

https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/On_the_shortness_of_life/Chapter_IV

IV.4 So desirable a thing did leisure seem that he anticipated it in thought because he could not attain it in reality. He who saw everything depending upon himself alone, who determined the fortune of individuals and of nations, thought most happily of that future day on which he should lay aside his greatness.

IV.5 He had discovered how much sweat those blessings that shone throughout all lands drew forth, how many secret worries they concealed. Forced to pit arms first against his countrymen, then against his colleagues, and lastly against his relatives, he shed blood on land and sea.

Through Macedonia, Sicily, Egypt, Syria, and Asia, and almost all countries he followed the path of battle, and when his troops were weary of shedding Roman blood, he turned them to foreign wars. While he was pacifying the Alpine regions, and subduing the enemies planted in the midst of a peaceful empire, while he was extending its bounds even beyond the Rhine and the Euphrates and the Danube, in Rome itself the swords of Murena, Caepio, Lepidus, Egnatius, and others were being whetted to slay him.

IV.6 Not yet had he escaped their plots, when his daughter¹ and all the noble youths who were bound to her by adultery as by a sacred oath, oft alarmed his failing years—and there was Paulus,² and a second time the need to fear a woman in league with an Antony. When he had cut away these ulcers³ together with the limbs themselves, others would grow in their place; just as in a body that was overburdened with blood, there was always a rupture somewhere. And so he longed for leisure, in the hope and thought of which he found relief for his labours. This was the prayer of one who was able to answer the prayers of mankind.

-
1. The notorious Julia, who was banished by Augustus to the island of Pandataria.
 2. In 31 B.C. Augustus had been pitted against Mark Antony and Cleopatra; in 2 B.C. Lullus Antonius, younger son of the triumvir, was sentenced to death by reason of his intrigue with the elder Julia.
 3. The language is reminiscent of Augustus's own characterization of Julia and his two grandchildren in Suetonius (*Aug.* 65. 5): "nec (solebat) aliter eos appellare quam tris vomicas ac tria carcinomata sua" ("his trio of boils and trio of ulcers").