illa quoque noscendi uices alternare uideatur? Minime. Omne namque futurum diuinus praecurrit intuitus et ad praesentiam propriae cognitionis retorquet ac reuocat nec alternat, ut aestimas, nunc hoc nunc illud praenoscendi uice, sed uno ictu mutationes tuas manens praeuenit atque complectitur.

"But," you will say, "if it lies in my power to change my purpose, I shall make providence void, if I happen to change what it foreknows." I will reply: you can indeed turn your purpose aside, but since the present truth of providence sees both that you can, and whether you will, and in which direction you will turn, you cannot escape divine foreknowledge, just as you could not escape the gaze of an eye that is present, however you might turn to various actions by your free will. What then will you say? "Will divine knowledge be changed by my arrangements, so that when I will now this, now that, it too seems to alternate its turns of knowing?" Not at all. For the divine gaze runs ahead of every future thing, and bends it back and recalls it to the presence of its own knowledge; nor does it alternate, as you suppose, foreknowing now this, now that; but, remaining still, it anticipates and embraces your changes in a single glance.

Quam comprehendendi omnia uisendique praesentiam non ex futurarum prouentu rerum, sed ex propria deus simplicitate sortitus est. Ex quo illud quoque resoluitur quod paulo ante posuisti indignum esse, si scientiae dei causam futura nostra praestare dicantur. Haec enim scientiae uis praesentaria notione cuncta complectens rebus modum omnibus ipsa constituit, nihil uero posterioribus debet. Quae cum ita sint, manet intemerata mortalibus arbitrii libertas nec iniquae leges solutis omni necessitate uoluntatibus praemia poenasque proponunt. Manet etiam spectator desuper cunctorum praescius deus uisionisque eius praesens semper aeternitas cum nostrorum actuum futura qualitate concurrit bonis praemia malis supplicia dispensans. Nec frustra sunt in deo positae spes precesque; quae cum rectae sunt, inefficaces esse non possunt.

This presence, in which he comprehends and sees all things, God has obtained not from the outcome of future things, but from his own simplicity. This also resolves the point you set down a little while ago as unfitting: that our future actions should be said to provide the cause of God's knowledge. For this power of knowledge, embracing all things in its present awareness, itself sets the measure for all things and owes nothing to what comes after. Since this is so, free will remains inviolate for mortals, and the laws are not unjust that set rewards and punishments before wills released from all necessity. There also remains God, the onlooker from above who foreknows all things, and the ever-present eternity of his vision runs together with the future quality of our actions, dispensing rewards to the good and punishments to the wicked. Nor are hopes and prayers placed in God in vain; when they are right, they cannot be ineffective.

Auersamini igitur uitia, colite uirtutes, ad rectas spes animum subleuate, humiles preces in excelsa porrigite. Magna uobis est, si dissimulare non uultis, necessitas indicta probitatis, cum ante oculos agitis iudicis cuncta cernentis."

Turn away, then, from vices; cultivate virtues; lift up your minds to right hopes; offer humble prayers on high. A great necessity of goodness is laid upon you, if you will not pretend otherwise, since you act before the eyes of a judge who sees all things.