

## Cicero: In Catilinam 1

### I

1. How far will you (continue to) abuse our patience, Catiline? For how much longer will that rage of yours make a mockery of us? To what point will your unbridled audacity show itself? Did the nocturnal garrison on the Palatine, the watch patrols of the city, the fear of the people, the assemblies of all the good men, this most fortified place of holding the senate, the faces and expressions of all these people [the senators] not move you at all? Do you not realise that your plans lie revealed? Do you not see that your plot is already held in check by the knowledge of all these people? Do you think that any of us do not know what you did last night, what you did the night before, where you were, who you summoned, and what plans you made?
2. O what times (we live in)! O what customs (we pursue)! The senate understands these things; the consul sees these things; this man, however, lives. He lives? No indeed, he even comes to the senate. He even takes part in public affairs. He points out and designates with his eyes, individuals amongst us for slaughter. But we, brave men, seem to do enough for the state, if we avoid, the rage and the weapons of that man. You, Catiline, should have been led to death already long ago [*lit.* it behoved you to be led...] by order of the consul, that ruin, which you are devising against us, should have been conferred upon you.
3. Indeed a most distinguished man, Publius Scipio, *pontifex maximus*, as a private man killed Tiberius Gracchus, (although) weakening the affairs of state (only) moderately: Will we consuls put up with Catiline, wanting to lay waste to the whole earth with slaughter and fire? For I pass over those old times too much, because Gaius Servilius Ahala killed with his own hand Spurius Manlius, striving after a new state of affairs. There was, there was once in this state that courage so that brave men might check a harmful citizen with fiercer penalties than the bitterest enemy. We have a decree of the state against you, Catiline, both strong and grave; the state does not lack the advice or authority of this class [senate]. We, we, I say it openly, we consuls are lacking.

II

4. The senate once decreed that Lucius Opimius the consul should see that the republic did not come to any harm. No night intervened; Gaius Gracchus was killed because of certain suspicions of uprising, from a very distinguished father, grandfather, and ancestors; Marcus Fulvius, of consular rank, was killed with his children. By a similar decree of the senate the republic was entrusted to Gaius Marius and Lucius Valerius the consuls: Surely death and the punishment of the republic was not delayed for one single day upon Lucius Saturninus, tribune of the people, and Gaius Servilius, the praetor? But indeed, we now allow for the twentieth day the sharp edge of the authority of these people to grow blunt. For we have a decree of the senate of this kind. But in truth it is enclosed in the records, as if hidden in a scabbard, from which decree of the senate it is fit for you, Catiline, to have been killed immediately. You live, and you live not to lay aside but to strengthen your audacity. I desire, members of the senate, that I be merciful, I desire that I do not seem negligent in such great dangers to the republic, but now I condemn myself of [for] stagnation and negligence.
5. A camp has been set up in Italy in the passes of Etruria against the Roman people. The number of the enemy grows every single day but the general of their camp and the leader of the enemy you can see inside the walls, and even in the senate, attempting some internal distraction for the state every day. If I order you now to be seized, Catiline, if I order you to be killed, I would have to fear, lest all good men say that this has been done by me too late, rather than that anyone say that this has been done too cruelly. But I am persuaded that I have not yet done this, which it behoved me to have done already long ago, for a clear reason. Then at last you will be killed, when no one so wicked, so corrupt, so similar to you will be able to be found, who believes [*lit.* confesses] that it has been done unlawfully.
6. For however long there is [*lit.* will be] anyone who dares to defend you, you will live, but you will live in such a way that, as you live, besieged by many strong garrisons, you are not able to move yourself against the republic. The eyes and the ears of many will still watch and guard you, oblivious [*lit.* not feeling] just as they have always done.

III

6. For what is it, Catiline, which you now await more fully, if neither the night can obscure your wicked meetings in darkness, nor can a private home contain the voices of your conspiracy in its walls? If everything is lit up, if all the news [*lit.* everything] breaks out, change your mind now; trust me. Forget your slaughter and burning. You are held on all sides; all your plans are clearer to us than the light, which you may now review with me.
7. Do you remember that I said in the senate on the 21st of October that Gaius Manlius, that aider and abettor of your audacity would be in arms on a certain day, and that day [*lit.* which day] was going to be [*lit.* was about to be] the 27th of October? Surely, Catiline, not only such a great event, so atrocious and so unbelievable, but also, that which is much more to be admired, the day, did not deceive me? I, the same person, said in the senate, that you had assigned a slaughter of the aristocrats on the 28th of October at that time when many leaders of the state (had) fled from Rome, not so much for the sake of preserving themselves, as of repressing your plans. Surely you are not able to deny that you, surrounded on that very day by my garrisons, (and) by my diligence, we not able to move against the republic; when you were saying that you were content with the departure of the others, but with our slaughter— we who had stayed behind.
8. What? When you were confident that you would seize Praeneste, on the very first (day) of November by a night attack, did you (not) realise that that colony had been fortified by my garrisons, guards, (and) patrols on my order? Everything which you do, everything which you undertake, everything which you think, I not only hear, but also see and clearly sense. [*lit.* You do nothing, you undertake nothing, you think nothing, which I do not only hear, but also see and clearly sense.]

IV

8. At last review with me that night before last: now you will understand that I keep watch much more keenly with a view to the safety of the republic, than you with a view to the destruction of the republic. I assert that you, on the night before last, came to the Scythe-maker's Street— I will speak plainly— to the house of Marcus Laeca; that several people assembled at the same place, allies in the same madness and crime as yours. Surely you do not dare to deny (this)? Why are you silent? I will refute (you), if you deny (it). For I see here in this senate certain men, who were together with you.
  
9. O immortal gods! Where in the world are we? In which city do we live? What sort of state to we have? Here, there are here in our number, members of the senate, in this most venerable and dignified assembly of the earth, who think about the destruction of all of us, who think about the ruin of this city and even the destruction of the world. I, the consul, see these men, and I ask their opinion, about the republic, and they should have been slaughtered by the sword, but I am not yet going to wound them with my voice. You were therefore at the house of Laeca that night, Catiline, You did allot the parts of Italy; You did establish those whom you would leave behind at Rome, those whom you would take away with you; you did divide the parts of the city for burning, you did say that even how there was little delay for you, because I was still alive. Two Roman equites were discovered to set you free from that worry and to promise that they would kill me in my little bed on that very night shortly before dawn.
  
10. I discovered all these things, with your gathering scarcely yet even dismissed, I defended and fortified my house with a larger number of guards, I excluded those whom you had sent to me to pay their morning call, when they themselves had come, those whom I had already foretold that they would come now at that point in time, to many (and) important people.

V

10. Since these things are so, Catiline, go where you have begun (to go), now at last leave the city; the gates lie open; go on your way. For too long your Manlian camp has longed for you as general. (And) take away with you even all your (friends), if less, than all; purge the city. You will free me from great anxiety, provided the city wall lies between me and you. Now you are not able to remain with us any longer. I cannot, I will not, I shall not endure it.
11. Many thanks are requiring to be given [*lit.* had] to the immortal gods, and moreover to this very Jupiter Stator (here), the most ancient guardian of this city, because so many times now we have escaped this so repulsive, so horrible and so disturbed plague of the republic. The safety of the state must not be risked again and again [*lit.* too often] in the person of one man. However long you plotted against me [*lit.* lay in wait for me], while I was consul-elect, I was not defended by a public garrison, but by (my own) private diligence. When, at the late elections for consuls, you wanted to kill me, as consul, in the Campus (Martius) and your own rivals, I endeavoured to suppress your heinous acts by the assistance and resources of friends, with no public tumult raised; And then however often you (tried to) attack me, I opposed you through my own resources, although I saw that my end was as one with great disaster for the republic.
12. Now you attack the entire republic openly; you call the temples of the immortal gods, the buildings of the city, the life of all citizens, the whole (of) Italy to destruction and desolation, therefore since it is now, I do not yet dare to do that, which is the first action [*lit.* thing] or that which is appropriate to this power and the tradition of our forefathers, (but) I will do that which is more lenient in respect to strictness, that which is more useful to the common safety. For if I order you to be killed, the remaining handful of conspirators will remain in public affairs. But if you, as I have encouraged you now for a long time will leave, great and destructive dregs of the republic, consisting of your comrades, will be drained from the city.
13. What is it Catiline? Surely you do not doubt that you were going to on my orders, that which you were already going to do by your own free will? The consul orders the enemy to leave the city. You ask me: surely not into exile? I do not order you, but, if you will consult me, I advise (you to.)

VI

- 13 For what is there, Catiline, that is able to please you now in this city? In which there is no one, outside of that band of conspirators of your ruined men, who does not fear you; no one, who does not hate you. What mark of domestic turpitude has not been burned into your life? What disgrace at your private affairs does not linger in your reputation? What lust from your eyes, what crime from your hands, what disgraceful act from your whole body has ever been absent? (Is there) a young man to whom you, whom you have ensnared in temptations of corruption, have not held forth a sword for boldness or a torch for lust?
- 14 What indeed? Recently, when you had made your house empty for a new marriage by the death of your former wife, surely you crowned that evil deed with another incredible crime? That I pass over and allow to be buried easily, lest the ghastliness of such a disgraceful act might not seem to have existed in this city and not to have been avenged. I pass over the ruins of your fortunes, all of which you will realise are hanging over you before the next Ides: I come not to those things, which relate not to the private infamy of your vices, not to your domestic difficulties and repulsiveness, but of the greatest concern to the republic and the health and safety of all of us.
- 15 Is this light, O Catiline, or the breath of this sky able to be pleasant to you, when you know that there is not one of these (men) who is ignorant, that you, on the 31st of December, with Lepidus and Tullus being consuls, stood in the assembly with a weapon? That you had prepared a band of men for the cause of the killing of the consuls and chief men of the state? That no certain mind or fear of yours blocked your evil deed and madness, but the fortune of the Roman people? And now I dismiss these things— for neither are they obscure nor and many have been committed afterwards [*lit.* nor have not many been committed afterwards]— : How many times have you tried to kill me designated as consul, indeed how many times as consul! How many attacks of yours, having been thrown in such a way, so that they seemed not able to be avoided, have I escaped by just a small sideways movement of my body, as they say! You do nothing, you achieve nothing, however you have neither ceased to try and to wait.
- 16 How many times already has that curved dagger been wrenched from your hands? How many times has it dropped down by some chance and slipped past. Indeed I do not know with what sacred rituals that that blade has been initiated and dedicated by you, that you might think that it is necessary to be plunged into the body of a consul.

VII

- 16 Now indeed what sort of life is that life of yours? For in this way now I will speak with you, not in order that I may seem to have been impelled by hatred, by which I ought to be, but by pity, nothing of which is due to you. You came a little while before into the senate. Who from this so great an assembly greeted you? If this after the memory of men happened to no one else, are you waiting for an insult with words, when you may be oppressed by a very heavy judgment of silence? What, because at your arrival these seats were vacant, because all consuls, who have been quite often set for slaughter by you, and at the same time you sat down, left that part of the benches bare and vacant, at last with which mind do you think you should bear this?
- 17 On my honour, if my slaves feared me in the same way that all citizens fear you, I should think I must leave my house. Do you not think you should leave the city? And if I saw that I was even suspected wrongly by my own citizens and loathed so deeply, then I would prefer to remove myself from the sight of the citizens than to be looked upon by the hostile eyes of all; You, with the consciousness of your wickedness have recognised that the hatred of all (is) just and for a long time now has been due to you, do you think, to avoid the sight and presence of those whose minds and senses you wound? If your parents feared you and hated you, nor were you able to calm them by any method, as I believe, you would depart from their eyes somewhere: Now your fatherland, which is the common parent of us all, hates and fears you and for a long time now passes no judgment on you, except that you are thinking parricide in its case: Will you neither hold in awe its authority, nor follow its judgment, nor fear its power?
- 18 Who, Catiline, thus pleads with you, and speaks in a certain manner silently; “Now for several years no crime has existed except through you, no atrocity without you, on your part alone are the slaughter of many citizens, on your part the harassing and plunder of the allies has been unpunished and unchecked; you not only were strong enough to neglect laws and investigations, but also to defeat and break through them. These former things, although they should not have been tolerated; however, I tolerated then, as much as I was able to. Now indeed this should not be tolerated that I am wholly in fear because of you alone, at whatever sound there has been that Catiline should be feared, that it seems that no plot should be made against me, which is foreign to your wickedness. Depart, according to such a thing and deliver me from this fear, if it is just, lest I be destroyed, but if it may be false, that I may cease to fear at last.

VIII

- 19 If, as I have said, your fatherland were to speak thus with you, surely it ought to obtain this, even if it was not able to apply force? What should be said to this, that you have given yourself into custody? That you said for the sake of avoiding suspicions that you wanted to live in the house of Manlius Lepidus? You, having not been received by (him), you even dared to come to me and you asked me to hold you in my house. When you had also borne that response from me, that by no means was I safe in the same (house)-walls with you, in that I was in great danger, because we were contained in the same city-walls, you came to Quintus Metellus the praetor: having been rejected by him [*lit.* which], you migrated to your associate, an excellent man, Marcus Metellus, whom you obviously thought would be most diligent to guard you, and most shrewd to suspect you, and most brave to avenge you. He himself has already judged himself worthy of being guarded, how far away does it seem that you ought to be away from prison and chains?
- 20 Since these things are so, Catiline, do you hesitate, if you cannot die off with a calm mind, to go away into other lands and to entrust that life of yours, having been snatched away from punishment to flight and solitude? “Refer the matter” you say “to the senate;” for you demand it, and, if this senate will vote that it seems good for you to go into exile, you say that you will obey. I will not refer it, because it goes against my principles, and however I will act so you understand, what these men think about you. Leave the city, Catiline, free the republic from fear; get out into exile, if you are waiting for that word. What is it Catiline? Is there anything you wait for, are you paying attention to the silence of those (men)? They endure it; they are silent. Why are you waiting for authority of the words of those whose wishes you see when they are silent?
- 21 But if I had said the same thing to this excellent young man Publius Sestius, (or) to that very brave man, Marcus Marcellus, now the senate would have laid violent hands on me, being consul, in this temple with excellent right. But from you, Catiline, when they are quiet, they approve, when they endure, they vote, when they are silent, they shout; Nor do these men alone, whose authority is of course esteemed by you, whose life is most worthless, but even those Roman knights, the most honourable and excellent men, and the other brave citizens, who now surround the senate, whose number you could see, whose desires you could perceive and whose voices you could hear a little while ago. Whose hands and weapons I for a long time scarcely held back from you, I will easily encourage the same men, that they should follow you right up to the gates, leaving those things which you have now for a long time strived to lay waste to.



IX

22. Although why am I speaking? That anything might break you? That you may ever correct yourself? That you may meditate any flight? That you may think of any exile? Would that the gods may give you that mind set. Although I see, if, having been terrified by my voice you have inclined your mind into exile, what storm of unpopularity may hang over me [*lit. us*] at the present time, with the memory of your evil deeds so recent, but in later times. But it is worthwhile, as long as that is only a private calamity, and is separated from the dangers of the republic. But one should not demand that you should be moved by your own vices, or that you should fear the penalties of the laws, or you should cede to the times of the republic; for neither are you the sort, Catiline, that either shame ever has recalled you from turpitude, or any fear from danger, or any reason from madness.
23. For the sake of which, as I have often said now, set out, and if that violence stirs up hatred to me as your enemy, go right now into exile. I will scarcely bear the gossip of men, if you will do this, scarcely will I sustain the mass of that deceit, if you will go out into exile by order of the consuls. But if you prefer to serve my praise and glory, go forth with your insolent band of evil-doers; take yourself to Manlius, rouse the ruined citizens, separate yourself from the good ones, wage war against your fatherland, exult in your impious piracy, so that you did not seem to have been driven out by me to strangers, but to have gone invited to your friends.
24. Although why should I invite you, from whom now I know that armed men have been sent, to expect you at the Forum Aurelium? To whom, I know a day has been agreed upon and decided upon with Manlius? I know that by whom, that silver eagle, which I trust will be ruinous and fatal to you and all your men, has already been sent ahead? (And) which was set up as a shrine to your crimes? You, so that you are able to be without that any longer which you were accustomed to revere setting out for slaughter, from whose altars have you transferred often that impious hand for the slaughter of citizens.

X

- 25 You will go at last at some time, to where that unbridled and frenzied desire has been seizing you to for a long time now. For this matter brings no grief to you, but such an incredible pleasure. Nature has formed you, desire has trained you, fortune has preserved you for this insanity. You not only never wanted peace [*lit.* quiet], but not even war except for a nefarious one. You have obtained from profligate men and those abandoned not only by all fortunes but also by hope, a band having been composed of derelicts.
- 26 Here with what happiness you will enjoy! With what delight will you exult! In what pleasure will you revel! When, in such a number of your men, you will neither hear nor see one good man! To the pursuit of this life these are the practises which are said to be your practises, that you lie on the ground in order to besiege the object of your lust, but even for accomplishing a crime, that you are watchful not only as one laying against the sleep of husbands, but even against the goods of the man of leisure. You have, when showing this your splendid endurance of hunger, of cold, of want of all things; in a short time you will sense that you have been worn out by such things.
- 27 Such I accomplished then, when I rejected you from the consulship, so that you could trouble the state as an exile rather than harass (it) as consul, and so that that, which had been undertaken with wickedness by you, should be named as piracy rather than as war.

XI

- 27 Now, members of the senate, so that I may turn aside and avert an almost near justified complaint of my fatherland from myself, I beg you, pay attention carefully to what I will say, and commit these things deeply in your minds and hearts. For if my fatherland, which is much dearer to me than my life, if all of Italy, if the whole republic were to be speaking with me thus: "Marcus Tullius, what are you doing? Will you allow him, whom you have ascertained to be the enemy, whom you see about to be the leader of a war, whom you sense to be expected in the camp of the enemy as general, the author of wickedness, the chieftain of the plot, the evocator of the slaves and the profligate citizens, to depart, so that he will seem not to have been sent out of the city, but to have been inflicted upon the city? Surely you will not order this man to be led in chains, to be hurried off for death, to be put to death with the supreme penalty?"
- 28 What, I beg of you, hinders you? Is it the customs of our ancestors? But even private men have very often slaughtered with death in this republic mischievous citizens. Are they the laws, which have been introduced concerning the punishment of Roman citizens? But never in this city have those who have defected from the republic held the rights of citizens. Do you fear hatred of future generations? Indeed you are returning fine gratitude to the Roman people, who have raised you, a man known on the basis of your own merits, with no commendation of your ancestors— so quickly through all grades of office to the supreme command, if you are neglecting the safety of your fellow citizens, because of this fear of hatred or any other danger.
- 29 But if there is any fear of hatred, it is not hatred of harshness and firmness requiring to be feared more violently than (hatred) of idleness and worthlessness. Or when Italy is laid waste to, the cities will be harrassed, the buildings will burn, then do you not think that you will be consumed by burning hatred?"

XII

- 29 To these most sacred voices of the republic, and to the minds of those men, who sense the same thing, I respond in short. I, if I were to judge to be actually the best, members of the senate, that Catiline be punished with death, I would have not given the enjoyment [*lit. use*] of one hour to that gladiator for living. For if the utmost men and most distinguished citizens did not only not contaminate themselves by the blood of Saturnius and the Gracchi, and Flaccus and many others of past times, but also honoured (themselves), certainly I did not have to fear, lest with this parricide of citizens having been killed, anything of unpopularity might run over in posterity. And yet, if these were to threaten me especially, however, I have always been in this mind, so that I thought that unpopularity obtained by virtue is an honour, not unpopularity at all.
- 30 And yet there are several men in this body, of the kind who either do not see what is threatening to them, or disguise what things they see, and these men nourish the hope of Catiline by tender notions and strengthen the young conspiracy by not believing; by whose authority many not only wicked (men), but also inexperienced (men), if I were to have (Catiline) punished, would say that it had been done cruelly and despotically. Now I understand, that with one man alone having been killed, this plague of the republic is able to be checked for a short time, but not able to be deleted forever. Which, if he throws himself out and leads out with him his own men, and if he has brought together the other shipwrecked men collected from everywhere into the same place, not only will this fully grown plague of the republic be extinguished and removed, but also the root and seed of all evils.

XIII

- 31 For a long time now, members of the senate, we have abided in these dangers and ambushes of conspiracies, but somehow the ripening [*lit.* maturity] of all evil deeds and the long-held madness and audacity, has burst upon the time of my consulship. But if that one man is carried from such a band of brigands, we will be seen perhaps for a short time to be relieved from care and fear, but danger will reside and will be enclosed deeply in the veins and bowels of the republic. As is often the case, men with a severe illness, when they are tossed about with burning fever [*lit.* with burning and fever], if they drink cold water, first they seem relieved, then they are afflicted much more gravely and severely; in this way, this disease, which is in the republic, having been relieved by the punishment of that man will become more and more graver, with the rest living.
- 32 Wherefore, let the dishonest men withdraw themselves, let them separate themselves from the good men, let them congregate in one place, then let them separate themselves, as I have often already said, from us by a wall; let them cease to plot against the consul in his own house, to surround the tribunal of the praetor of the city, to besiege the senate-house with swords, to gather together fire-darts and torches for the purpose of burning the city: let it then be written on the forehead of each and every one, what he proposes concerning the republic. I promise this to you, members of the senate, that there will be such great diligence in us consuls, such great authority in you, such great virtue in Roman knights, such great unanimity in all good men, that you will see, with the departure of Catiline, that everything is disclosed, brought to light, oppressed and punished.
- 33 And with all these omens, Catiline, the utmost safety of the republic, your misfortune and injury and the destruction of those, who have joined themselves to you in all wickedness and parricide— set out to your impious and nefarious war. You, Jupiter, who were established by Romulus with the same auspices as this city (was), whom we rightly name Protector of this city, and empire, you will keep off this man and the companions of this man from yours and other temples, from the buildings and walls of the city, from the lives and fortunes of all citizens; you will afflict the enemies of good men, the enemies of the fatherland, the robbers of Italy, those having been joined by a treaty and nefarious alliance of evil deeds amongst themselves, living and dead, with eternal punishments.