

*Rome is under siege by the Etruscan king Porsenna; a young Gaius Mucius decides to make an attempt on the king's life.*

obsidio erat nihilo minus et frumenti cum summa caritate inopia, sedendoque expugnaturum se urbem spem Porsinna habebat, cum C. Mucius, adulescens nobilis, cui indignum uidebatur populum Romanum seruientem cum sub regibus esset nullo bello nec ab hostibus ullis obsessum esse, liberum eundem populum ab iisdem Etruscis obsideri quorum saepe exercitus fuderit,—itaque magno audacique aliquo facinore eam indignitatem uindicandam ratus, primo sua sponte penetrare in hostium castra constituit; dein metuens ne si consulum iniussu et ignaris omnibus iret, forte deprehensus a custodibus Romanis retraheretur ut transfuga, fortuna tum urbis crimen adfirmante, senatum adit. “transire Tiberim” inquit, “patres, et intrare, si possim, castra hostium uolo, non praedo nec populationum in uicem ultor; maius si di iuuant in animo est facinus.” adprobant patres; abdito intra uestem ferro proficiscitur. ubi eo uenit, in confertissima turba prope regium tribunal constitit. Ibi cum stipendium militibus forte daretur et scriba cum rege sedens pari fere ornatu multa ageret eumque milites uolgo adirent, timens sciscitari uter Porsinna esset, ne ignorando regem semet ipse aperiret quis esset, quo temere traxit fortuna facinus, scribam pro rege obtruncat. uadentem inde qua per trepidam turbam cruento mucrone sibi ipse fecerat uiam, cum concursu ad clamorem facto comprehensum regii satellites retraxissent, ante tribunal regis destitutus, tum quoque inter tantas fortunae minas metuendus magis quam metuens, “Romanus sum” inquit, “ciuis; C. Mucium uocant. hostis hostem occidere uolui, nec ad mortem minus animi est, quam fuit ad caedem; et facere et pati fortia Romanum est.”

LIVY 2.12

*caritate*: think Engl. “dear”

*fuderit*: *fundo* = “pour” but also “defeat”

*transfuga*: a deserter

*populatio*: the act of plundering, laying waste

*facinus*: probably always negative in Cicero but can be neutral in historians; “a deed”

*confertus* < *confercio* < *farcio* to stuff

*sciscitor* (1) = πυνθάνομαι

*semet* = *se* + *-met* intensifying particle; “his very self” vs simply “himself”

*satelles* an attendant, assistant

*sentences for translation into Latin*

1. Porsenna hopes to defeat (= “expects that he will”) the Roman army.
2. Porsenna hoped to defeat the enemy soldiers.
3. After the king had defeated the Roman army he began to lay siege to the city.
4. After Rome had been taken through siege the Roman people became slaves to their Etruscan overlords.
5. Gaius learned through inquiry which one was Porsenna.