

punish without outside help; and that Arruns was the one who led them over the Alps and exhorted them to attack Clusium. Now I do not dispute that Arruns or some other man from Clusium brought the Gauls to that city. But historians are in general agreement that the Gauls who fought at Clusium were not the first to cross the Alps. Indeed, the Gauls had come into Italy two hundred years before they attacked Clusium and before they captured Rome, nor were the people of Clusium the first Etruscans the Gallic armies attacked, for they had fought many times before with those who lived between the Apennines and the Alps.

Prior to Roman rule the power of the Etruscans extended far over land and sea. The names given to the upper and lower seas that surround Italy like an island are proof of how powerful they were, for the peoples of Italy call one the Tuscan Sea from the nation as a whole, the other the Adriatic from Atria, an Etruscan colony, while the Greeks call them the Tyrrhenian and Adriatic. And they populated the lands adjacent to both seas, founding twelve cities in each area, first settling the one on the near side of the Apennines facing the lower sea and later the one on the far side of the Apennines, sending out as many colonies as there were mother cities; these colonies occupied the entire area across the Po with the exception of the Veneti, who inhabit a corner of the Adriatic. They were undoubtedly also the founders of the Alpine peoples, especially the Raeti, whose location subsequently made them quite uncivilized, retaining nothing save their language, although that too became debased.

34. This is what we are told about the crossing of the Gauls into Italy: during the reign of Tarquinius Priscus at Rome, the chief power among the Celts, whose country comprises a third of Gaul, lay with the Bituriges, who used to supply the Celtic nation with its king. At that time his name was Ambigatus, pre-eminent for courage and the blessings of good fortune in private life and as a public figure. The population was so large and the soil so fertile that it scarcely seemed possible to keep such large numbers under control. When Ambigatus grew old and wished to unburden his kingdom of so many people, he announced that he would send forth Bellovesus and Segovesus, the adventurous sons of his sister, to settle in those lands the gods gave them by augury; they were instructed to take as many men as they liked so that none might withstand their coming.

To Segovesus the Hercynian forests then fell by lot;* to Bellovesus the gods gave the more promising road to Italy. He took the surplus population of the Celtic tribes: from the Bituriges, Arverni, Senones, Aedui, Amboni, Carnutes, and Aulerci.* Setting out with a great force of infantry and cavalry he came to the Tricastini. There the Alps confronted him. I do not wonder that they appeared impassable, since no one had as yet crossed them, as far back as memory goes, unless one chooses to believe in the fables concerning Hercules' exploits. The high mountains held the Gauls back, penned up, so to speak, and they looked for a route that would lead over the summits that touched the sky to another world beyond. A religious scruple also restrained them, when they heard that strangers seeking a place to settle were under attack by the tribe of the Salvi. These were the people of Massilia, who had come by ship from Phocaea.* This the Gauls thought an omen of their own aspirations, and so they gave help in order that the Massiliotes might, without interference by the Salvi, fortify the site they had first occupied on landing.

They themselves then passed through the Taurini and crossed the passes of the Julian Alps. After defeating the Etruscans in battle not far from the Ticinus River and on hearing that the land which they now occupied belonged to the Insubres, the same name as a tribe in the territory of the Aedui, they took this as an omen and founded a city, naming it Mediolanium.* 35. Then another band consisting of Cenomani, under the leadership of Elitovius, using the same pass as their predecessors and with the encouragement of Bellovesus, crossed the Alps and occupied the sites where the cities of Brixia and Verona now stand. The Libui were the next settlers, followed by the Salvi, in the territory around the Ticinus River near the ancient people of the Laevi Ligures. Then came the Boii and Lingones, who crossed over the Poenine Pass.* By this time, holding everything between the Po and the Alps, they crossed the Po by rafts, driving out not only the Etruscans but even the Umbri, but stopping on the far side of the Apennines. The Senones were the latest to arrive, settling in the territory between the Utens and Aesis rivers.* I find it was this tribe that came to Clusium and then to Rome, but it is uncertain whether they were alone or were helped by all the Gallic peoples of the Cisalpine region.

The people of Clusium were thoroughly frightened by the new war they faced, particularly the large numbers of the foe, their strange

appearance, and the kind of weapons they used—and they had heard of the frequent defeats suffered by the Etruscans living on both sides of the Po. And so, although they enjoyed no right of alliance or friendship with the Romans (except that they had not defended their kinsmen at Veii against the Romans), they sent envoys to Rome to seek help from the senate. They received no direct aid, but three envoys, the sons of Marcus Fabius Ambustus, were dispatched, who were instructed to urge the Gauls in the name of the senate and the Roman people not to attack the allies and friends of the Roman people, by whom they had not been injured; further, the Romans would be bound to come to their defence if the situation required; but it seemed better not to resort to arms, if this was possible, and as a new people to make the acquaintance of the Gauls in peace rather than in war.

36. It would have been a peaceable embassy had not the bellicose envoys behaved more like Gauls than Romans. After delivering their message in a meeting of the Gauls, they received the following response: although they were now learning of Rome for the first time, they were yet ready to believe that those whom the people of Clusium had called on in their hour of need were brave men; and because the Romans preferred to defend their allies against themselves by sending an embassy than resorting to arms, they would assuredly not reject the peace that was offered—provided that the people of Clusium ceded a part of their territory to the Gauls, who were in need of land, which the people of Clusium possessed in greater quantity than they could cultivate. Otherwise a peaceful solution was not possible. Furthermore, they wished to receive a response while the Romans were present and, should the land be denied them, they would fight in the presence of these same Romans, who could then report back how much the Gauls surpassed all other mortals in martial prowess. When the Romans asked what right they had to demand land belonging to others or to threaten war, and what business the Gauls had in Etruria in the first place, they received the menacing reply that right consisted in the weapons they carried and that all things belonged to those who had the courage to use them. And so, with feelings running high on both sides, they rushed to arms and battle was joined.

There the envoys took up arms, contrary to the law of nations, and the fates began to bring down ruin on the city of Rome. Nor

could what they did escape notice, since three of the noblest and bravest young Romans were fighting in the front ranks of the Etruscans, so conspicuous was the valour of the strangers. What is more, Quintus Fabius, riding far forward of the battleline, killed the Gallic commander by stabbing his lance through his side as he was charging ferociously into the very standards of the Etruscans. The Gauls recognized him as he gathered the spoils, and word was passed from one end of the battleline to the other that the envoy was the one responsible. Their anger against Clusium vanished; sounding the trumpet for retreat, they turned their menace upon the Romans. Some thought they should march on Rome at once, but the older men persuaded them first to dispatch envoys to complain of the injuries and demand that the Fabii be bound over to them, in accordance with the law of nations. After the Gallic envoys had set forth their complaints as instructed, the senators viewed what the Fabii had done with disapproval and thought the barbarians' demands were just, but favouritism kept them from issuing a decree embodying their true sentiments in opposition to men of such great nobility and influence. And so, in order that the blame for a possible defeat in a war with the Gauls not lay with themselves, they referred the decision concerning the Gauls' demands to the people, among whom wealth and popularity had so much more effect than those whose punishment they were asked to decide were elected military tribunes with consular power for the coming year. When the Gallic envoys heard this, they reacted with justifiable anger. Openly threatening war, they returned to their own people. Elected military tribunes along with the three Fabii were Quintus Sulpicius Longus, Quintus Servilius for the fourth time, and Publius Cornelius Maluginensis.

37. In face of the looming catastrophe—so completely does fortune blind us mortals when she wants to remove all obstacles to her growing power—the state that against Fidenæ, Veii, and other nearby peoples named in many a crisis a dictator as a last resource looked on this occasion to no extraordinary command or safeguard, although they were facing an enemy hitherto unseen and unheard-of—one that had stirred up war from the ocean and the ends of the earth. The tribunes whose reckless behaviour had ignited the war were the heads of state; in conducting the levy they were no more thorough than if this had been an ordinary conflict, even making

light of the rumoured gravity of the danger: In the meantime the Gauls, after hearing that those who had violated man's unwritten laws had been honoured by election to office and their embassy mocked, and beside themselves with anger (to which the Gauls are uncontrollably prone), immediately pulled up their standards and surged forward in a rapid order. In response to the tumult caused by their swift advance, terrified cities rushed to arms and the countryfolk fled, but the Gauls signified by their shouting wherever they went that their destination was Rome, their cavalry and infantry taking up a vast expanse, as they spread out far and wide. Even though their approach was known through rumours and reported by messengers from Clusium and other places, Rome was thunderstruck by the swiftness with which they moved, which is shown both by the haste in mustering the army, as if it were meeting a spur-of-the-moment emergency, and the difficulty of getting any further than the eleventh milestone, where the Allia, a river descending steeply from the mountains above Crustumrium, joins the Tiber not far from the main road. The enemy filled the entire place, in front and on every side, all the while making horrifying sounds, with menacing chants and all kinds of noise, for the Gauls by nature are fond of such empty bravado.

38. There the military tribunes drew up the battleline without first fixing their camp, without building a rampart behind which they might find refuge, paying no heed to the gods much less to the mortals they faced, and without taking the auspices or offering sacrifice. They extended the two wings to prevent being surrounded by the huge number of the enemy, but were none the less unable to match their front line with that of the enemy, even though extending the wings caused the centre to be weak and difficult to hold together. On their right was a slight rise of ground, where they decided to station some reserve forces, which proved to be the place where the fear and flight began and which was the sole refuge for those who fled. For Brennus, the Gallic chieftain, fearing a stragem, especially in view of the paucity of the enemy, and suspecting that the high ground had been occupied for just this purpose and that as the Gauls were making a frontal attack on the Roman legions the reserves would attack his rear and flank, moved against these forces in order to drive them from their position, having no doubt that his numerically superior army would have an easy victory on

level ground. And so the barbarians were blessed not only by fortune but also by foresighted leadership.

On the other side no one behaved like a Roman, not the commanders, not the troops. Fear and flight filled their hearts, together with such utter thoughtlessness that most of them fled to the enemy city of Veii, although the Tiber stood in their way, rather than taking the direct route to Rome, to their wives and children. For a brief time the reserves found protection in their position; as for the rest of the army, as soon as the Gauls' battle-cry was heard those nearest on the flanks and those furthest away at the rear ran from this enemy they had barely seen, without even trying to fight or to raise a battle-cry of their own, without having suffered a scratch or having even been touched. Men were not killed as they fought, but from behind as they struggled through their own men who were blocking their flight. A great slaughter took place along the bank of the Tiber, where the entire left wing had fled after throwing down their arms, and many were swallowed up in the swirling waters, not knowing how to swim or too weak to make the attempt, weighed down by their breastplates and other protective gear. Yet most fled safely to Veii, from where they failed to send men to Rome to defend the city or even news of their defeat. All those on the right wing, who were furthest from the river and closer to the mountains, headed for Rome, where they rushed to the citadel without even bothering to close the city gates behind them.

39. Their sudden victory seemed to the Gauls like a miracle, virtually paralysing them. At first they stood rooted in shock, as if not comprehending what had happened; their next fear was that this was a trap; they then turned to gathering the spoils of the slain and piled up the arms in heaps, as is their custom; at last, with the enemy nowhere in sight, the army moved forward and reached Rome a little before sunset. When the cavalry that had been sent ahead to reconnoitre reported that the gates had not been closed, no sentinels were stationed before the gates, and no armed men were to be seen on the walls, they regarded this as another miracle, much like the first, and were brought up short. Fearful of the darkness and not knowing the layout of the city, they settled down between Rome and the Anio River, after sending scouts around the walls and the other gates to find out what the enemy was doing to meet this desperate crisis.

Those in the city, because most of the army had found refuge in Veii rather than in Rome, believed that only those who had fled to the city had survived. All the living and dead were mourned alike, and virtually the whole city was filled with the sounds of lamentation. Private grief was then swallowed up in fear for the nation when they learned that the enemy was at hand; soon the howls and cacophonous cries of the barbarians as they moved in groups around the walls were heard. Throughout the whole time apprehension held them in its grip, and lasted until the sun rose the next day, so much so that they expected to be attacked at any moment: at the Gauls' first approach, when they reached the city—otherwise they would have remained at the Allia; then at sunset, because little daylight remained—surely they would attack before it grew dark; then in the darkness itself—Rome's panic would be greater under the cover of night. Finally, with dawn approaching they were beside themselves with fear, and close upon this fear came what they were dreading: the enemy's standards were seen moving through the gates.

Yet a complete change had come over the city during the night and in the course of the following day: the Romans were not the same as those who had fled in such panic at the Allia. For when they saw no hope of defending the city with the small force on hand, they took the following decisions: the young fighters with their wives and children were to retire to the citadel and Capitol, where food and weapons had been gathered, and from this fortified place they were to defend gods and men, and the very existence of Rome; the flamen and priestesses of Vesta were to take the sacred objects of the nation far from the carnage and the flames, and the cults of the gods were not to be abandoned as long as any survived to perform them. If the citadel and the Capitol, where the gods resided, if the senate, which guided the ship of state, if the youth of military age survived the ruin that threatened the rest of the city, the loss of most of the older people would be bearable, for they would perish in any event, should they remain in the city. And in order to make the mass of plebeians endure their fate with greater equanimity, those seniors who had celebrated triumphs and those who had held the consulship proclaimed they would die along with them and that they, who could not bear arms or defend their country, would not be a burden to those in arms by depriving them of the sustenance they needed to carry on.

40. So did the elders console one another as death approached. Then, turning to the young fighters, they escorted them to the Capitol and citadel, exhorting them to remember that in their hands lay whatever fortune was left the city, victorious in all her wars for three hundred and sixty years. As those upon whom rested all hopes and resource departed from those who had determined not to survive the city's capture, their plight and the sight of it were pitiable indeed, and when the women rushed back and forth in tears, turning now to one group and now the other, asking husbands and sons to what fate they were abandoning them, the final stroke of human misery was realized. Yet when a great many of them followed their relatives into the citadel, no one stood in their way or called out, because it was inhumane to cast out these non-fighters, however much it might have helped the besieged. Another large group consisting mostly of plebeians poured out of the city as if in a continuous stream, because such a small hill could not hold them all and because of the scarcity of food. They made for the Janiculum hill, from which some scattered through the countryside, others to neighbouring cities. There was no one to lead them and no concerted plan, each following his own hopes and his own counsels, having despaired of aid from the state.

Meanwhile the flamen Quirinalis and the Vestal Virgins, with no thought for their personal affairs, debated what they would have to leave behind, for they had not the strength to carry everything, or what hiding place would prove the safest; in the end they decided the best plan was to put them underground, stored in jars in the shrine next to the house of the flamen Quirinalis, where now it is sacrilege to spit. They divided up the remainder among themselves and took the road over the bridge of wooden piles that leads to the Janiculum.* Lucius Albinus, a plebeian, saw them as they began their ascent. He was moving along in a wagon with his wife and children, part of the crowd of non-combatants leaving the city. Pre-serving even at this moment the respect owed to the gods on the one hand and to men on the other, he regarded it as a sin for the priests of his country to be on foot, carrying the sacred relics of the Roman people, while he and his family were seen riding in their cart. He ordered his wife and children to step down and, putting the virgins and the sacred objects in the wagon, he brought them to Caere, where the priestesses were destined to go.

41. At Rome meanwhile, after everything possible under the circumstances had been done for the defence of the citadel, the throng of elders returned to their homes and awaited the enemy's coming, resolved to die. Those who had held curule magistracies,* wishing to end their days wearing the insignia of their former fortunes, honours, and merit, seated themselves on chairs inlaid with ivory placed in the centre of their homes, clad in their most august raiment, worn when they had escorted the images of the gods in solemn procession or when celebrating a triumph. Some writers affirm that, with Marcus Folius the pontifex maximus dictating the formula, they swore to sacrifice their lives to save their country and the citizens of Rome.*

The Gauls had not been under the pressures of war during the night just ended nor had they at any time been engaged in a battle whose outcome was in doubt, while at present they had no need to use force or violence in taking the city. They entered Rome through the open Colline Gate, neither in anger nor keyed up for battle, and on reaching the forum their eyes looked to the surrounding temples of the gods and to the citadel, which alone seemed prepared to oppose them. They departed the forum after leaving a small protective force in case of attack from the citadel or Capitol, and scattered in search of booty. They met no one in the streets. Some plunged in a body into the nearest buildings, others continued to places far off, as if there they would find houses as yet untouched and full of plunder. But the very solitude made them uneasy; wary of falling into a trap as they wandered about, they returned to the forum and the places near by, and grouped together. There, on finding the houses of the plebeians bolted and the doors of the nobles flung wide, they were almost more hesitant to enter those that were open than those that barred their way. Indeed, they gazed as in veneration at the beings seated in the vestibules of their homes, for their attire and bearing surpassed those of mortal men, and in majesty of countenance and gravity of expression they were most like to deities. They approached them as if they were statues and as they stood there Papirius, one of the elders, is said, when a Gaul touched his beard (all wore full beards in those days), to have struck him with his ivory staff. The Gauls were enraged and a massacre began; the rest were cut down where they sat. After killing the leading statesmen no one was spared. The houses were ransacked, emptied, set afire.

42. The fire on the first day did not, however, spread far or wide, which is unusual in a captured city. Perhaps not everyone was bent on destroying the city, or perhaps the Gallic leaders had fixed on a policy of starting selected fires to frighten the besieged into surrendering out of concern for their personal property and of not burning all the buildings so that what remained could be used as a bargaining tool to bring their enemies to heel. As the Romans looked down from the citadel and beheld their city filled with the enemy and all the streets busy with their comings and goings, and as successive disasters appeared now in one quarter, now in another, they were unable not just to think through what was going on but even to hold their wits together from the assault on their eyes and ears. On every side came the uproar made by the enemy, the cries of women and children, the crackling of the flames, the crash of falling buildings. Appalled and distracted, their minds, heads, and eyes turned in all directions, as if fortune had placed them there to witness the spectacle of their dying country and had left them to fight not for anything they owned but for their lives alone. More to be pitied than any of those who have suffered siege in the past, they were cut off from their country and saw all that they possessed in the hands of the enemy.

The night that followed this terrible day proved equally agonizing. Dawn succeeded unquiet night and no moment went by in which some new disaster was not before their eyes. Yet, though afflicted and weighed down by great misfortune, they were not so crushed that, even if everything they saw was levelled by fire and collapsing in ruin, they were unprepared to defend the Capitol courageously, however small it was, however ill-provided, the sole remaining bastion of liberty. In the end, as if inured to the evils that were piling up day after day, they no longer thought or cared about what they owned, looking to the weapons and swords in their right hands as representing their only remaining hope.

43. The Gauls, too, who for the past few days had been waging a fruitless war upon the buildings of the city, when they saw that nothing was left amid the burned-out ruins save an enemy in arms, and that he had not been cowed at all by the destruction they had wrought and was not about to surrender without fighting, decided to make an all-out effort to capture the citadel in a direct assault. At first light, on a given signal, the forum was filled with the assembled

horde, and after giving their war-cry and raising their shields over their heads, they began to ascend in close formation. The Romans reacted without rashness, without fear. They reinforced the guardposts at all the approaches, and wherever they saw the enemy's standards being directed, there they concentrated their forces, allowing the enemy to move ever upward unopposed, because the higher up the steep incline they got, the easier they could be repulsed. When the Gauls were about half-way up, the Romans counter-attacked and, as they rushed down from their higher position, their very momentum routed the Gauls, tumbling them to their deaths down the cliff. Thereafter the enemy never made an attempt to mount a direct assault, either in groups or all together. And so, giving up hope of taking the place by frontal attack, they got ready to mount a siege. Up to that time they had given no thought to one; moreover, what foodstuffs had been in the city the fire had destroyed, while all the produce in the countryside had been quickly gathered during this time and taken to Veii. Accordingly, they divided their army, one part to plunder peoples near by, the other to besiege the citadel, with those ravaging the countryside supplying the food for the besiegers.

As the Gauls set out from the city, Fortune herself brought them to Ardea to learn first-hand the nature of Roman valour. Camillus was in exile there, saddened more by the fortune that had befallen his native city than by his own, but feeling old and useless, railing against gods and men, indignant, and wondering where those men were who had captured Veii and Falerii under his command, men whose courage had always surpassed their luck. Suddenly came the news that the Gallic army was approaching and that the people of Ardea had gathered in fear to decide how to respond. Hitherto he had not attended their meetings, but now, like one divinely inspired, he entered the assembly and spoke as follows. 44. 'Men of Ardea, old friends in the past and now my fellow citizens—for so your kindness and my hapless fortune would have it—let none of you think that I stand here before you unmindful of my status; but the present situation and the danger that faces us all requires each man to help in whatever way he can in this fearful crisis. And when might I demonstrate my appreciation for the great kindness you have shown me, if I hold back now? How else might I be of use to you, if not in war? Because of this ability I stood secure in my native

city until, undefeated in war, I was driven out in peacetime by ungrateful citizens. Yet, men of Ardea, fortune has given you the opportunity to show your thanks to the Roman people for the great services they have done you, which you yourselves remember—for those conscious of their debts need no chiding—as well as the opportunity to win renown in defeating a common enemy, who approaches in undisciplined force. This is a people to whom nature has given big bodies and much bravado—both unreliable: every time they fight the terror they cause is greater than their real strength. Rome's capture is proof of this. They seized a city whose gates were open. From the citadel and Capitol a small group drove them back. Now, tired of the siege they mounted, they have wandered off to pillage the countryside. They stuff themselves with food and gulp down wine and, when darkness falls, lie down like cattle everywhere along the river banks, taking no steps to protect themselves, posting no guards or sentinels, even more careless than usual because of their successes. If you want to defend these walls, if you do not want everything here to fall into the hands of the Gauls, I urge you to take up your weapons at the first watch, to follow me in force as we go forth—not to battle but to butchery. If I do not give them to you like so many lambs for the slaughter, I am ready to suffer the same fate at Ardea that I did in Rome.'

45. Friend and foe alike considered no contemporary the equal of Camillus in warfare. After the assembly had broken up, they took rest and refreshment, ready to move the instant the signal was given. When it came, they presented themselves before Camillus at the gates. Darkness had descended and it was quiet, and not far from the city they found, as Camillus had predicted, the Gallic camp unguarded and everywhere in disarray. They raised a great cry and burst in. They met no resistance, the slaughter was indiscriminate. The unarmed Gauls were cut down as they slept. But those on the edges of the camp jumped up in panic from where they had bedded down, not knowing what the nature of the attack was or where it was coming from. They fled helter-skelter, some in ignorance running straight toward the enemy. Flight carried a great many to the territory of Antium, where the townspeople sallied forth and cut them off.

In the territory of Veii there was a similar massacre—this time of Etruscans, who were so far from taking pity on Rome, their neigh-

hour for nearly four hundred years and now crushed by an enemy hitherto unseen and unheard-of, that they raided Roman territory during this time and, laden with booty, were even contemplating an attack on Veii and the garrison there, Rome's last hope. The Roman soldiers had seen them moving through the countryside and then, gathering into a line of march, driving the cattle they had taken before them, and they saw their camp being pitched not far from Veii. At first they felt sorry for themselves, then came resentment, then anger: were even the Etruscans, whom they had saved from fighting the Gauls by turning the war upon themselves, aiming to mock them by capitalizing on their misfortunes? They came close to losing self-control and staging an immediate attack, but, held back by the centurion Quintus Caedicius, whom they had chosen as their commander, they settled down until nightfall. They only lacked a leader equal to Camillus; in all else events transpired in the same order and with the same success. In addition, using captives as guides who had survived the night massacre, they moved against another band of Etruscans at the Salt Works,* where they surprised them the following night, creating even greater carnage; they then returned to Veii, rejoicing in their double victory.

46. At Rome meanwhile the siege was for the most part without incident and all was quiet, for neither side was inclined to act, while the Gauls' only concern was to let no one slip past their sentries. Then suddenly a young Roman drew on himself the admiration of citizens and enemies alike. It was a regular custom for the Fabian clan to offer sacrifice on the Quirinal hill. To perform it Gaius Fabius Dorsuo, with his toga girt up in Sabine fashion* and carrying the implements for sacrifice in his hands, descended from the Capitol and strode through the midst of the enemy sentries, unmoved by shouts or threats. After reaching the Quirinal he performed the entire ceremony in traditional fashion and then returned the way he had come, maintaining the same composure of countenance and gait, for he had placed his confidence in the favour of the gods, whose worship he had not forgotten even under the threat of death. The Gauls allowed him to rejoin his men on the Capitol either because they were overawed by this amazing act of courage or because they, too, were sensible to the claims of religion, for as a people they are scrupulous in this regard.

At Veii meanwhile not only had morale improved, but numbers

and strength also. It was there that Romans had gravitated who had been wandering about the countryside after the defeat at the Allia or the capture of the city; in addition, volunteers from Latium poured in, wanting to get their share of the booty. The time now seemed ripe to reclaim their country and wrest it from enemy hands; but, though strong, they had no one to lead them. The place itself was a reminder of Camillus, and many of the soldiers who had served under his auspices and successful leadership were present. Moreover, Caedicius declared he would not wait for god or man to put an end to his command, but, mindful of his status, would himself ask for the appointment of a commander-in-chief. It was unanimously agreed that Camillus should be summoned from Ardea, but only after first receiving the blessing of the senate in Rome—so great was the respect for proper procedure, so sensitive were they to the niceties of the situation when their own situation was well-nigh hopeless.

Yet the messenger would have to pass through the enemy sentries at great peril to himself. For this a gallant young man, Pontius Cominius, volunteered his services: buoyed on a strip of cork, he floated down the Tiber to the city. There he landed as close to the Capitol as he could and, climbing up the steep cliff (which was therefore not guarded by the enemy), he gained the top of the hill and, conducted to the magistrates, reported the charge given him by the army. After the senate decreed that the Curiate assembly* should proceed to recall Camillus by order of the people and he then be named dictator at once and that the soldiers should have the commander they wished, he departed, using the same route, and hastened with his message to Veii. Envoys were dispatched to Camillus at Ardea and escorted him immediately to Veii—although I would prefer to think he did not leave Ardea until he had heard the law had actually been passed, for he could not return to Roman territory without the permission of the people nor possess the auspices to lead the army without having been named dictator. The curiate law was accordingly passed, and he was named dictator in his absence.

47. While these things were going on at Veii, at Rome in the meantime the citadel and Capitol were in great peril. For the Gauls, after finding traces left by the messenger from Veii, or perhaps discovering for themselves that the cliff above the shrine of Carmentis could be scaled, sent out on a starry night an unarmed man to

explore the way first, and then, passing up weapons to one another where the going was rough, supported by those below and pushing up others in turn or pulling up their fellows from above as the going required, they emerged on the summit in such silence that not only did the guards fail to hear them, but the dogs as well, animals quick to respond to sounds in the night. But the geese sacred to Juno heard them, which had been untouched despite the severe shortage of food. And this proved Rome's salvation. For Marcus Manlius, consul three years before and an outstanding soldier, was alerted by their honking and the beating of their wings. He snatched up his weapons and called his fellows to arms. Striding forward, as the others held back in alarm, he struck a Gaul standing on the summit with the boss of his shield and pushed him over the precipice, the downward fall toppling those closest. Manlius then cut down others, who let go their weapons in terror and clung desperately to the rocks with their hands. Then other Romans grouped together and drove back the enemy, hurling javelins and stones, whereat the Gallic force collapsed utterly and plunged down headlong.

After the uproar had subsided, the rest of the night was spent quietly, or at least as quietly as possible for people still in turmoil, even though the danger had now passed. At dawn the trumpet called the soldiers to assemble before the tribunes, who proceeded to reward bravery and punish cowardice. First, Manlius was praised for his courage and given rewards not only by the military tribunes but also by the soldiers acting together, for each one brought to his house (it was on the citadel) a half-pound of spelt and a cup of wine—a small thing in the telling, but a great proof of the high regard in which he was held, given the scarcity, when each man deprived himself of sustenance he needed to keep body and soul together and gave it by way of honour to one man. Next, the guards who had been stationed at the point where the enemy had appeared on the citadel were ordered to stand forth, and, when Quintus Sulpicius, the military tribune, declared he would punish every one of them according to the harsh code of the military, he changed his mind when the assembled soldiers united in loudly accusing a single sentry; so he spared the others and, to everyone's approval, ordered the culprit, whose guilt was manifest, thrown from the precipice. Thereafter sentries on each side were more alert, both among the Gauls, on learning that messengers were moving back and forth

between Veii and Rome, and among the Romans, mindful of the peril they had faced in the night.

48. But of all the evils that afflicted the two sides in the siege and the war, famine was the greatest. The Gauls were stricken with pestilence as well, for their camp lay between the hills in a place scorched by the flames and choked with heat, which the slightest breath of wind filled up with ash and dust. As a people they are accustomed to damp and cold, and are therefore quite intolerant of such conditions; now they had not just fallen victim to stifling heat, but were dying from disease that spread among them as if through a herd of cattle. Not having the energy to bury the dead individually, they heaped up the bodies indiscriminately and cremated them, giving the name Gallic Pyres to the site. They then struck a truce with the Romans, and soldiers on both sides began talking back and forth with the permission of their commanders. When the Gauls kept repeatedly pointing to the Romans' starved state and the consequent necessity of surrendering, those on the Capitol are said to have rained down bread on the enemy guardposts to conceal their plight.

But there came a time when the famine could no longer be disguised or further endured. And so, while the dictator was holding a levy of his own at Ardea (having ordered his master of the horse Lucius Valerius to fetch the army from Veii) and was making preparations and exercising the troops with the aim of enabling them to oppose the enemy on equal terms, the army on the Capitol in the meantime, exhausted from standing guard day and night, having surmounted every misfortune save starvation, which alone nature would not let them overcome, looking day after day for help from the dictator, and, in the end, as both hope and food failed them, seeing the guards staggering to their posts, their wasted bodies barely able to support the weight of their arms—the army finally bade the authorities negotiate surrender or ransom on whatever terms they could, the Gauls having made no secret that they could be persuaded to lift the siege for no very great price. Then the senate convened and the military tribunes were told to treat for peace. A meeting between the military tribune Quintus Sulpicius and Brennus the Gallic chieftain followed. They fixed on an amount: a thousand pounds of gold was the price put on the nation that was destined to rule the world. To this utterly demeaning transaction insult was

added when, after the Gauls used dishonest weights and the tribune protested, Brennus tossed his sword on the scale, uttering words intolerable to Roman ears, 'Woe to the vanquished!'

49. But god and man forbade the Romans be a ransomed people. For by some chance, before the unspeakable business could be carried through, when the gold had not yet been completely weighed out owing to the dispute, the dictator intervened, and ordered the gold taken away and the Gauls removed. When they balked and said they had made an agreement, he informed them that no agreement was valid that had been made without his order by a magistrate of lesser authority after he had been named dictator; and he told the Gauls to make ready for battle. He ordered his men to pile up their backpacks in a heap, to take up arms, and to recover their country by iron instead of gold, having before their eyes the shrines of the gods, their wives and children, the soil of their country ravaged by the evils of war, and all those things that duty enjoined them to defend, reclaim, and avenge. He then drew up his battleline, as the terrain permitted, on ground uneven by nature and in a city half in ruins, and made provision for everything that good generalship could plan or devise for the benefit of his men.

The Gauls were alarmed by this unexpected turn of events; they seized their weapons and attacked the Romans more in anger than good judgement. But now Fortune had reversed her course, now the favour of the gods and man's intelligence were on Rome's side. And so at the first clash the rout of the Gauls was accomplished with as little effort as they themselves had expended in their victory at the Allia. Then in a more regular battle at the eighth milestone on the road to Gabii, where they had gone after taking flight, they were defeated for a second time under the leadership and auspices of the same Camillus. The slaughter was total: their camp was captured and not even a messenger survived to report the disaster. The dictator, after taking back his country from the enemy, returned to the city in triumph, in which his soldiers, in rough, extemporaneous verse, deservedly called him Romulus, parent of his country and the city's second founder.

There is no question that the country he had saved in war he now saved again in peace, by preventing the scheme to migrate to Veii, which the tribunes advocated more strongly after the burning of the city and which the plebs of themselves were disposed to favour.

This was the reason why he did not resign the dictatorship after his triumph, for the senate begged him not to leave the state in such an unsettled condition. 50. His first act, as a man of great religious sensibility, was to bring before the senate matters pertaining to the immortal gods. The following decree was the result: all shrines should be rebuilt, marked with boundary stones and purified because they had been in enemy hands; the method of purification was to be sought in the Sibylline books by the two men in charge of them; the people of Caere should be made the guest-friends of the city because they had housed the sacred objects of the Roman people and their priests and, owing to their kindness, the worship due the immortal gods had not been interrupted; the Capitoline Games should be instituted because Jupiter Optimus Maximus had protected his temple and the citadel of the Roman people at a terrifying time, and to celebrate these games Marcus Furius the dictator was to form a board selected from among those who lived on the Capitol and citadel. Then a proposal was made to expiate the omen of the nocturnal voice that was heard to foretell the Gallic attack before it happened but had been disregarded, and the order was given to build a temple to Aius Locutius, the Speaking Voice, on New Street. Because people could not remember what gold had been recovered from the Gauls and what had been taken from different temples in the confusion and stored in the shrine of Jupiter, they were at a loss how to put it back; accordingly, the senate decreed that all of it was sacred and should be placed beneath Jupiter's throne. Even before this happened, when the state did not have enough gold to pay the Gauls the full amount agreed upon, religious feeling had been shown when the matrons supplied the deficit in order to leave gold that was sacred untouched. Now they were thanked, and given in addition the right to have a customary speech of praise delivered at their funerals, as in the case of men. Only after these steps had been taken that pertained to the gods and that fell under the senate's purview, did he reply to the tribunes of the plebs, who in one meeting after another had been urging their constituents to move to Veii, a city ready and waiting to receive them, and to abandon their ruined country. Camillus entered one of these meetings, accompanied by the entire senate, and delivered the following speech.

51. 'So hateful to me are these conflicts with the plebeian tribunes, citizens, that throughout my unhappy exile at Ardea my one

consolation was the thought that I was far removed from this strife, and that precisely because of it I would never return—not even if you called me back repeatedly by decrees of the senate and votes of the people. But now your altered fortune, not a change of heart, has forced my return, since at issue is whether our country is to continue in this place, not whether I am to live in our country. And I would now make no move and would gladly hold my tongue, if this present dispute were not also a fight for our country; but to fail her at this juncture, so long as a spark of life remains, would be in the eyes of others an affront to honour, in the eyes of Camillus an affront to heaven also. For why are we trying to win the city back, why did we wrest it from enemy hands when they had it under siege, if we voluntarily abandon what we have recovered? Not long ago, with the Gauls victorious and the whole city in their power, gods and the men of Rome nevertheless held out on the Capitol and citadel. Now, with Romans victorious and the city retaken, will even the citadel and Capitol be abandoned? Will good fortune devastate the city more completely than did our misfortune?

‘Even if the religious practices that were established when this city was founded and have been handed down by our forebears meant nothing to us, still, the power of the gods has been so clearly revealed in Rome’s affairs in these past days that mankind, I believe, will never again disregard any aspect of their worship. If you review in your minds the successes and failures of recent years, you will find that everything the gods favoured turned out well, everything they opposed did not. Take the war with Veii first. Think of the time and effort it took! And think, too, of the fact that it did not end before the gods advised us to let the waters from the Alban lake. And what of the disaster we have just experienced? Did it not occur only after we had disregarded the voice from heaven warning of the Gauls’ coming? After our envoys violated the law of nations, after we failed to punish them because of this same disregard of religion? The conclusion is inescapable. The penalty we paid to gods and men in suffering defeat, capture, and ransom is so great that we stand today as an object lesson to the entire world.

‘Yet then, in our darkest hour, we remembered the gods. We fled to them on the Capitol, to the home of Jupiter Optimus Maximus; amid the loss of our personal possessions, we buried some sacred objects in the earth, others we took from the enemy’s sight and

carried them to cities near by. Though abandoned by gods and men we still did not forsake the gods’ worship. They therefore gave us back our country, gave us back victory, gave us back the honour we long enjoyed in warfare but had lost, and upon enemies who in blind avarice had broken their word and the truce in weighing out the gold, they brought panic, flight, and death.

52. ‘Seeing such telling evidence of what happens when the power of heaven is honoured and when it is slighted, do you realize, citizens, how great a sin we are about to commit now, having barely survived the shipwreck of our former guilt and calamity? Our city owed its foundation to augury and to the auspices taken then. There is no place in it that is not filled with religious associations and divine power. There are as many days fixed for religious ceremonies as there are places in which they are performed. Do you intend, men of Rome, to abandon all the gods of the state and all those we worship privately? How does this compare with what that outstanding young man Gaius Fabius did during the recent siege? He excited the wonder no less of the Gauls than of you when, quitting the citadel, he strode through Gallic spears and performed the rites of the Fabian clan on the Quirinal hill. Is it your pleasure that the sacred rites of families not be interrupted even in wartime, while the state religion and the gods of Rome are abandoned in peace? That our nation’s pontiffs and flammens be more derelict in their public duties than a private person practising the rites of his clan?

‘Possibly someone might say that either we will perform these ceremonies at Veii or we will send our priests here to perform them. But neither can be done while maintaining their sacral integrity. I need not enumerate all the holy rites by type and all the gods. The feast of Jupiter will suffice. His couch* cannot be set up in any other place than the Capitol, can it? And I do not need to mention the everlasting flame of Vesta and the image which is housed in her temple as guarantor of Rome’s empire.* What of your shields, Mars Gradivus, and you, father Quirinus? Citizens, do you intend to abandon and profane all these holy things that are coeval with the city, some even antedating its founding?

‘Look now at the difference between us and our ancestors. They handed down certain religious ceremonies that we are obligated to perform on the Alban Mount and at Lavinium. If it was wrong for rituals to be moved from enemy cities to us here in Rome, how can

we move them to the enemy city of Veii without committing sacrilege? Come, think how often ceremonies are repeated because some step in ancestral ritual has been omitted through negligence or accident. Not so long ago, in consequence of the prodigy of the Alban lake, what else turned our fortunes around when the war was going badly at Veii if not the repetition of sacred rites and the renewal of the auspices? But then we acted like men mindful of their ancient religious inheritance when we brought to Rome foreign deities and introduced new ones. Queen Juno was recently carried to the Aventine from Veii. Remember the enthusiasm of the married women, the great throng of people who celebrated her dedication! We ordered a temple to Aius Locutius be built because of the voice from heaven that was heard in New Street. At the senate's direction we added the Capitoline Games to the others we regularly hold and created a new board to oversee them. What point was there in making such innovations if we were about to leave Rome along with the Gauls, if our occupation of the Capitol through so many months of siege was not voluntary, but because fear of the enemy kept us there?

'We speak of rites and of temples, but what of our priests? Doesn't it occur to you how great the sacrilege would be? There is only one place for the Vestals, and nothing save the capture of the city has ever moved them from it. It is a sin for our priest of Jupiter, the flamen Dialis, to spend a single night outside the city.* Do you intend to have our priests of Rome transmogrified into priests of Veii? Will your Vestals desert you, Vesta? Will the flamen by living on foreign soil bring down, night after night, a crushing burden of sin upon himself and the nation?

'And what of the other things whose performance depends on taking the auspices, most of which take place within the city's sacred boundary? How can we consign them to such oblivion, to such neglect? The Comitia Curiata, which concerns our military, the Comitia Centuriata, in which you elect consuls and military tribunes—where can they be convened, after the auspices have been taken, except in the places they are customarily held? Will we transfer these things to Veii? Or will the people at great inconvenience come back here to elect them, to a place forsaken by gods and men?

53. 'Aside from the fact that everything has been polluted and no act of atonement can set it right, someone might say it is quite apparent that our present predicament requires us to quit a city

wasted by fire and lying in ruins, to move to Veii where everything is intact, and not to burden our indigent plebs by having to rebuild here. That this argument is more specious than real is, I think, apparent to you, citizens, even if I were not to mention it, for you remember that even before the Gauls' arrival, when the city was safe and sound, when the public and private buildings were intact, this same proposal to move to Veii was discussed. What is more, I want you tribunes to realize how much your thinking differs from mine. You maintain that even if it was unnecessary then, it is necessary now, while I, on the contrary—do not be surprised until you understand my meaning—am convinced that even if it was right to consider moving while Rome was still untouched, we must not abandon her now that she is in ruins. Previously, the reason for migrating was our victory in capturing Veii, a glorious thing for us and our descendants; now it is a source of shame and humiliation, but something that the Gauls can glory in. For we will be seen not as having left as victors, but to have lost our country after being defeated; it will be said we had no choice, that we were forced to abandon our tutelary deities, to go into exile, to flee the place we could not defend after the rout at the Allia, the capture of the city, and the siege of the Capitol. Will Romans be seen as incapable of rebuilding a city that the Gauls were able to demolish? If they should come again with a new force—for everyone agrees that their numbers are scarcely to be believed—if they should decide to settle in this city which they captured, must not one expect that you would permit it? Or suppose it was not the Gauls but your old enemies, the Aequi or Volsci, who chose to migrate to Rome—would you want them to be citizens of Rome, you of Veii? Or do you prefer this to be a place where you are not rather than a city where the enemy is? Frankly, I cannot conceive of anything more disgraceful. Are you prepared to put up with such outrage, such humiliation, because you are loath to rebuild?

'If in the whole city no finer, no grander dwelling could be built than the hut of our founder,* isn't it better to live in huts like shepherds and peasants amid our tutelary deities and the things sacred to us than to go *en masse* into exile? Our ancestors, who were refugees and shepherds, quickly built this city in a place where there was nothing except forests and marshes. Are we loath to rebuild the structures that have burned, while the Capitol and citadel remain

untouched, while the temples of the gods still stand? In face of a conflagration that has affected us all, shall we refuse to do together what each of us would have done if his own house had burned down?

54. 'But that is not all. If accident or arson should cause a fire to break out in Veii, and if, as can happen, the wind spreads the flames, destroying a great part of the city, will we look to Fidenae or Gabii, or to some other city, where we can take up residence? Does our native soil, does mother earth, as we call her, have so little hold on us that love of country is love for the buildings and timbers placed upon her? Let me now make a confession, even though I find it more painful to mention the wrong you did me than the suffering I endured. All the time I was in exile, whenever I thought of my country, I beheld in my mind's eye everything that surrounds us here at this moment: the hills and plains, the Tiber, the familiar earth and sky, which saw my birth and upbringing. It is my fervent wish, citizens, that love for this place will so fill your hearts that you will remain where you are, and that you will not, if you do leave, be wracked by longing, homesick for your native soil. Gods and men chose this place to found a city for excellent reasons: these health-giving hills, the river near to hand that conveys provisions from places inland and up which goods from abroad are brought, the sea conveniently close by, but not so near that we are exposed to danger from foreign fleets—the very heart of Italy, a place uniquely fitted to promote the growth of our city. The size itself of a city so new is proof. Rome is now in its three-hundredth-and-sixty-fifth year, citizens.* For a long time you have waged wars against peoples far older, and all the while, not to enumerate the cities one by one, not the numerous strongholds of the Volsci combined with the Aequi, not the armies and navies of all of Etruria, spanning the breadth of Italy from sea to sea, have been your equal in war. In view of the success you have enjoyed here, what reason, in heaven's name, could there be for trying some other place—for though your valour may accompany you, the good fortune that attends this site assuredly cannot.

'You see the Capitol before you, where once the unearthing of a human head was taken as a sign that this spot marked what would be the centre of empire and head of the world. Here, when the Capitol was cleared of buildings, the gods of Youth and of Boundar-

ies, Iuventas and Terminus, would not allow themselves to be moved, to the great joy of your ancestors.* Here is Vesta's fire, here the shields of Mars fell from the sky, here, if you remain, all the gods in heaven will shower their blessings upon you.'

55. Camillus' speech is said to have moved them greatly, especially when he spoke of religion, but a fortuitous remark decided the question. During a meeting of the senate, held shortly thereafter to discuss the matter in the building built by King Hostilius,* a cohort of soldiers returning from sentry duty chanced to be marching through the forum. When they reached the place of assembly, the centurion called out, 'Standard-bearer, plant the standard; we will do best to remain here.' When the senators heard what he had said they came out of their chamber crying that they accepted the omen, while the plebs crowded around, voicing their agreement. The proposed law was then rejected by the voters.

Rebuilding began haphazardly all over the city. Roof tiles were supplied at public expense, while those who pledged to finish construction within a year were allowed to take wood and stone from wherever they could find them. The haste with which they worked resulted in an irregular street plan, as they built over empty areas without attention to the exact boundaries between their own and others' property. This is the reason why the old sewer system, which originally followed its course through public land, now runs in many places under private dwellings, and the result is a city that resembles one built piecemeal rather than laid out according to a master plan.