
WJEC

Certificate in Latin Literature

Unit 9542
Latin Literature Narratives

Section A
Tacitus, *Messalina*

Student Study Book



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hortatio*

You may now be about to have your first encounter with a sizeable chunk of Latin written by Roman authors. It will at first seem noticeably more difficult than what you have read previously. There is a simple explanation for this. What you've read so far is mostly written by modern hacks (i.e. British schoolteachers), composing pieces of Latin whose difficulty slowly but steadily increases to match your increasing grasp of the language. Roman authors, of course, did not do anything like this; they did not automatically begin a work with the easiest bits and put the hardest bits at the end. So you are likely to feel that the level of difficulty begins by rising sharply but then settles down; your increasing experience of the language should help to make you feel steadily more comfortable.

Introduction

These notes and questions are composed particularly for students who have only a limited amount of time with a teacher. Follow your teacher's guidance over which notes to use and which questions to answer. The more time you have with your teacher, the more questions can be ignored.

The text has ten sections, generally corresponding to ten chapters of Tacitus' text. Each section (e.g. Section I) is divided into a number of sub-sections (Section Ia, Section Ib, etc.), each with its own heading and its own notes and questions.

The notes on each sub-section nearly always begin by taking you through three steps:

1. read the sub-section (aloud if possible);
2. study the vocabulary for the section;
3. read the sub-section again.

You do not have to stick rigidly to these steps. You may find you make better progress by repeating a particular step, or missing one out; you may want to vary your approach from one sub-section to the next. Experiment with different approaches to find the one that suits **you**; the aim is to prepare yourself as fully as you can for the detailed questions that follow. You will usually find it best to finish work on each sub-section by checking that you can translate it, as recommended in the notes.

In addition to comprehension questions, some questions ask you to analyse the grammar of a particular word or phrase. Your teacher will tell you whether or not to use these questions. The exam will not contain grammar questions, but they are included here to help you towards an accurate translation and a fuller understanding of the text.

Some questions, such as "Why do you think character so-and-so behaved in this way?" or "What is the mood of this section?" have more than one possible answer. In dealing with such questions, study the text carefully and come to your own conclusion. An examiner will always give credit for any sensible answer, supported where possible by quoting from the Latin text. A dagger (†) means there is no "official" right answer to a question.

An asterisk (*) next to a question indicates that the question is or may be suitable for group discussion. It is often a good plan for you to work on such questions on your own first and then compare your answers with those of the rest of the group. Groups (or pairs) can also be used to discuss how a passage should be translated, but beware of taking over someone else's translation without understanding how that translation was arrived at.

Messalina contains many examples of Indirect Statement, and you may find it helpful to work through *Cambridge Latin Grammar* pages 79-81 (especially page 81, section 25, paragraph 6) to practise this feature.

Check boxes



From time to time you will find check boxes in the notes. These encourage you to check your answer to a question. Answers can be found at the end of the notes for the particular sub-section.

Introduction to Section I

According to Roman historians, after the soldiers of the Praetorian Guard had killed the emperor Caligula (AD 41), they found his uncle **Claudius** hiding behind a curtain in the palace and decided he would be a good choice to succeed Caligula. He was the brother of Germanicus (a popular general, still remembered with great affection in the army years after his death). While the Senate was discussing whether to restore republican government and have no more emperors, the Praetorian Guard settled the matter: Claudius was emperor. He suffered from various physical

***hortatio**: *speech of encouragement*, e.g. delivered by general to his troops on the eve of battle.

disabilities (possibly caused by cerebral palsy) and the first two emperors, Augustus and Tiberius, had wondered if he was also defective mentally; many people simply thought of him as a harmless member of the emperor's family who lived a quiet life and liked writing history. But in his early years as emperor, he was unexpectedly business-like; he judged legal cases enthusiastically (perhaps *too* enthusiastically) and launched the conquest of Britain, visiting the island in person.

Valeria Messalina (sometimes spelt *Messallina*) was Claudius' third wife; his previous two marriages had ended in divorce. She came from a very distinguished upper-class family; both of her parents were cousins of Claudius, and she was (like Claudius) directly related to Rome's first emperor, Augustus. As the emperor's young wife, Messalina had to learn to live in the sometimes dangerous world that surrounded him. She learnt fast. The events described here began in AD 47, by which time Messalina's behaviour had become notorious.

Time Chart

BC	10 (1st August)	birth of Claudius
AD	between 20 and 26	birth of Messalina
	late 39 or early 40	Messalina marries Claudius
	40	birth of daughter Octavia to Claudius and Messalina
	41 (24th January)	Claudius becomes emperor
	41 (12th February)	birth of son to Claudius and Messalina
	43	invasion of Britain; Claudius' son receives additional name Britannicus

Messalina's birth-date is uncertain. If it was as early as 20, she was married rather late for a girl of aristocratic family; if it was as late as 26, she was very quick, for someone so young, at learning the skills of sexual misbehaviour and political crime.

At the time of these events, **Gaius* Silius**, a young member of a noble family, described by Tacitus as **pulcherrimus**, had been named in advance as consul during one of the next two years. He plays a central part in the following narrative, for reasons which will quickly become obvious if you've not guessed them already. His wife, Junia Silana, came from a powerful family, several members of which had held the consulship.

One man can't run an empire on his own, and although much of the work was carried on by the Senate and by magistrates such as the consuls and provincial governors, each emperor used a small number of ex-slaves (**liberti**) as private secretaries and personal assistants. Among the **liberti** of Claudius was **Narcissus**, another key player in the drama surrounding Messalina.

Narcissus was Claudius' secretary **ab epistulis** (*dealing with letters* – an unusual meaning of **ab**). When handling the large amount of correspondence to and from the emperor, he could sometimes influence Claudius' decisions – for example, he might steer Claudius into deciding to grant somebody a favour. This was a risky game to play, but it gave Narcissus immense power. He was obviously a good person to bribe, and became phenomenally rich.

As well as Claudius, Messalina, Silius and Narcissus, there is a fifth person to bear in mind: the man telling the story. **Tacitus** was famous for his eloquence as an orator and a historian, and had a distinguished career as a senator. In AD 77 he married the daughter of Agricola, governor of Britain. He was consul during AD 97, a year of great political crisis and unrest in the army, and in about AD 112/113 he was governor of Asia.

In his *Annales* (*Annals*), Tacitus wrote an account of Roman history beginning with the death of Augustus. Books I-VI of the *Annales* survive, then there is a gap, and the story is picked up again in Book XI, about half-way through Claudius' reign.

It is natural to ask, especially when reading a dramatic episode like the story of Messalina, "Is it true?" or "How can Tacitus have known this?" Tacitus was born eight or nine years after these events took place, but he could have questioned older people, and he had read historical accounts (now lost) written by people like Pliny the Elder. Opinions differ about the accuracy of Tacitus' facts and about his comments on the events he describes. He claimed to write **sine ira et studio** (*without anger and bias*), but not everyone accepts this claim. As you read the text, you will find it a good idea to pause from time to time and ask yourself "Does this account sound convincing, or probable?" or "How fair is Tacitus' comment?"

*When abbreviated to a single letter, the letter used is "C.", not "G.". This abbreviation goes back to the days when the letter C represented both c-sounds and g-sounds, the letter G being added later. (If you say a pair of words such as "cot" and "got, your mouth will feel the similarity between the two initial consonants, whereas rot, for example, feels quite different.)

Soon after Claudius became emperor, he was faced with the rebellion of a provincial governor who commanded two legions and had been encouraged to revolt by many senators. Claudius panicked, and although the rebellion collapsed in a few days, he remained wary of possible conspiracies against him. He knew that most senators had not wanted him as emperor; many hoped for a return to republican government. Claudius' suspicions led him to hold private "treason trials" in his palace (often with Messalina present), resulting in the death of a number of senators.

Messalina knew that, as Claudius' wife, she, too, could be a target. She also saw that she could gain personally by getting accusers to bring false charges against innocent people. For example, she brought about the death of Asiaticus, a distinguished man who had twice held the consulship. Her motives, according to Tacitus, were partly a dislike of Asiaticus' lady-friend, partly a wish to possess Asiaticus' splendid gardens. Messalina next intended to launch accusations against Claudius' niece Agrippina, but was diverted by a powerful new interest ...

1. Read lines 1-4 (... **potiretur**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again, noting that three people are involved.
4. Who is the first sentence about? What emotion came over her? Quote the Latin word.
5. Translate these two sentences (the second is a shortened version of line 1):
 - (i) **heri templum ab hostibus incensum est.**
 - (ii) **Messalina amore incensa est.** As this is about a person, not a temple, a different translation of **incensum/incensa** is needed. The verb *to fire*, as in sentences like "They were fired (*or fired up*) by desire for revenge", obviously contains the idea of burning, so you could use it here.
6. Translate the two adjectives in line 1 which describe the love felt by Messalina. Which adjective suggests that Messalina's love was extremely unwise, and which one suggests that she had had at least one affair previously?
7. What is said about her passion?
 - (a) it *seemed* mad
 - (b) it *was* madGive a reason for your choice.
8. Notice the translation of **quasi**. The word has the same effect as putting **insano** in inverted commas (or miming inverted commas in the air, if the sentence is spoken).
9. Translate the first sentence.
10. In lines 2-4, find and translate a verb in the pluperfect tense which tells you about the state of Messalina's feelings.
11. For whom did she have these feelings?
12. A reminder that superlative adjectives (**gravissimus, celerrimus**, etc.) can be translated in more than one way. Translate these sentences:
 - (i) **ille athleta est celerrimus.**
In the next sentence, **celerrimus** requires a different translation:
 - (ii) **frater meus est celerrimus omnium illorum athletarum.**
 - (iii) (based on part of line 2) **Silius erat pulcherrimus omnium Romanorum.**
 - (iv) **iuventus** (*youth*) can be used in the same way as **iuvenes** (*young men*), just as *the youth of today* can mean *the young people of today*. Using this information, and the answer to sentence (iii), translate the description of Silius in line 2.
13. In line 2, **ita** points forward to **ut** ... (*she had become ... in such a way that she ...*). Find and translate the subjunctive verb in line 4 which tells you the first result of Messalina's passion. Whom did she force out, and how does Tacitus describe her (line 3)?
14. Which of these translations of **matrimonio eius** (line 3) is literally correct, and which one is the most natural translation in this particular sentence?
 - (a) *out of the marriage from him*
 - (b) *out of her marriage with him*
 - (c) *out of the marriage of him*

To whom does **eius** refer?

*15. When **exturbare** refers to divorce, it usually indicates the action of a husband:

senator uxorem matrimonio exturbavit. *The senator forced his wife out of their marriage (i.e. divorced her).*

What do you think Tacitus means by saying that Messalina forced Junia Silana out of her marriage with Silius? Did Messalina bully Junia Silana, or put pressure on Silius to divorce her? Or can you suggest an explanation of your own? (†)

16. What was the second result of Messalina's feelings for Silius (line 4)? (Hint: the verb **potiri** *to take possession of* is used with a noun in the ablative case, because an early meaning of the verb was *to make oneself powerful with ...*) If you are unsure why **potiretur** has a passive ending, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 38, paragraph 8b Imperfect. You will meet another of these verbs in section 1b.
17. Which is the more emphatic word in the phrase **libero adultero**? Which of these two translations seems to you to get the emphasis right?
- (a) an unencumbered adulterer
 - (b) an adulterer who was unencumbered
18. Messalina's lover is now described as *unencumbered* or *disentangled* (**libero**). What had been the "problem" from which Silius was disentangled?
19. Translate this sub-section.
- *20. Use the Time Chart in the Introduction to Section I to remind yourself of Messalina's age in AD 47 (within a five-year range), then consider her personality. What impression do you have from lines 1-4? Pleasant or unpleasant? Weak or powerful? Pick out and translate the words which contribute to your impression. Do any words in these lines indicate approval or disapproval of her behaviour?
- *21. Many writers besides Tacitus have compared love to a fire. How many similarities between love and fire can you think of?

Answers

5. (i) *Yesterday the temple was burnt (down) by the enemy.*
(ii) *Messalina was fired (or fired up) by love.*
12. (i) *That athlete is very fast.*
(ii) *My brother is the fastest of all those athletes.*
(iii) *Silius was the most handsome of all the Romans.*
(iv) *The most handsome of the Roman young men.*
or, *The most handsome of the young Roman men.*

Notes

Section 1b

Lines 4-8 (neque ... frui)

Silius decides

neque Silius flagitii
aut periculi nescius erat: sed intellexit exitium, si abnueret, 5
fore certum et, si consentiret, nonnullam facinoris celandi
spem esse; simulque se magna praemia accepturum. igitur
placuit neglegere futura praesentibus frui.

- 4 neque - *and not, nor*
Silius, Silii - *Gaius Silius, a young nobleman*
flagitium, flagitii - *scandal*
- 5 aut - *or*
periculum, periculi - *danger*
nescius, nescia, nescium - *unaware of*
sum, esse, fui - *be*
sed - *but*
intellego, intellegere, intellexi, intellectus -
understand
exitium, exitii - *destruction, killing, death*
si - *if*
abnuo, abnuere, abnui - *refuse, deny*
sum, esse, fui - *be*
6 certus, certa, certum + *gen.* - *certain*
et - *and, also, even*
si - *if*
consentio, consentire, consensi - *agree*
nonnullus, nonnulla, nonnullum - *some*
facinus, facinoris - *deed, crime*
celo, celare, celavi, celatus - *hide*

- 7 spes, spei - *hope*
sum, esse, fui - *be*
simul - *at the same time, together*
se - *himself, herself, themselves*
magnus, magna, magnum - *big, great*
praemium, praemii - *prize, reward*
accipio, accipere, accepi, acceptus - *receive*
igitur - *therefore, and so*
- 8 placeo, placere, placui + *dat.* - *please, suit, be pleasing*
neglego, neglegere, neglexi, neglectus -
neglect, disregard, ignore
futura, futurorum - *the future*
praesentia, praesentium - *the present*
fruor, frui, fructus sum + *abl.* - *enjoy*

1. Read lines 4-8 (**neque ... frui**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again. If possible, read it aloud, with special attention to the *pauses*. There is one at each punctuation mark and a slight pause after **certum** in line 6.
4. What drawbacks to an affair with Messalina are mentioned in lines 4-5 (**neque ... erat**)? Was Silius aware of these drawbacks? Translate the sentence.
5. What were the two choices facing Silius over Messalina's invitation? Each choice is introduced by **si** in lines 5 and 6 ("If he did X, one thing would happen; if he did Y, something different was likely.")
6. What did Silius realise would happen if he chose the first alternative (**intellexit ... certum**, lines 5-6)? (Hint: according to Tacitus, Silius thought "**exitium meum ... erit certum**"; for **erit**, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 40, section 9, paragraph 1, Future)
7. The word **fore** (line 6) is the short form of the *future* infinitive **futurum esse**:

futurum (giving us our word *future*) means *about-to-be* or *going-to-be*
esse means *to be*

futurum esse therefore means *to be about-to-be*. It is often replaced by **fore**, but the literal meaning remains the same: *to be about-to-be*.

Whether **futurum esse** or **fore** is used, the translation *to be about-to-be* has to be tweaked in the following way to produce acceptable English:

direct statement

ancilla "dominus erit attonitus" inquit. *"The master will be astonished" said the slave-girl.*

indirect statement

ancilla credebat dominum fore attonitum. *The slave-girl believed the master to be about to be astonished.*
 Or, after tweaking into natural English: *The slave-girl believed that the master would be astonished.*

Translate what Silius said to himself:

direct statement

"exitium meum erit certum."

Now translate Tacitus' report of Silius' thoughts. Use the literal translation of **fore** if it helps, but you may find it just as easy to go straight for natural English:

indirect statement

Silius intellexit exitium fore certum.

(Although these events took place many years ago, Tacitus uses the *future* infinitive, because what Silius realised was, *from his point of view*, the future.)

8. **exitium** is a strong word. Why would saying "no" to Messalina *certainly* have this result? You might consider what you have learnt about Messalina's power and personality, as revealed in lines 1-4 and described in the Introduction to Section I.
9. If Silius chose the second alternative (**si consentiret**, line 6), how much hope did he have of getting away with it, according to lines 6-7?
 - (a) no hope at all
 - (b) some hope
 - (c) considerable hope

Which two words tell you this?

10. Translate the two-word phrase in the *genitive* case in line 6, which tells you what Silius had a hope *of* doing if he said "yes" to Messalina. (If you are unsure why *both* words are in the genitive, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 82, section 26, paragraph 2a.)
- *11. Why do you think Silius fancied his chances of concealing the affair from Claudius? You might consider Claudius' personality and Messalina's previous behaviour, as indicated in the Introduction to Section I. (†)
12. What additional advantage did he think would result from an affair with Messalina (line 7)? (Hint: according to Tacitus, Silius thought "**ego magna praemia accipiam**".)

If you are unsure whether the phrase **magna praemia** is singular or plural, notice the gender of **praemium** in the glossary, and see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 9, section 1, paragraph 2, **templum**.

13. Do you have some idea by now what Silius' choice will be?!
14. Even though there are no inverted commas, how would a Roman have known from the form of the words in line 7 (**se ... accepturum**) that the narrative is continuing to quote Silius' thoughts (see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 81, section 25, paragraph 6 if necessary) and that **se** refers to Silius, not to anybody else (*Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 80, section 25, paragraph 4d)?
15. These are examples of a common Latin way of relating *decision-taking*, used by Tacitus in line 8:
 (i.a) **mercatori placuit tabernam vendere.** *It pleased the merchant to sell the shop.*
 Or, in more natural English: *The merchant decided to sell the shop.*

Check

Translate this sentence:

(i.b) **regi placuit nuntium mittere.**

In the next example, the brackets indicate that a word can be either included or omitted:

(ii.a) **viatores timebant. (eis) placuit reverti.** *The travellers were frightened. They decided to turn back.*
Literally, It was pleasing (to them) to turn back.

(**reverti**, like **mittere** in the previous example, is an infinitive; if you are unsure why a verb ending in **-i** can be an infinitive, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 39, section 8c, paragraph 5. You will meet another infinitive with an **-i** ending, in question 16.)

Check

Now translate this sentence:

(ii.b) **servus fessus erat. (ei) placuit fugere.**

16. What did Silius decide (**neglegere...frui**, line 8)? (The verb **frui** is used with the ablative, because the literal meaning is "I enjoy myself *with* or *by means of*...".) Did he say "yes" or "no" to Messalina's invitation? Was his attitude "look before you leap" or "don't worry about tomorrow"?
17. Two points of vocabulary:
- (i) Masculine, feminine and neuter forms of adjectives can be used on their own (i.e. unaccompanied by nouns) with the meanings "...man, men", "...woman, women" and "...thing, things":
- | | |
|--|--|
| bonus a good man | nostri our men |
| multae many women | bona good things, "goods" |
| omnia all things, everything | vera true things, i.e. the truth |
| praesentia present things, i.e. the present | futura future things, i.e. the future |
- (ii) When you are building up your vocabulary skills by noticing English words derived from Latin, remember that Latin **ae** often becomes **e** in English. **praesentia** in line 8 is one example, and you will meet another in Section 1c.
18. Translate this sub-section.
- *19. (a) "Tacitus has no right to tell us Silius's thoughts; he can't possibly know them."
 (b) "Nonsense! Tacitus knows Silius' situation, and he knows what Silius decided to do; so he knows what Silius must have thought."

To what extent, if at all, do you agree with either of these views? (†)

- *20. Do you have any sympathy for Silius? You might consider both the situation facing him in lines 5-7 and the wrong done to Claudius. Have you (or people you know) experienced situations in which future consequences were ignored for the sake of present enjoyment?

21. Look at the word order in Tacitus' report of Silius' decision (line 8):

infinitive **neglegere** noun **futura** /// noun **praesentibus** infinitive **frui**

The second half of the decision matches the first half; each half is made up of the infinitive of a verb, plus a noun (strictly, an adjective being used as a noun). Does the word order of the second half *repeat* the order of the first, or *reverse* it? You can see the same pattern in this English example:

She gave an **orange** to **Fred**, and to **Mary** an **apple**.

The slightly unusual word order draws attention to the two pairs of words in each sentence:

neglegere corresponds to **frui**, while **futura** corresponds to **praesentibus** in Tacitus; and in the English example, **orange** contrasts with **apple**, while **Fred** contrasts with **Mary**.

This word order is known as *chiasmus*. If you write out the two halves of Silius' decision, one above the other:

First half: **neglegere** **futura**

Second half: **praesentibus** **frui**

and then draw one line joining the two infinitives and another line joining the two different times, your two lines will form the Greek letter *chi*, from which *chiasmus* got its name.

In the next examples, particular *key words* are used twice, the second time in reverse order:

- (a) Fair is foul, and foul is fair. (Shakespeare)
- (b) Many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first. (Bible)
- (c) Ask not what your country can do for you - ask what you can do for your country. (President John F Kennedy)
- (d) Nice to see you; to see you, nice. (Bruce Forsyth)

Sometimes this word order reflects the *meaning* of the words. In (b) above, the word order reflects the reversed situation that it describes. But also the **A B B A** pattern made by the word order can give pleasure to listeners and readers. The mind is satisfied (usually subconsciously?) when the last word falls into place and the pattern is completed. If the word order did not have any effect, writers and speakers would not use it.

Strictly speaking, (a) to (d) above, in which *keywords* are repeated, are examples of a special type of chiasmus known as *antimetabole* (!) and pronounced as six syllables, but for most people *chiasmus* is quite good enough.

Answers

15. (i.b) *It pleased the king to send a messenger.*

Or, in more natural English: *The king decided to send a messenger.*

(ii.b) *The slave was tired. He decided to run away.*

Literally, *It was pleasing (to him) to run away.*

Section 1c

Lines 8-12 (*illa non ... ignarus*)

An open secret

illa non furtim

sed multis cum comitibus ventitat domum, egredienti
adhaeret, dat opes honoresque; postremo servi, liberti, 10
paratus principis apud adulterum saepe videbantur. at
Claudius matrimonii sui erat ignarus.

- 8 ille, illa, illud - *that, he, she, the following*
non - *not*
furtim - *furtively*
- 9 sed - *but*
multi, multae, multa - *many*
cum - *with*
comes, comitis - *comrade, companion*
ventito, ventitare - *come repeatedly*
domus, domus - *home, house*
egredior, egredi, egressus sum - *go out*
- 10 adhaereo, adhaerere, adhaesi - *stick to, (here) always be with*
do, dare, dedi, datus - *give*
opes, opum - *money, wealth*
honor, honoris - *honour, official position*
postremo - *finally, lastly*
servus, servi - *slave*
libertus, liberti - *freedman, ex-slave*

- 11 paratus, paratus - *property, belongings*
princeps, principis - *chief, chieftain, emperor*
apud - *among, with, in, at the house of*
adulter, adulteri - *adulterer, lover*
saepe - *often*
video, videre, vidi, visus - *see*
at - *but, yet*
- 12 Claudius, Claudii - *Claudius*
matrimonium, matrimonii - *marriage*
suus, sua, suum - *his, her, their own*
sum, esse, fui - *be*
ignarus, ignara, ignarum - *not knowing, unaware, unsuspecting*

1. Read lines 8-12 (**illa non ... ignarus**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. Who is meant by **illa** (line 8)? Whose **domus** is referred to in line 9?
5. You have met many phrases in which a preposition is followed by an adjective and noun, e.g. **per totum oppidum**, *through the whole town*. But Latin often uses a different order, sandwiching the preposition between the adjective and the noun, e.g. **totum per oppidum**. (In the same way, English can say either *through all the night* or *all through the night*.) The meaning is unchanged. For example:

hac in urbe = in hac urbe = in this city

ipsum ad regem = ad regem ipsum = to the king himself

Translate these phrases:

paucis cum amicis = cum paucis amicis

ingentes per undas = per ingentes undas

Pick out and translate the three-word phrase in line 9, similar to those above, which tells you there is something very unusual about Messalina's frequent visits to her adulterer.

6. Translate the word in line 8 which tells you how the wife of a very powerful man might normally be expected to carry on an affair.
7. You may have worked out already that the verb **ventito** (*I often come, I keep coming*, line 9) is derived from **venio**. It is one of a group known as *frequentative verbs*, for obvious reasons. For practice, what are the meanings of the frequentative verbs **clamito** and **rogito**?
8. Whom does Messalina regularly accompany (**adhaeret**, line 10) on particular occasions? Tacitus does not name the person, but the answer is obvious all the same. When does she accompany him, according to line 9?
 - (a) whenever he goes out
 - (b) whenever he goes away
 - (c) whenever he returns

adhaerere (which gives us an English word meaning *to stick*) can also refer to physical closeness, so Tacitus may be suggesting that she is liable to *cling* to him (or *drape herself* around him?) on these occasions. You may feel the picture conjured up by Tacitus is charmingly romantic or nauseatingly exhibitionist.

9. Messalina's own wealth (**opes**, line 10) was great, but perhaps she is here bestowing (**dat**) wealth to which she has access but which belongs to somebody else (who?). It is not clear what the **honores** were. Silius had already been named as a future consul for a four-month or two-month term in AD 48 or 49, and so was going to hold what was (almost) the top job. His family was also upgraded at some point to become a *gens patricia* (a patrician family, the highest class of the Roman nobility). Tacitus may be suggesting that these **honores** had been the result of pressure by Messalina on Claudius.
10. Which phrase in line 7 is partly explained by **opes honoresque**?
11. So far in this sub-section, the verbs have been in the present tense (**ventitat ... adhaeret ... dat**, lines 9-10), although the events took place in the past. This use of the present tense to relate past events is called the *historic present* and is commoner in Latin than in English. English sometimes uses it in excited speech ("I was standing just here when this man comes round the corner, and as soon as he sees the policeman he starts running ..." etc.). A Latin historic present tense can be translated in English by either a present or a past tense.
12. In the rest of Section I, the verbs are in a past tense. Who and what could be seen at Silius' house (lines 10-11)? Quote and translate the word in the genitive singular which tells you to whom they belonged to (line 11).
13. What does **postremo** (line 10) indicate?
 - (a) the affair has been going on for some time
 - (b) the scandal has become steadily more shocking
 - (c) both (a) and (b)
14. How is Silius referred to in line 12? Why does Tacitus refer to him in this way rather than using his name? Which noun in line 11 makes a strong contrast with the word describing Silius?
- *15. What does Tacitus stress, the removal of property (including people) from the emperor's palace to the house of Silius, or the fact that there was no attempt at concealment? Which two-word phrase (adverb + verb in line 11) tells you this? You may find it helpful to imagine the scene, with visitors to Silius' house looking discreetly round and thinking "What's that slave of the emperor doing here?" or "Where have I seen that marble table before?" etc.

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- *16. This is very much a matter of opinion, but is it significant that **paratus** (line 11) is placed last in the list? Might it be placed there because it is the most outrageous, or the saddest, or the most ludicrous of the thefts? You may feel that more than one of these answers is correct. (†)
17. **at** (line 11) is a stronger word than **sed**, though “but” can be used to translate either word. It often signals a contrast, switching the focus of interest. To whom does it switch here?
18. What does Tacitus say about Claudius in line 12? (Hint: what case is **sui matrimonii**?)
19. **suus** is often better translated by *his own* or *her own* than by *his* or *her*. Compare the following examples:
 (a) **Oedipus patrem vidit.** *Oedipus saw his father.* (No word for “his”; no emphasis.)
 (b) **Oedipus patrem suum interfecit.** *Oedipus killed his own father.* (Shock! Horror!)
20. Which of these is the best way of translating **sui matrimonii**?
 (a) of his own marriage
 (b) of the end of his own marriage
 (c) of the state of his own marriage
21. In view of lines 8-11, is the final sentence (**Claudius ... ignarus**, line 12) predictable, or surprising?
22. Translate this sub-section.
- *23. Messalina had already been unfaithful to Claudius many times before her affair with Silius. Why is this particular affair described as **quasi insanus** (line 1)? (†)
- *24. Can Claudius *really* have been unaware of what was going on? Might he have been aware of the situation but have chosen for some reason to turn a blind eye to it? (†)
- *25. Does the situation described in the final sentence agree with what Silius had rather expected? If stuck, look back at lines 6-7 in Section 1b.
26. Read Section 1c aloud. (Expert readers might aim to convey the way in which the details of Messalina’s behaviour become increasingly striking; then comes the unexpected twist in the final sentence. Your answers to questions 13 and 20 may help you; also see the note on pauses in section 1b question 3.)
27. At this point Tacitus, having described the key features of the Messalina-Silius-Claudius situation, switches to an account of other events in Rome and abroad. He groups the events of one year together where possible (as you would expect from the Latin title of his work – **Annales** – *yearly histories*). When a particular episode spills over from one year to the next, as often happens, Tacitus sometimes continues his narrative into the following year rather than stop the flow, but more often, as in the Messalina story, he interrupts the narrative to relate other events. He is in the same position as the writers of television soap operas with two or more story-lines going on at once: historians and script-writers must judge the right moment to switch. Tacitus picks up the Messalina story again in chapter 26 of **Annales** Book XI and stays with it until its dramatic conclusion.
- *28. (An advanced point.) The poet Juvenal, writing at roughly the same time as Tacitus, uses Silius as an example to support his argument that Good Looks can be a Bad Thing (Silius’ good looks were particularly mentioned by Tacitus in line 2 above.) Juvenal imagines himself addressing Silius when Silius is wondering whether to say “yes” or “no” to Messalina.
- quid placeat dic.
 ni parere velis, pereundum erit ante lucernas;
 si scelus admittas, dabitur mora parvula ...
 ... quidquid melius leviusque putaris,
 praebenda est gladio pulchra haec et candida cervix.
- (Satire X, lines 338-340, 344-5)
- Tell me your decision. If you’re not willing to say ‘yes’, you’ll have to perish before this evening’s lamps are lit. If you commit the crime, you’ll only be given a very short delay [i.e., before being killed] ... Whichever choice you think is better and easier, [either way] this handsome white neck of yours must be offered to the executioner’s sword.*
- Compare Juvenal’s advice to Silius with Tacitus’ account in lines 5-7 above. Which writer is more pessimistic about Silius’ dilemma? Are there any similarities of wording which might suggest that one writer had read the other?

Notes

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16. Whether Silius was crazy, or whether he thought that risky situations need risky solutions, he kept on insisting that something in particular be done. Find the word in line 4 which means *he kept on insisting*, then quote and translate the two words which tell you what he wanted to be done. (If puzzled by the ending of the first of the two words, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 34, section 7, paragraph 7 **trahi**.)
17. **simulatio** is a pretence that something is the case. My **simulatio virtutis** is my pretence of courage; I'm pretending that I'm courageous.
dissimulatio is a pretence that something is *not* the case. My **dissimulatio irae** is my pretence of non-anger; I'm pretending that I'm not angry.
You can see why "concealment" is such a useful translation of **dissimulatio**.
- *18. What had Messalina and Silius been concealing so far? Had it been concealed from the general public (see Section Ic)? If not, from whom *had* it been concealed? Explain in your own words what Silius wanted to happen.
19. Check that you can translate the whole of the long sentence **Silius ... urgebat** (lines 2-4). If you feel insecure, refer to note 10 and the practice example in note 11. **ipsa pericula** can be translated here either as singular or plural, whichever makes the meaning clearer.
- *20. Explain in your own words what Tacitus means by "danger is a cure for danger". The following expressions from gambling may be a guide.
(a) raising the stakes
(b) upping the ante
The third is rather similar, and more respectable:
(c) better keep going than turn back
21. Like other writers of his time, Tacitus had a liking for terse pointed comments ("epigrams"): **ipsa pericula remedium periculorum** in lines 2-3 is a good example. The Romans called them **sententiae**; modern politicians call them sound-bites. One **sententia** spoken by a 20th-century politician follows a similar pattern to Tacitus' epigram about Silius:
"The only thing we have to fear is fear itself." (President Roosevelt in 1933, encouraging his audience to take an up-beat view of the USA economy).
22. (*?) Do you yourself sometimes have the same attitude to risk as Silius? (You might also assess your friends' attitudes: how likely are they to behave like Silius in a risky situation? Be tactful about revealing your assessments.)
- *23. Tacitus often gives two explanations for a person's behaviour and leaves the reader to choose. The sentence in lines 2-4 is a good example: **fatali insania** (line 2) is the first explanation. Then **ipsa ... imminetium** (lines 2-3) is the second explanation and is:
(i) longer than the first, and
(ii) different in grammar (**fatali insania** is a two-word noun+adjective phrase, but **ipsa ... imminetium** is an indirect statement, linked to the participle **ratus**).
Is the second explanation also more striking and memorable than the first? (†)
- *24. Some readers feel that when Tacitus gives two explanations, the second is the one he himself prefers, and that he chooses words which steer the reader or listener into agreeing with him. Did you feel, when studying these lines, that Tacitus was pushing the "gambler" explanation rather than the "madness" one? Which of the two explanations stayed in your mind longer? Why?
25. The danger threatening Silius and Messalina is that the emperor may at any moment wake up to what they are doing and punish them. What Silius may be thinking is that the way out of these dangers is through further danger: he has a plan which can't be carried out without revealing the truth to Claudius; but as long as it works, Claudius will be unable to punish them. The rest of Section II deals with Silius' plan; Tacitus reveals it gradually, but you may already have some idea what it was
26. Translate this sub-section.
- *27. Compare these three translations of Tacitus' epigram in lines 2-3:
(a) *the antidote to impending danger was actual danger* (John Jackson)
(b) *amid the dangers which hung over him, danger itself was the best safety* (A. J. Church and W. J. Brodribb)
(c) *impending perils could only be met by perilous action* (Michael Grant)
Which do you think best? (Some possible points to consider: Which one conveys Tacitus' meaning most clearly? Which uses the most eloquent vocabulary? Which gives the best impression of the way Tacitus wrote? Notice the number of words used, compared to Tacitus' five. Does any translation retain the metaphors in **remedium** and **imminetium**?) Have a go yourself at composing a brief memorable version (optional).

Notes

Answers

11. *The prisoner, whether because of great boldness or because he thought the guards were sleeping, attempted to escape from the prison.*
15. (i) *Many dangers were hanging over Silius.*
Or, *Many dangers were threatening Silius.*
(**Silio** in dative case because the dangers were a threat to him.)
- (ii) *Silius was looking for a cure for the dangers (which were) threatening him.*
- (iii) *The master, thinking the slave to be lazy, sold him.*
Or, in natural English, *The master, thinking that the slave was lazy, sold him.*
Or, making it clearer, *The master, because he thought the slave was lazy, sold him.*
- (iv) *Dangers themselves or danger itself* (the plural can be treated as a singular here).

Section IIb

Lines 4-8 (*quippe ... esset*)

The cover up

quippe non exspectandum, dum
princeps senesceret. se caelibem, orbum, nuptiis et 5
adoptando Britannico paratum. eandem Messalinae
potentiam mansuram esse, addita securitate, si praevenirent
Claudium, qui insidiis incautus sed ad iram celer esset.

4	quippe - <i>for obviously, indeed</i> non - <i>not</i> exspecto, exspectare, exspectavi, exspectatus - <i>wait for</i> dum - <i>until</i> (+ subjunctive)	7	potentia, potentiae - <i>power</i> maneo, manere, mansi - <i>remain, stay</i> addo, addere, addidi, additus - <i>add</i> securitas, securitatis - <i>safety, security</i> si - <i>if</i>
5	princeps, principis - <i>chief, chieftain, emperor</i> senesco, senescere, senui - <i>grow old</i> se - <i>himself, herself, themselves</i> caelebs, caelibis - <i>unmarried</i> orbis, orba, orbis - <i>childless</i> nuptiae, nuptiarum - <i>wedding, marriage</i> et - <i>and, also, even</i>	8	praevenio, praevenire, praeveni - <i>forestall</i> Claudius, Claudii - <i>Claudius</i> qui, quae, quod - <i>who, which</i> insidiae, insidiarum - <i>ambush, intrigue</i> incautus, incauta, incautum - <i>unthinking, unsuspecting</i> sed - <i>but</i>
6	adopto, adoptare, adoptavi, adoptatus - <i>adopt</i> Britannicus, Britannici - <i>Britannicus, son of Claudius and Messalina</i> paratus, parata, paratum - <i>ready, prepared</i> idem, eadem, idem - <i>the same</i> Messalina, Messalinae - <i>Messalina, third wife of the Emperor Claudius</i>		ad - <i>to, at</i> ira, irae - <i>anger</i> celer, celeris, celere - <i>quick</i> sum, esse, fui - <i>be</i>

-
1. Read lines 4-8 (**quippe ... esset**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
 3. Read this sub-section again.
 4. In lines 3-4, Tacitus related some advice which Silius kept on pressing upon Messalina. His further advice includes the word **expectandum**, a part of the verb known as a gerundive, meaning that something *has to be done* (see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 83, section 26, paragraph 2b). Some gerundives have found their way into English:

memorandum something which *needs to be* remembered

agenda things which *are to be* discussed at a meeting

referendum a political decision which *has to be* referred to the people in a vote

Work out for yourself the meanings of **Amanda** and **Miranda** (*deserving to ...*).

5. According to Silius, what did he and Messalina *not* need to do (**expectandum ... senesceret**, lines 4-5)?
6. Compare these two examples:
 - (i) **dormiebam dum amicus me excitavit.** *I was asleep till my friend woke me.*
 - (ii) **fures expectabant dum senex abiret.** *This could be translated: The thieves were waiting until the old man went away.*
But the following translation would make things clearer, because the subjunctive **abiret** suggests the thieves waited for a purpose:
The thieves were waiting for the old man to go away.

In the same way, **senesceret** in line 5 is subjunctive, so Silius was talking not just about waiting *until* something happens, but about waiting *for* something to happen. What event did he and Messalina *not* have to wait for?
7. An important part of Silius' plan is emerging. He felt that he and Messalina should act sooner rather than later, even if waiting might seem safer.
8. Who did Silius refer to by **se** (line 5)?
9. What did he say about himself in the words **caelibem** and **orbem**?
10. What event in Section I had caused Silius to be **caelebs**?
11. Silius now reveals an important part of the plan. What event was he prepared for (**nuptiis**, line 5) and what action (**adoptando Britannico**, line 6)?
12. For the reason why **Britannico** is in the dative case and not the accusative, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 82, section 26, paragraph 2a and study the literal translation of the ACCUSATIVE and GENITIVE examples. Then work out the literal translation of the DATIVE example, and finally the literal translation of the phrase **adoptando Britannico** in line 6.
13. If you have forgotten who Britannicus was, see the Introduction to Section I, page 5. As a result of this adoption, Britannicus might expect to inherit any position achieved by Silius.
14. You may have met the phrase "the elephant in the room", meaning something very extraordinary and obvious which is being ignored. Is there an elephant in Silius' and Messalina's room? In other words, when Silius speaks about **nuptiae** and the adoption of Britannicus, is he apparently overlooking any important fact or person?
15. How powerful was Messalina going to be, according to Silius? (**eandem Messalinae potentiam mansuram esse**, lines 6-7; **eadem** is the feminine form of **idem**.)
 - (a) less than before
 - (b) more than before
 - (c) as much as before

Silius' original words were "**tua potentia eadem manebit**". Lines 6-7 do not contain inverted commas, but the case of **potentiam**, and the form of the verb **mansuram esse**, show that Tacitus is continuing to quote what Silius said. (If you are unsure about this, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 81, section 25, paragraph 6.)
16. In what ways had Messalina previously shown that she was a powerful woman? (See the Introduction to Section Ia, if necessary.)

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17. The passive of the verb **addere**, *to add*, can sometimes be translated as *with the addition of* or *together with*. For example:

miles multos labores patitur, addito periculo.

A soldier suffers many hardships, with the addition of danger

or, *A soldier suffers many hardships, together with danger. Literally, with danger having been added.*

Check

Translate the following sentence:

iudices victori coronam lauream (laurel wreath) **dederunt, multa pecunia addita.**

According to Silius, what extra advantage would Messalina receive, in addition to her existing **potentia**? Find and translate the word (line 7).

18. What Silius promised was freedom from **cura**, *anxiety*. Have Silius and Messalina in fact *shown* much anxiety so far? (See Section I, lines 8-12, if you need to remind yourself.) Perhaps Tacitus is being inconsistent here. But perhaps Messalina, in spite of her behaviour in Section I, might still have had moments when she feared detection.
19. Silius was telling Messalina that the things which he listed (the **nuptiae**, the adoption of Britannicus, the continued **potentia** of Messalina, and her additional **securitas**) could all be achieved provided they did one thing: **si praevenirent Claudium** (lines 7-8). What did they have to do?
- (a) act as soon as Claudius did.
 - (b) act before Claudius did.
- What did he mean by this? If unsure, see note 25 of Section IIa.
20. Quote and translate the word in line 8 in which Silius made plain that he was proposing hostile action of some sort against Claudius.
21. According to Silius (line 8), how short was Claudius' temper, but how ready was he to suspect plots? Which of these two comments was untrue? (See Introduction to Section I.)
22. Translate this sub-section.

Answers

17. *The judges gave the winner a laurel wreath, together with much money.*
or, *with the addition of much money.*
Literally, *with much money having been added.*

Notes

1. Read lines 9-11 (**Messalina ... persuasum**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. How quickly did Messalina decide on her response to Silius? Quote and translate the two words in line 10 which tell you this.
5. What was *not* the reason for the speed or slowness of her reply (line 9)?
6. What was the reason?
 - (a) fear
 - (b) anger
 - (c) an attack of conscience

Which word tells you this?

- *7. Tacitus takes only four words (**non ... maritum**, line 9) to dismiss the idea that Messalina's hesitation was caused by fondness for Claudius. What attitude, if any, is Tacitus expressing towards her?
- (a) disapproval
 - (b) scorn
 - (c) anger
 - (d) amazement
 - (e) no particular attitude

You might consider how the words should be read aloud.(†)

8. What *did* cause Messalina to hesitate (lines 9-10)?
 - (a) a feeling that the plan was stupid
 - (b) fear that it would go wrong
 - (c) fear that it would work, but that she would suffer afterwards
9. Silius has mentioned a plot (**insidiis**, line 8). In Messalina's view, what was he aiming to do as a result of this plot? Consider the whole passage from **se** (line 5) to **adeptus** (line 10).
 - (a) marry her
 - (b) become emperor
 - (c) both (a) and (b)

- *10. What did Messalina fear might happen to her afterwards if the plot succeeded (line 10)? Do you think her fear was foolish, or realistic? (†)

11. What did she eventually decide (**sed tandem persuasum**, lines 10-11)?

12. Translate this sub-section.

13. (For experts only) It is easier to translate the little sentence **sed tandem persuasum** than to understand its grammar. Study the literal meaning of the verbs in these examples (more natural translations are added in brackets):

ego tibi faveo	Literally <i>I give my support to you</i> (more naturally <i>I support you</i>)
tibi a me favetur	<i>Support is given to you by me</i> (<i>You are supported by me</i>)
ego tibi imperavi	<i>I gave an order to you</i> (<i>I ordered you</i>)
tibi a me imperatum est	<i>An order was given to you by me</i> (<i>You were ordered by me</i>)
ego tibi persuadeo	<i>I am persuasive to you</i> (<i>I persuade you</i>)
tibi a me persuadetur	Ah, problems! Impossible to translate literally and still be talking English; one semi-literal equivalent would be <i>persuasive speech is spoken to you by me</i> (natural translation very simple: <i>You are persuaded by me</i>)

You can see from the literal translations why the person who is supported, ordered or persuaded is always in the dative case; it makes no difference whether the Latin verb is active or passive.

An expanded version of **persuasum** in line 11:

ei a Silio persuasum est semi-literally something like *Persuasive speech was spoken to her by Silius* but more naturally *She was persuaded by Silius*.

However, it is obvious who did the persuading, and **est** can be missed out. So all Tacitus needs to write is:

persuasum. *She was persuaded.*

1. Read lines 11-14 (**nomen ... celebrat**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. How did Messalina want her relationship with Silius to be described? Quote and translate the word in line 11 which tells you this. To check its case if necessary, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 9, section 1, paragraph 2 **templum**.
5. What was her reason (lines 11-12)?
6. Why would this particular **matrimonium** (unlike most **matrimonia**) be a cause of great **infamia** (line 12)?
7. Tacitus says that Messalina wanted **magna infamia**. How credible is this? Is it in fact true that some people would rather be famous for something bad than not be famous at all? At a less extreme level, you may be able to think of people who enjoy behaving outrageously in order to shock others. Is this true of some celebrities?
8. What did Messalina (and Silius) wait for Claudius to do (**Claudius ... proficisceretur**, line 13)? Why was Claudius doing this? (**gratia** regularly comes after the word it refers to; e.g. **spectaculi gratia** for the purpose of a show.)
9. Ostia was about sixteen miles from Rome, at the mouth of the river Tiber. It was Rome's harbour, the unloading place for ships bringing the vital corn supply from Egypt. Claudius was well aware how much the corn supply mattered to Rome's million inhabitants, as there had been a severe shortage at the time when he became emperor. During his reign, he was responsible for a major expansion and rebuilding of the harbour at Ostia. At some point, a temple was built there to Castor and Pollux, and Claudius' sacrifice (line 13) might have been in their honour. Why would Castor and Pollux be particularly suitable gods to be worshipped at Ostia?
10. When did Messalina go into action?
 - (a) just before Claudius' departure
 - (b) straight after Claudius' departure
 - (c) long after Claudius' departure

11. In Section IIb question 6, you met this sentence:

- (i) **fures expectabant dum senex abiret.** *The thieves were waiting for the old man to go away.*

The subjunctive **abiret** suggests the idea of purpose.

Lines 4-5 of Section IIb contained a similar example:

- (ii) (**Silius urgebat ...**) **non expectandum dum princeps senesceret.**

(Silius insisted that...) they need not wait for the emperor to grow old.

Now translate this sentence, aiming to emphasise the idea of purpose:

- (iii) **Messalina expectabat dum Claudius proficisceretur.**

Next consider a trickier example involving the thieves. **ultra** (usually meaning *further*) means *longer* here, as it refers to time. You may find it easier to work out a literal translation first, but you may prefer to go straight to natural translations, which make early use of the word *only* and are shorter.

- (iv) **fures non ultra expectabant quam dum senex abiret.** (There are several options, some expressing purpose more clearly than others)

Returning finally to Messalina, translate the following sentence, using the word *only* and translating **morata est** as if it were **expectabat**:

- (v) **Messalina non ultra morata est quam dum Claudius proficisceretur.**

12. Latin indicates movement to a place in the following way:

To a named town (or small island)

(accusative used without preposition)

Romam *to Rome*

Pompeios *to Pompeii*

Londinium *to London*

Capreas *to Capri*

To anywhere else

(accusative used with **ad** or **in**)

ad forum *to the forum*

ad Italiam *to Italy, as far as Italy*

in Italiam *to Italy, into Italy*

in Aegyptum *to Egypt, into Egypt*

Ostia was not an island; was it regarded as a town (see line 13)?

13. What ceremony does Messalina celebrate in lines 13-14?

14. Is any part of the regular ritual missed out? Translate the phrase which tells you this. (If you need to revise the reason why the **-a** ending is plural, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 10, section 1, paragraph 3 **mare** and page 14, section 2, paragraph 2 **fortis**.)

15. Translate the sub-section.

-
- *16. According to Tacitus' account, who started the affair between Silius and Messalina? (See Section I if you don't trust your memory.) Is the same person still in charge by the end of Section II? Give a reason for your view.
- *17. Judging from what you have read so far, is this the story of a sex scandal or an attempt at a political coup d'état? By the end of Section II, do Messalina and Silius seem to have different purposes in mind? (†)
- *18. (i) As a result of being the emperor's wife, Messalina was very powerful. (If necessary, see 2nd paragraph of the Introduction to Section I, also lines 3-4 in Section I).
- (ii) Silius says to her "If you marry me, you will be as powerful as you are now" (lines 6-7 in Section II).
- (iii) Do (i) and (ii), taken together, suggest anything about the position Silius is aiming at? Where does this leave Claudius? Can Messalina and Silius, when married, safely let Claudius remain alive? (†)

Answers

11. (iii) *Messalina was waiting until Claudius set out.*
or, emphasising the idea of purpose more clearly: *Messalina was waiting for Claudius to set out.*
- (iv) Literally, *The thieves waited no longer than until the old man went away.*
More naturally, *The thieves were only waiting until the old man went away.*
But the next two bring out the idea of purpose more clearly:
The thieves were only waiting for the old man to go away.
or, *The thieves were only waiting long enough for the old man to go away.*

Notes

This is one of the few occasions where Tacitus steps back from his narrative and discusses his work. He is aware that some of his readers, perhaps including you, will be wondering just how much of his account of Messalina and Silius' affair can be believed.

1. Read lines 1-2 (... **tacente**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines, then read them again.
3. The following is the kind of comment Tacitus might anticipate from a puzzled or angry reader of Sections I and II. Translate it.

Check

“Tacitus mihi non videtur vera loqui.”

Passive of **video** can mean *seem*. **vera** = *the truth* (literally, *true things*).

Check

4. Translate the first four words of line 1. **id** is simply *it*. **fabulosam** is *fabulous* not in the sense of *highly delightful* but in the sense of *like a story*, i.e. *made-up, not real*. *Fictitious* is one of several suitable translations. For the tense of **videbitur**, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 36, section 8a, paragraph 1 second conjugation.
5. Study the next part of the sentence (**tantum ... fuisse**, lines 1-2). Does the “incredible story” seem to be about *bad* behaviour, or about *foolish* behaviour? Quote and translate the word which tells you this. (Silius used it in Section II, but there he was speaking of it with approval.) Possible translations include *negligence* and *recklessness*, or you could startle your teacher with *insouciance*. The phrase *couldn't care less* sums it up, but is unlikely to fit easily into your translation of the whole sentence.
6. In what way(s) have Silius and Messalina displayed this quality in the previous two sections?
7. Tacitus uses **tantum securitatis** in a way you have often met in such phrases as these. Translate them. It's better not to check until you've done all four.

Check

- (i) **plus vini**
- (ii) **minus cibi**
- (iii) **satis pecuniae**
- (iv) **tantum sanguinis**

In each example, a word indicating an amount is followed by a word in the genitive case, since the phrases are referring to varying amounts of wine, food, money and blood, though English usually omits “of”. Translate **tantum securitatis**, using either *so much ...* or *such a high degree of ...*, followed by your chosen word.

8. Tacitus says it will seem extraordinary that anybody possessed **tantum securitatis**. To indicate possession, he uses the dative case and part of the verb **esse**. If you feel a need to practise this use of the dative, study examples (a) to (c) and translate (d) to (f). If you feel secure on this point, go directly to (d) (e) and (f) or to question 9.

(a) **est mihi multa pecunia** *There is much money (belonging) to me, i.e. I have much money.*

(b) **erant hostibus nullae naves.** *There were no ships (available) to the enemy, i.e. The enemy had no ships.*

fuit, the perfect tense of **est**, can be literally translated either as *has been* or *was*:

(c) **fuit Marco tantum audaciae!** *There has been so much boldness to Marcus! or There was so much boldness to Marcus! i.e. Marcus possessed so much boldness!*

Check

Translate these sentences, either going straight for the natural translation, or working out the literal translation first. It's better not to check until you've done all three.

(d) **sunt vobis nullae togae.**

(e) **erat mercatori anulus aureus.**

(f) **nullis mortalibus umquam fuit tantum securitatis.**

9. Tacitus is saying people will believe sentence 8(f). By saying this, he turns sentence 8(f) from a direct statement into an indirect one, so he uses an accusative and infinitive; the ending of **tantum** doesn't change, since **tantum** can be either nominative or accusative, but **fuit** becomes **fuisse**. (To see the link between the two forms, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 40, section 9, paragraph 1 Perfect and page 42, section 9, paragraph 3 Perfect infinitive.) To remind yourself that this is an indirect statement, you might highlight **tantum** and **fuisse**, if allowed.

Translate this sentence (you are now getting close to Tacitus' actual words in lines 1-2):

omnibus videbitur nullis mortalibus umquam tantum securitatis fuisse.

Check

10. Rather than saying *It will seem to everyone that no human beings ...*, Tacitus puts the negative in a different place. He says *It will seem unbelievable that any human beings ...*
11. Translate from **id** to **fuisse** (lines 1-2).

-
12. Tacitus adds a reminder of the place where this risky behaviour took place. Silius and Messalina were not living on a desert island; they lived **in civitate omnium gnara et nihil tacente** (line 2). Tacitus does not name the **civitas**, but you will identify it easily.
13. Pick out and translate the two words in the ablative singular (one an adjective and the other a present participle) which describe the city in line 2. What does Tacitus say the city knows, and how much does it keep quiet about? Translate the whole phrase **in civitate ... tacente**. Pick out the adjective(s) in this list which, according to Tacitus, could be used to describe the city:
- (a) knowledgeable
 - (b) ignorant
 - (c) secretive
 - (d) gossipy
 - (e) discreet
14. Translate lines 1-2.
- *15. Which of these three translations of the last seven words is the most successful in conveying the way Tacitus writes?
- (a) in a city cognizant of all things and reticent of none (Jackson)
 - (b) in a city which knows everything and hides nothing (Church and Brodribb)
 - (c) in a city where nothing escapes notice or comment (Grant) (†)

Answers

3. *'Tacitus does not seem to me to be speaking the truth.'*
4. *It will certainly seem incredible* (or other words suggesting untruth, e.g., *fictitious, made-up, fantasy, etc.*)
7. (i) *more wine*
(ii) *less food*
(iii) *enough money*
(iv) *so much blood*
8. (d) *You have no togas*. Literally, *There are no togas (belonging) to you*.
(e) The merchant had a gold ring. Literally, there was to the merchant a gold ring.
(f) *No human beings have ever possessed so much recklessness*. Literally, *To no human beings has there ever been such a great quantity of recklessness*.
9. *It will seem to everyone that no mortals have ever possessed so much recklessness, etc.*

Notes

Section IIIb

Lines 3-5 (... *convenisse*)

"Still more incredible"

nedum consulem designatum cum uxore principis,
praedicta die, eis qui obsignarent adstantibus, velut
susciendorum liberorum causa convenisse;

5

- 3 nedum - *not only that, let alone that*
consul, consulis - *consul*
designo, designare, designavi, designatus -
designate, appoint, choose
cum - *with*
uxor, uxoris - *wife*
princeps, principis - *emperor*
- 4 praedico, praedicere, praedixi, praedictus -
declare beforehand, prearrange
dies, diei - *day*
is, ea, id - *he, she, it; this, that*
qui, quae, quod - *who, which, that*
obsigno, obsignare, obsignavi, obsignatus -
sign, be a witness
adsto, adstare, adstiti - *stand by, be present*
velut - *as it were, as if, as though*

- 5 suscipio, suscipere, suscepi, susceptus -
have a child, rear, produce
liberi, liberorum - *children*
causa, causae - *for the sake of (+ gen.)*
convenio, convenire, conveni - *come*
together, join in marriage

1. Read lines 3-5 (**nedum ... convenisse**).
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines, noticing in particular some key verbs:
 - praedicere** to announce in advance
 - obsignare** to be a witness (by putting one's seal (**signum**) on a document)
 - adstare** to stand by, e.g. in readiness to do something
 - suscipere** to take up, in particular describing the action of a father lifting up his newly-born son to acknowledge that he was indeed the father; the verb is also used more vaguely in the marriage ceremony, in the phrase **liberos suscipere**, meaning to have or produce children
 - convenire** to come together, e.g. in (and after) a marriage ceremony
3. Read this sub-section again, aloud if possible. It is worth taking care to pause at each comma. Tacitus is listing separate details of the ceremony; pauses can mark off the separate items in the list and help you to sort out their meaning.
4. Tacitus is saying people will not believe *that* the events in his list happened, and so he continues to use indirect statement. Why would a Roman know this at once from the form of words used? (What case is **consulem** (line 3) and what part of the verb is **convenisse** (line 5)? Highlight these words if this is helpful and permitted.) You will probably find it useful to insert *that* into your translation after translating **nedum**.
5. **nedum** acts a link between Sections IIIa and IIIb. (Tacitus is saying "People will find it hard to believe that anybody could have acted like this, *still less* that these particular individuals could have done so.")
6. How does he identify (a) Silius (b) Messalina in line 3?
7. When did the ceremony take place (**praedicta die**, line 4)? If you are unsure how to translate the ablative case here, use the sentence **nuntius sexto die revenit** as a guide.
8. Why might **praedicta die** seem just as incredible to Tacitus' readers as the rest of the story? (How much advance notice would you expect if an **uxor principis** took a new husband without the emperor's knowledge?)
9. Study these examples:
 - (i) **is qui me derisit poenas dabit.** *He who laughed at me will pay for it.*
Or, *The man who ... etc.*
 - (ii) **ei qui circumstabant attoniti erant.** *Those who were standing round were amazed.*
Or, *The people who ... etc.* (There is more about this in *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 67, section 23, paragraph 1)

Check

Translate this sentence:

- (iii) **ei qui dormiebant nihil audiverunt.**

In the next example, the verb in the relative clause is a subjunctive.

- (iv) **ei qui cantarentsurrexerunt.** *Those who were to sing stood up.* (see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 68, section 23, paragraph 2, second example)

Check

Translate this sentence:

- (v) **ei qui sacrificarent adstabant.**

The next example involves an ablative absolute.

- (vi) **eis qui sacrificarent adstantibus** *with those who were to sacrifice standing by*

Translate the phrase **eis qui obsignarent adstantibus** in line 4.

10. The infinitive **convenisse** (line 5) is best dealt with before the phrase **velut suscipiendorum liberorum causa** (lines 4-5). It is an infinitive because it is part of the indirect statement that started in line 1. What does Tacitus say Silius and Messalina did?
11. In Section II d you met the phrase **sacrificii gratia**, for the purpose of (making) a sacrifice, with **gratia** placed after the word it referred to. **causa** has the same meaning as **gratia** and it, too, follows the word or phrase it refers to. For what purpose are Silius and Messalina said to have come together? (For the reason why **liberorum** is genitive not accusative, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 82, section 26, paragraph 2a genitive.)
12. The phrase **suscipiendorum liberorum causa** was regularly used in weddings as a ritual formula referring to the traditional purpose of marriage. It seems to have often been little more than an empty phrase, spoken because it was traditional to speak it. The effect of **velut** (line 4) is rather like putting the phrase **suscipiendorum liberorum causa** into quotation marks (which is exactly what one published translation does to the corresponding English).
13. Tacitus' account includes two further details omitted here for the sake of brevity. Words of good omen were pronounced by religious officials to ensure or predict good fortune and a sacrifice was made to the gods.

14. Translate this sub-section.

- *15. (a) "Tacitus piles up the details of religious ritual, and the effect is to make the behaviour of Messalina and Silius increasingly shocking."
(b) "Not at all; the more details are included of a regular religious ceremony, the more respectably Messalina and Silius are behaving."

Who's right, (a) or (b)?

Answers

9. (iii) *Those who were asleep heard nothing.*
(v) *Those who were to sacrifice were standing by.*

Notes

Section IIIc

Lines 5-8 (*atque ... coniugali*)

"Scandal"

atque illos 5
sacrificiis perfectis inter convivas discubuisse, oscula et
complexus dedisse, noctem denique egisse licentia
coniugali.

- 5 atque - *and, and also, and even*
ille, illa, illud - *he, she; it; that; the well-known; the former*
- 6 sacrificium, sacrificii - *sacrifice (to a god)*
perficio, perficere, perfeci, perfectus - *finish, complete, perform*
inter - *between, among*
conviva, convivae - *dinner guest*
discumbo, discumbere, discubui - *lie down, recline at table*
osculum, osculi - *kiss*
et - *and*

- 7 complexus, complexus - *embrace*
do, dare, dedi, datus - *give, offer*
nox, noctis - *night*
denique - *finally*
ago, agere, egi, actus - *pass, spend*
licentia, licentiae - *liberty, licence, freedom*
- 8 coniugalis, coniugalis, coniugale - *conjugal, matrimonial, of marriage*

-
1. Read lines 5-8 (**atque ... coniugali**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. (Notice **discumbere**, *to take one's place on a dining couch*).
 3. Read this sub-section again.
 4. The indirect statement (*it will seem incredible THAT...*) continues. Pick out a pronoun in the accusative case and the three perfect infinitives (highlight them if permitted).
 5. Who does **illos** (line 5) refer to? (Feminists may not like the fact that when a Latin plural refers to one man and one woman the word is in the masculine gender (*man* embraces *woman*, as the saying is) but Roman civilisation, like other ancient civilisations, was thoroughly sexist.)
 6. What did the people referred to by **illos** do, and among whom? (Tacitus is referring to the arrangements for the wedding feast – it usually took place at the bride's house but this particular marriage is so extraordinary that we can only make guesses about its location.)
- Check**
7. Find and translate the ablative absolute phrase in line 6 which tells you *when* the couple went to recline among the guests. If you get stuck, try the following examples of similar sentences, then return to line 6.
 - (a) **pecunia forte inventa, omnes laeti redierunt.**
 - (b) **cena consumpta, ancilla suavissime cantavit.**
 - (c) **omnibus perfectis, Silius et Messalina discubuerunt.**
 8. What did Silius and Messalina do next (**oscula ... dedisse**, lines 6-7)? Bear in mind that if A gives something to B, and B does the same to A, the verb *exchange* may be appropriate. If puzzled by the endings of the accusative nouns **oscula** and **amplexus**, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 9, section 1, paragraph 2, **templum** and page 11, section 1, paragraph 4 **manus**.
 9. You have probably guessed already what the final detail in Tacitus' description is going to be. What period of time did the couple spend, and how did they spend it? Tacitus' language is very dignified here; **licentia** is connected with **licet**, *it is permitted*, and **coniugalis** is connected with **coniunx**, *spouse*. In a different story, **licentia coniugali** might suggest respectability: what is its effect here? (If unsure about this, you might have a (first or second) look at Section IIIb, question 15.)
 10. Translate this sub-section. The final words need some thought: your translation should be dignified like the Latin. Such versions as *in the way permitted to a married couple* successfully keep the links with **licet** and **coniunx** but are rather wordy; you may be able to do better. *Marriage licence* won't do.
 11. The following exercise is very challenging. Read Sections IIIa, IIIb and IIIc aloud, concentrating both on Tacitus' meaning and on his tone. If you feel that the lines become steadily more dramatic, your best plan is to start quietly in a matter-of-fact way and gradually increase the emphasis, taking care not to reach a maximum level of drama until you are into line 7.

Answers

7. (i) *When the money had been found by chance, everybody returned happily.*
(ii) *When the dinner had been eaten, a slave-girl sang very sweetly.*
(iii) *When everything had been finished, Silius and Messalina took their places on the couch.*

-
1. Read lines 8-9 (**nihil ... tradam**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines, and re-read the sentence.
 3. In lines 1-8, Tacitus has recognised that people may say he has made things up to create a sensational story. He now replies by claiming: **nihil composui miraculi causa** (line 8). You met **causa** in section IIIb line 5, following the word or words it refers to. Translate Tacitus' claim. It is up to each of his readers, yourself included, to decide whether to believe him.
 4. Find and translate the word in line 9 which contrasts with **nihil composui** (if you are unsure what its ending means, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 28, section 7b, paragraph 1 *third conjugation*).
 5. What things is Tacitus going to pass on (lines 8-9)? It is advisable to have an answer clear in your mind before proceeding to question 6.
 - *6. Translate this sub-section. **audita scriptaque a senioribus** needs careful handling. Use your answer to question 5 in choosing from the following mini-vocabulary:

audita ... a ... - *things heard by ... or things heard from ...*

scriptaque a ... - *and things written by ...*

seniores - *those older than me or earlier generations* (Do you need to translate **a senioribus** twice, in order to make use of the two different translations?)

You may prefer your own translations, e.g. you could translate **scriptaque a ...** by saying *and what was written by ...*. The golden rule is to make the sense of the sentence clear.

Notes on Sections I, II and III

From now on the narrative moves fast, so this may be a good moment to pause and think about what you have read so far. The first three Sections raise questions which you could consider now and revisit after reading the remaining Sections - follow your teacher's guidance over this. Tacitus himself has (in line 1 of Section III) raised the first question.

(i) Did this really happen?

These notes are for students working for an exam in Latin Literature, not in Roman History. But whether a narrative is fact or fiction, the reader has to answer the same sort of questions about how the characters behaved; and since Messalina, Silius and Claudius really existed, it is natural to go on to ask *What actually happened?* and *How much of this is true?* All these questions can lead you to a firmer grasp of what Tacitus says and the way he says it. (On a more down-to-earth note, this can be rather helpful for exam purposes.)

The story of Silius and Messalina is one of the most extraordinary episodes in Roman history and many readers naturally feel they want to make sense of it. There are definitely no "official right answers" here because nobody so far has come up with a really satisfactory explanation.

(ii) Is this about a sex scandal, or an attempted political coup d'état?

This question has already arisen in Section II (see Section II d, note 17). Sections IV-X will give you some idea of how other people viewed the behaviour of Silius and Messalina.

(iii) If this is a real plot to make Silius emperor, is it carried out in an incredibly stupid way?

You may have wondered about (iii) already. Do Silius and Messalina seem to have taken any important steps needed for a change at the top of government? Are there any groups in the Roman army whose loyalty would be essential if there was to be a new emperor? Did Messalina and Silius have their priorities right in concentrating on the wedding? Or perhaps they did make further plans, but the person from whom Tacitus got his information didn't know what they were ...

(iv) Were Silius and Messalina really married to each other by the end of Section III, or was this a "fake" marriage, intended to deceive, or even just a bit of fun?

An important difference between Roman and modern marriage may matter here. In the eyes of the Romans, a couple could become married simply through living together by **consensus** (*agreement*) and with **adfectus maritalis** (declared intention and desire for marriage). Of course many couples wished to mark their marriage with some or all of the traditional ceremonies, thus declaring the marriage publicly to friends and relatives, some of whom might sign a written record as witnesses. But none of these things was required by law. Divorce could take place by mutual agreement or by the action of one spouse (normally the husband) telling the other to leave. (You may recall from Section I the rather brutal circumstances of Silius' divorce from Junia Silana.) If Messalina and Silius set up house together in the imperial palace or elsewhere, by consensus and with **adfectus maritalis** (see above), then as far as the law was concerned they were husband and wife. This would be emphasised if their relationship came to be regarded as **matrimonium** by a significant number of people. But they still had one important question to settle (if you feel the need for a reminder, see Section II d, question 18(iii)).

Tacitus says that his narrative will certainly seem **fabulosum**. It might, of course, have seemed equally **fabulosum** to Tacitus if he had been told that his words would be read, nearly two thousand years later, as part of their education, by **iuvenes** of both sexes from the remote islands which Claudius added to the empire. On the other hand, Tacitus might have felt no surprise at all; his father-in-law, who governed Britain for seven years, reckoned that the young Britons had the ability to out-do the Gauls in Latin studies (Tacitus *Agricola* 21.2).

Notes

Section IV (*Annales* XI.27) - Crisis

Section IVa

Lines 1-6 (... *essent*)

Danger

igitur domus principis inhorruit, maximeque ei qui
potentiam habebant timuerunt ne res verterentur: spem
tamen habebant, si Claudio de atrocitate sceleris
persuasissent, Messalinam posse opprimi sine quaestione
damnata; sed periculum esse ne ille defensionem audiret, 5
neve clausae aures etiam confitenti non essent.

1	igitur - <i>therefore, and so</i> domus, domus - <i>home, house, household</i> princeps, principis - <i>chief, chieftain, emperor</i> inhorresco, inhorrescere, inhorruui - <i>shudder</i> maxime - <i>very greatly, very much, most of all</i> is, ea, id - <i>he, she, it; that</i> qui, quae, quod - <i>who, which</i>	4	persuadeo, persuadere, persuasi, persuasus + dat. - <i>persuade</i> Messalina, Messalinae - <i>Messalina, third wife of the Emperor Claudius</i> possum, posse, potui - <i>can, be able</i> opprimo, opprimere, oppressi, oppressus - <i>crush</i> sine - <i>without</i> quaestio, quaestionis - <i>trial</i>
2	potentia, potentiae - <i>power</i> habeo, habere, habui, habitus - <i>have, hold, reckon, consider, treat</i> timeo, timere, timui - <i>be afraid, fear</i> ne - <i>that, lest</i> res, rei - <i>thing, business</i> verto, vertere, verti, versus - <i>turn, change, overturn, upset</i> spes, spei - <i>hope</i>	5	damno, damnare, damnavi, damnatus - <i>condemn</i> sed - <i>but</i> periculum, periculi - <i>danger</i> sum, esse, fui - <i>be</i> ne - <i>that, lest</i> ille, illa, illud - <i>that, he, she, the following</i> defensio, defensionis - <i>defence</i> audio, audire, audivi, auditus - <i>hear</i>
3	tamen - <i>however</i> habeo, habere, habui, habitus - <i>have, hold, reckon, consider, treat</i> si - <i>if</i> Claudius, Claudii - <i>Claudius</i> de - <i>from, down from; about</i> atrocitas, atrocitatis - <i>enormity</i> scelus, sceleris - <i>crime</i>	6	neve - <i>and that</i> claudio, claudere, clausi, clausus - <i>shut, close, block</i> auris, auris - <i>ear</i> etiam - <i>even, also</i> confiteor, confiteri, confessus sum - <i>confess</i> non - <i>not</i>

1. Read lines 1-6 (... **essent**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. Whose reaction to the wedding is reported by Tacitus at the start of line 1? What was their reaction? Suggest a reason why they reacted in this way – disgust, fear or anger?
5. Who would be more likely to be worried at the prospect of a violent change of emperor – the powerful **liberti Augusti** (freedmen of the emperor) mentioned in the Introduction to Section I, or the humble **servi**, working for example in the palace kitchen? Why?
6. According to Tacitus, who felt the greatest fear (lines 1-2)? If you are unsure about the translation of **ei qui**, look back at section IIIb, question 9, especially sentences (ii) and (iii).
You may be able to name one of the men whom this phrase refers to.
7. What was their fear (line 2)? **res** is an all-purpose word; it takes its meaning from the sentence in which it appears. **vertere** can be a very strong verb: not just *turn* but *overturn* or *overthrow*, which suggests a word like government for **res**.
8. A rather complicated piece of Latin is omitted here, in which the **liberti** anxiously discuss the violent change of power that would certainly (in their opinion) be the result of the wedding.
9. Did the freedmen despair of preventing a political revolution? Translate the two (or three) words in lines 2-3 which tell you this.
10. In lines 3-4, the freedmen are saying to each other “Provided that we do X, we can achieve Y”. The words **si Claudio ... persuasissent** tell you what X was. Whom did they have to persuade, and what did they have to persuade him about? Notice the case of **sceleris**.
- *11. What is the **scelus** referred to in line 3?
 - (a) the wedding
 - (b) an attempt to overthrow Claudius
 - (c) both

Which of (a) and (b) is more likely to be emphasised by the freedmen if they denounce Messalina to Claudius, and which aspect is likely to cause Claudius more grief? Why? (†)
12. What did the freedmen hope could be achieved by persuading Claudius (**Messalinam ... opprimi**, line 4)? If puzzled by the ending of **opprimi**, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 34, section 7f, paragraph 7.
13. Find a perfect passive participle in the next few words, translate it literally, find the noun it describes, and translate the whole phrase **sine quaestione damnatam**. In translating the whole phrase, you may prefer to replace *having been ...* with *by being ...*
14. Did the freedmen want Messalina to be put on trial, with Claudius as judge? Did they want Messalina and Claudius to meet at all? Why?
15. **periculum esse** (line 5) continues the indirect statement which was introduced by **spem habebant** in lines 2-3, so **periculum** is accusative and the verb is the infinitive **esse** not **erat**. Tacitus has reported the freedmen’s hope; now he switches to reporting their fear. You could make it clear that this is an indirect statement by putting *they thought that ...* in front of your translation of **periculum esse** but this is not essential.
16. Who is **ille**? What did the freedmen fear he would do?
17. The freedmen’s first fear was introduced by **ne** in line 5, following the rule of using a negative word to introduce something that the person involved doesn’t want to happen. The second fear is introduced by **neve** (line 6), translated as *and that ...*
18. What Narcissus feared about Claudius was **clausae aures ... non essent** (line 6), a fear very similar to **defensionem audiret** in the previous line. Check your grasp of the Latin by choosing between these two translations, using your answer to the second part of question 16 as a guide if necessary:
 - (a) They feared that his ears would be closed.
 - (b) They feared that his ears would not be closed.
19. Check your understanding of the remark about Claudius’ ears by choosing between these explanations:
 - (a) The freedmen feared that he would refuse to listen to her.
 - (b) The freedmen feared that he would not refuse to listen to her.

If you feel insecure over this question, your answer to question 18 should get you back on track.

20. The freedmen feared Claudius might be prepared to listen. There is no noun or pronoun in line 6 to indicate the person he might listen to, but it is obvious who is meant. She is described by a present participle and an adverb (**etiam confitenti**) and the participle is in the dative case because the sentence is about Claudius listening to her. Translate the following sentences, which lead up to the way **etiam confitenti** fits into line 6:

- (i) This sentence uses the deponent verb **minari**, *to threaten*. (The fact that it is deponent does not affect the example.) Translate it literally, then again in natural English, making clear who is doing the threatening.

Check

ego numquam ei pecuniam dabo, etiam minanti.

- (ii) In the next sentence, Narcissus predicts what Claudius will do. He uses **ignoscere**, *to forgive*, a verb used with the dative (give forgiveness to).

Check

Claudius Messalinae ignoscet, etiam confitenti. (see vocabulary for **confiteor**)

In line 6, **etiam confitenti** means the same as in sentence (ii). Tacitus doesn't need to include the noun **Messalinae** or the pronoun **ei**.

- *21. It may at first sight seem odd that the freedmen wanted Claudius to take no notice of Messalina even if she confessed. Surely (you might think) they would want him to hear her confess? But why might a confession be Messalina's best chance? You might consider a number of points: the ages of Claudius and Messalina, the way Messalina had repeatedly deceived Claudius over the years, and the fact that what somebody says may be less important than the way s/he says it.

22. Translate this sub-section.

Answers

20. (i) Literally, *I will never give money to him, even threatening*.
In natural English, *I will never give money to him, even if he threatens me*. (Or *though he is threatening me* or *when he threatens me*. There are various possibilities, all following the same pattern)
- (ii) *Claudius will forgive Messalina, even if (or when or although, etc.) she confesses*.

Notes

Section IVb

Lines 6-9 (*Narcissus ... subire*)

"Who's going to tell him?"

Narcissus,

occasiones quaerens, cum Caesar diu apud Ostiam
moraretur, duas eius paelices largitione et promissis
perpulsit delationem subire.

6 Narcissus, Narcissi - *Narcissus*
7 occasio, occasionis - *opportunity*
quaero, quaerere, quaesivi, quaesitus -
search for, look for, ask
cum - *when, since, because, although*
Caesar, Caesaris - *the emperor*
diu - *for a long time*
apud - *among, with, in, at the house of*
Ostia, Ostiae - *Ostia, the harbour-town of*
Rome

8 moror, morari, moratus sum - *delay*
duo, duae, duo - *two*
is, ea, id - *he, she, it; that*
paelix, paelicis - *concubine, courtesan*
largitio, largitionis - *generous gifts, bribery*
et - *and, also, even*
promissum, promissi - *promise*
9 perperlo, perperellere, perpuli, perpulsus -
induce, prevail upon
delatio, delationis - *accusation, denunciation*
subeo, subire, subii, subitus - *undertake*

-
1. Read lines 6-9 (**Narcissus ... subire**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
 3. Read this sub-section again.
 4. Translate a participle in line 7 and a noun in the accusative plural. The two words tell you what Narcissus was doing.
 5. Where was Caesar (i.e. Claudius) meanwhile, and for how long? (Memory test: why had he gone there? – see Section II, line 13, if your memory lets you down.) Tacitus doesn't say whether any of the freedmen were with him, or how long is meant by **diu** – it sounds as if it was more than one day. (Tacitus often omits such details when he wants to keep his narrative moving quickly.) What is clear is that Narcissus had time to organise the accusation of Messalina.
 7. Find and translate the verb in line 9 which tells you what Narcissus did.
 8. Whom did he persuade?
 9. Should **duas eius ...** be *his two ...* or *two of his ...*? It depends on whether you think he had more than two.
 10. A grammar check: Who does **eius** (*his*) refer to, Claudius or Narcissus? If you're insecure about this, notice that the word is **eius**, not **suas**, (see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 19, section 5, end of paragraph 1; also ask yourself whose **paelices** would be more likely to convince the emperor.
 11. Tacitus takes it for granted that the emperor would have concubines in addition to his wife. Roman wives, on the other hand, were expected to remain faithful to their husbands. Roman society, like other societies, followed a double standard in sexual morality: one standard for men, another for women. In such a society, Messalina's notorious unfaithfulness would be particularly scandalous.
 - *12. Was Narcissus being shrewd in picking these two girls to tell Claudius about Messalina and Silius? Some points for speculation: how likely is Claudius to believe them? Might there have been mutual fondness in their relationship? How great was the risk to them personally if Silius and Messalina successfully carried out a violent change of emperor? (†)
 13. What did Narcissus get the girls to do?
 14. Find and translate the two ablative nouns in line 8 which tell you by what means Narcissus induced them to carry out their task.
 - *15. Why did Narcissus need to use the methods referred to in question 14, in spite of the possibilities mentioned in question 12?
 - (a) The concubines in fact disliked Claudius and would prefer to be rid of him.
 - (b) Their best chance of safety was not to get involved at all.
 - (c) They feared the anger of Messalina if she survived a power struggle and then discovered who had denounced her.You can choose more than one of these, or put forward a different explanation altogether. (†)
 16. Translate this sub-section.

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1. Read lines 9-11 (**exim ... exclamat**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
 3. Read this sub-section again. If you are reading aloud and are interested in acting, you could aim to increase the tension gradually and reach a dramatic climax in the last four words when Calpurnia actually breaks the news. But do not take the final word **exclamat** too literally if it will disturb others.
 4. Who is Calpurnia (**id ... nomen**, lines 9-10)? It quickly becomes clear that Narcissus has brought her and the other girl to Ostia – if indeed all three were not already there (see Section IVb question 5).
 5. What very necessary favour is granted to Calpurnia (line 10)?
 6. What physical attitude does she adopt (**ad genua Caesaris provoluta**, lines 10-11)? Visualise the scene. **provolvi** is a very strong word. The Latin dictionary gives the meaning as *to fall down or to prostrate oneself (at someone's feet, etc.)*. The three translations previously compared have *falling at the Caesar's knee* (Jackson), *threw herself at the emperor's knees* (Church and Brodribb) and *throwing herself at his feet* (Grant).
 7. What word does Tacitus use instead of **Claudii**?
 8. What tense is **exclamat** and why does Tacitus use it here? (If unsure, see Section Ic note 11 on **ventitat** and notice the effect in the English example there.)
 9. What does Calpurnia shout out?
 10. The indirect statement **nupsisse Messalinam Silio** is reporting the direct statement "**nupsit Messalina Silio**". What is unusual about this word order? What would the more usual order be? (If unsure, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar* page 84, section 27, paragraph 2.2a.)
 - *11. Many students are aware, sometimes uncomfortably, that they're expected to know something about the effects of varied word order but feel the need for some practice. There are some helpfully straightforward examples here and in the next sub-section.
Look again at Calpurnia's three words. She tells Claudius of the event, then the name of the bride, then the name of the groom. Does each word deliver a bigger shock? Or is Calpurnia (or Tacitus) using unusual word order to hold the attention of the listener (Claudius) at a key moment? Sometimes unusual word order simply sounds better than the usual one – could this be the case here? Opinions differ on questions like this. But Tacitus took care over his word order, and it is often worth asking why he made a particular choice. (†)
 12. Translate this sub-section.

Section IVd

Lines 11-15 (*altera ... maritus*)

Narcissus speaks out

altera

paelice haec confirmante, Calpurnia cieri Narcissum
postulat. qui 'discidiumne tuum' inquit 'novisti? nam
matrimonium Silius vidit populus et senatus et milites; ac nisi
celeriter agis, tenet urbem maritus.'

15

- 11 alter, altera, alterum - *the other, another*
12 paelex, paelicis - *concubine, courtesan*
hic, haec, hoc - *this*
confirmo, confirmare, confirmavi, confirmatus
- *confirm*
Calpurnia, Calpurniae - *Calpurnia*
cieo, ciere, civi, citus - *summon*
Narcissus, Narcissi - *Narcissus*
13 postulo, postulare, postulavi, postulatus -
demand
qui, quae, quod - *who, which*
discidium, discidii - *divorce*
tuus, tua, tuum - *your (singular), yours*
inquit - *he says, he said*
novi, novisse - *know, be familiar with*
nam - *for*

- 14 matrimonium, matrimonii - *marriage*
Silius, Sili - *Gaius Silius, a young nobleman*
video, videre, vidi, visus - *see*
populus, populi - *people*
et - *and, also, even*
senatus, senatus - *senate*
et - *and, also, even*
miles, militis - *soldier*
ac - *and*
nisi - *unless*
15 celeriter - *quickly, fast*
ago, agere, egi, actus - *do, act*
teneo, tenere, tenui, tentus - *hold, keep*
urbs, urbis - *city, the City, Rome*
maritus, mariti - *husband*

1. Read lines 11-15 (**altera ... maritus**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again. Once you reach Narcissus' words, study them closely as you read. You may spot further unusual word order as his speech progresses, and experts may notice an unexpected tense in Narcissus' final warning. A second look at the vocabulary, followed by a final reading, may be useful before proceeding to the notes and questions.
4. Who confirms Calpurnia's story (lines 1-2)? What request does Calpurnia then make?
5. Narcissus arrives. He has probably taken care not to be too far away during Claudius' meeting with the concubines, though perhaps not actually listening at the key-hole. In lines omitted here for the sake of brevity, he suggests with his tongue in his cheek that Silius might be allowed to keep the slaves and furniture he has stolen from the palace (as described in Section I), but that Claudius ought to have his wife back. Narcissus' next words (picked up in line 13) will make it even clearer whether he believes in breaking things gently or in using shock tactics.
6. What is the best translation of **qui** (line 13)?
 - (a) who
 - (b) he
 - (c) the latter
 - (d) Narcissus(†)
7. **novi** is often correctly translated as *I know*, but it is in fact the perfect tense of **nosco**, *I get to know* or *I hear about* and that may be a clue to a suitable translation here (*Have you ... ?*). Translate Narcissus' question.
8. Who saw (or witnessed) Silius' marriage, according to Narcissus (line 14)? There are three nominatives, and they occupy an unusual position in the sentence.
9. Which word is (or Which words are) emphasised by the unusual word-order? The three nominatives or **matrimonium**?
10. One way to keep Tacitus' word order is to turn the sentence into the passive (*... has been witnessed ...* etc.).
11. Are the three nominatives placed in an ascending or descending order of importance? Which is more important, **populus** or **senatus**?
12. Which is the most important of the three nominatives?
13. Who does Narcissus mean by **milites**? Their importance is emphasised by placing them last before a pause. The most emphatic position in a phrase or sentence is usually (not always) at the end. This is why the verb is so often placed last; it is also why "The three nominatives" was the right answer to question 9 and **milites** was the right answer to question 12.
14. To see the point of **nam**, in line 13, you may find it helpful to run over the translation of Narcissus' words so far. Narcissus is suggesting: You ought to know, because everybody else does.
15. Narcissus continues with a warning, contained in a conditional sentence: "unless you do X, then Y happens": **nisi celeriter agis, tenet urbem maritus**. What does Narcissus tell Claudius he must do?
16. If he doesn't do this, what happens?
17. How is Silius described in line 15? Why doesn't Tacitus say whose **maritus** he was? (You may like the idea of translating **maritus** as the new husband, a version chosen in all three of the translations previously quoted.)

Questions 18-21 continue to deal with Tacitus' use of word order, together with his use of tenses. Questions 22-23 are translation and discussion. Be guided by your teacher over whether to work on questions 18-21 before or after questions 22-23, or to omit them altogether.

Check

18. (i) Study **tenet urbem maritus** in line 15. In what order has Tacitus (or Narcissus) placed the nominative, accusative and verb? If you answer in writing, use initial letters N, A and V.
 - (ii) What is the more usual order?
 - (iii) This little sentence attracts attention simply because the word order is unusual (though Claudius was probably already listening attentively, in horror). In addition, which word is placed in the most emphatic position (see question 13)?

The second-most emphatic position, very roughly, is the beginning, and you can see that the first word after the pause is **urbem**. Translate the sentence in a way that keeps Tacitus' word order. You might try using a passive verb like *is being held* or the expression *is in the hands of*. (And there's no harm in giving the city a name.)

19. Study the first part of Narcissus' sentence, and its translation:

nisi tu celeriter agis *If you don't act quickly ...*

In sentences like this, Latin would not normally use a present tense. (It would use a future perfect tense, which these notes are not concerned with at the moment.) The best way to see why Tacitus does this is to ask yourself which of (a) or (b) Narcissus is more likely to mean:

(a) *If you don't act quickly (from this very moment)*

(b) *If you don't act quickly (at some future time)*

20. In the second part of the sentence, **tenet urbem maritus**, Narcissus again uses the present tense, **tenet**, this time in a sentence where English and (normally) Latin both use the future (**tenebit** and *he will hold*). It is best to keep Tacitus' unusual present tense and say *holds*. Tacitus may be using **tenet** for the same reason that he used **agis**, as you can see by asking yourself again which of (a) or (b) Narcissus is more likely to mean:

(a) *the new husband will be in control of Rome (soon)*

(b) *the new husband will be in control of Rome (and he's already started)*

21. English sometimes uses the present tense to refer to the future in such sentences as "We go home tomorrow" and in threats, prophecies and warnings such as "Get this in your heads: if you don't practise harder, the opposition win (instead of *will win*) on Saturday".

22. Translate this sub-section.

*23. How would you describe Narcissus' method of breaking news to his emperor? Consider how his words should be read aloud.

(a) angrily

(b) brutally

(c) gently

(d) tactfully

(e) urgently

There is more than one possible answer.

*24. "It's disgusting that these people get together to have a woman killed, with no chance to defend herself in court." Do you agree? (†)

Answers

18. (i) VAN

(ii) NAV

(iii) **maritus** at end

Notes

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1. Read this section, aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary.
 3. Read this section again.
 4. Whom does Claudius summon (line 1)? What particular group of people would probably be among those summoned? Who else is specially mentioned and what was his position (lines 1-2)?
 5. Who is referred to by **eo** (line 2)?
 6. Which of these is the literal translation of **eo locuto** and which is the most suitable of the natural translations?
 - (a) although he has spoken
 - (b) after he has spoken
 - (c) with him having spoken
 - (d) because he has spoken
 7. There is an attractive alternative to *he* when arriving at a natural translation for **eo**. Bear in mind that Geta has just been mentioned. If puzzled, look back to Section IVd question 6.
 8. In a phrase omitted here, the **praefectus rei frumentariae** (commander in charge of the corn supply – a vital post) joins Geta in confirming Narcissus' story. What do the others (i.e. other than Geta and the **praefectus**) do?
 - *9. The words **ceteri certatim circumstrepunt** challenge the translator severely. The perfect translation would use as few words as possible (Tacitus uses three). It would also reproduce the alliteration (repeated initial **c**, making the mini-sentence more attention-grabbing); and it would convey the idea that Claudius is more or less surrounded (**circum-**) by people each trying to shout louder than the others, like a group of excited small children. (You may feel the last point exaggerates what Tacitus says, but **certatim**, though often translated as *eagerly*, is closely linked with **certare**, *to compete*.) This is what our usual translators produce:
 - (a) *From the rest of the circle came a din of voices* (Jackson)
 - (b) *The whole company clamoured in concert* (Church & Brodribb)
 - (c) *The rest of the emperor's entourage loudly insisted ...* (Grant)
 Which of the three gives the best impression of the way Tacitus wrote? (†) Can you produce a translation which out-does it?
 - *10. What two things do the advisers strongly urge Claudius to do in line 3? What do you think of their advice? Good or bad?
 11. What was the third thing Claudius was urged to do (**securitati ... consuleret**, line 4)? (**consulere** is used with the dative, meaning *pay attention (to)*.) This piece of advice gives the reason behind the previous two.
 - *12. This is the third time you have met **securitas**. In Section II, it was what Silius told Messalina she would gain by marrying before Claudius discovered their affair. In Section III **securitas** indicated that Silius and Messalina couldn't care less about their wedding being found out. In Section V **securitas** is a safety which Claudius is urged to aim at. What do these different shades of meaning have in common? (Hint: remember that **cura** can mean *anxiety*, and does **se-** at the front of the word seem to suggest *together with*, or *apart from*?)
 13. Whose **securitas** is referred to, and whose **vindicta**?
 14. By this time (**iam**, line 5) the question which Claudius kept putting to himself and the others over and over again (**identidem interrogabat**, line 5) was the *direct* question (**egone potens imperii sum?** Translate it.
 15. The *direct* question turns in lines 5-6 into the *indirect* question **Claudius identidem interrogabat num ipse potens imperii esset** (**ipse** with the meaning *he* is included to make it clear who Claudius is asking about). Translate the sentence. (For comparison of direct and indirect questions, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 77, section 25, paragraph 2.)
 16. This is a useful way for you to test how well you understood questions 14 and 15. What was the *second* question which Claudius kept on asking (line 6)?
 17. Claudius could have combined his two questions by asking *Have X and Y changed places?* Who are X and Y?
 18. Translate this Section.
 - *19. Which of the following gives the best description of Claudius as presented by Tacitus in this Section?
 - (a) feeble and clueless
 - (b) determined to get at the truth
 - (c) in a state of shock

One of the three is a non-starter, but good reasons can be found for either of the other two.

Section VI (*Annales* XI.31 continued) - Wedding celebrations

Section VIa

Lines 1-4 (... *Bacchae*)

Agrippina's response

at Messalina, numquam solutior luxu, adulto autumno
simulacrum vindemiae per domum celebrabat. urgebantur
prela, fluebat vinum. feminae pellibus accinctae adsultabant
ut sacrificantes vel insanientes Bacchae;

- 1 at - *but, meanwhile*
Messalina, Messalinae - *Messalina*
numquam - *never, at no time*
solutus, soluta, solutum - *unrestrained, free, relaxed, uninhibited*
luxus, luxus - *luxury, extravagance*
adolesco, adolescere, adolevi, adultus - *grow older, be well advanced*
autumnus, autumni - *autumn*
- 2 simulacrum, simulacri - *representation, pretence, show*
vindemia, vindemiae - *grape-gathering, grape harvest*
per - *through, throughout, all over*
domus, domi - *house*
celebro, celebrare, celebravi, celebratus - *celebrate*
urgeo, urgere, ursi - *press, squeeze, weigh down*

- 3 prelum, preli - *wine-press*
fluo, fluere, fluxi - *flow, stream*
vinum, vini - *wine*
femina, feminae - *female, woman*
pellis, pellis - *skin, hide*
accingo, accingere, accinxi, accinctus - *dress in*
adsulto, adsultare, adsultavi - *jump about, leap about*
- 4 ut - *as, like*
sacrifico, sacrificare, sacrificavi, sacrificatus - *sacrifice*
vel - *or*
insanio, insanire, insanivi - *be mad, be in a frenzy, act crazily*
Baccha, Bacchae - *Bacchant, a follower of Bacchus*

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1. Read lines 1-4 (... **Bacchae**), aloud if possible. As you read, you'll see that a nominative singular noun tells you at once that the story is switching from Claudius, and a verb in line 2 tells you what the new character was doing.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines, which may give you some idea of the style in which Messalina celebrated her wedding.
 3. Read this sub-section again. As you read, you may notice another nominative noun in line 3, introducing further characters.
 4. Which of these descriptions does Tacitus use to describe Messalina's behaviour on this occasion (line 1)?
 - (a) never restrained
 - (b) never more restrained (than at this moment)
 - (c) never unrestrained
 - (d) never more unrestrained (than at this moment)
 5. What does Tacitus mean by calling Messalina free or unrestrained (**soluta**)?
 - (a) she completely lacked fear
 - (b) she had little or no self-control
 - (c) her marriage to Claudius was over
 6. What case is **luxu**? (If unsure, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 11, section 1, paragraph 4, **manus**.) Out of four common meanings of this case (*by, from, with and in*), which is the most suitable here?
 7. What time of year was it? (A two-word phrase is involved.)
 8. Which word in line 2 tells you what festival Messalina was "celebrating"? Which word tells you it was not the real thing? What case is **vindemiae**? Translate the phrase **simulacrum vindemiae**.
 9. Where did the celebrations take place? In this particular sentence, is *throughout* (or *all over*) a better translation of **per** than *through*? During Section VI, it will become clear whether the place for festivities included the gardens.
 10. Although this was an imitation festival, Messalina was evidently keen to make the theme of the party clear, and the short sentence **urgebantur ... vinum** in lines 2-3 indicates two processes taking place which you would expect (probably on a larger scale) at the real festival. What were they?
 11. **vinum** could refer to the newly-pressed grape-juice. This was occasionally drunk, but not often. At a high-class party like this one, the **vinum** offered to guests was normally made from grapes that had been pressed a long time previously and stored in amphorae.
 12. If you search for 'themed party' on the internet, you will find many examples of the use of fancy dress, such as 'Angels and devils' and 'Cops and robbers'. Line 3 makes it clear that some of the females at the party wore costumes suitable to the theme described in line 2. What were they dressed in and what were they doing (**feminae ... adsultabant**)?
 13. Who did the women imitate by wearing this costume (line 4)? Translate the two present participles which describe them.
 14. Translate this sub-section.
 - *15. Find the answers to as many of the following questions as you can, using wherever possible books or websites which you have previously found reliable.
 - (i) What was Bacchus' Greek name?
 - (ii) What was he god of, apart from wine?
 - (iii) What were his worshippers called? (Two names are common, one beginning with B, one with M.)
 - (iv) What was a **thyrsus**? (It will be mentioned in the next sub-section, but can be conveniently researched here.)
 - (v) What emotional state might a Bacchic festival create in Bacchus' followers, helped perhaps by the music, dancing, wine and dressing-up? If you are stuck, one of Tacitus's present participles may give you a clue. Might this emotional state be aroused even by the imitation of such festivities (just as an actor can sometimes get carried away by his part)?
 - (vi) What attitude did the Roman authorities sometimes take towards Bacchic celebrations? The Latin word **Bacchanalia** may lead you to an answer, and the meanings of the English words *bacchanalian* and *orgy* may also give you a clue.
 16. The worship of Dionysus in the past had involved tearing an animal to pieces and eating it raw. It is most unlikely that this played any part in Messalina's wedding celebrations. (If something so gruesome and dramatic had taken place, would Tacitus have missed it out?) Just as the women were not really Bacchae but were acting, one explanation of **sacrificantes** is that the killing of an animal was mimed (to the accompaniment of music and dance?). This would suit the link between Dionysus and drama.
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Section VIb

Lines 4-7 (ipsa ... choro)

The happy couple

ipsa crine fluxo
thyrsus quatibet, iuxtaque Silius hedera vinctus, 5
cothurnos gerens iaciebat caput, strepente circum procaci
choro.

- 4 ipse, ipsa, ipsum - *he, she, it; himself, herself, itself*
crinis, crinis - *hair*
fluo, fluere, fluxi - *flow, stream, hang loosely*
- 5 thyrsus, thyrsi - *Bacchic wand*
quatio, quater, quassus - *shake, brandish*
iuxta - *close by, near by*
Silius, Sili - *Silius*
hedera, hederae - *ivy*
vincio, vincere, vinxi, vinctus - *bind, encircle, garland*

- 6 cothurnus, cothurni - *high boot*
gero, gerere, gessi, gestus - *wear*
iacio, iacere, ieci, iactus - *throw around, toss*
caput, capitis - *head*
strepo, strepere, strepui - *make a loud noise, shout confusedly*
circum - *around, about*
procax, procacis - *dissolute, undisciplined*
- 7 chorus, chori - *chorus, band, group*

1. Read lines 4-7 (**ipsa ... choro**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. Who is **ipsa** (line 4)?
5. Messalina and her children appear on a cameo (carved gem), now in a Paris museum. Find a photo of this cameo (there is a good one on page 121 of the *Cambridge Latin Anthology*), study it and compare Messalina's hairstyle there with her hairstyle as described at the end of line 4. Account for the difference.
- *6. "Letting her hair down in both senses of the phrase." Explain this comment on Messalina as described in line 4.
7. What activity of Messalina's in line 5 makes it clear that she was playing the role of a worshipper of Bacchus?
8. Where was Silius? What was the garland around his head made of? What unusual footwear did he have (line 6)?
9. The **cothurni** were worn by actors in performances of Greek tragedy: Silius wears them because Bacchus was, under his Greek name of Dionysus, closely associated with drama.
10. What else was Silius doing? You may have seen people behaving in this way, for instance when dancing to loud and lively music. It is not being suggested that you have ever behaved in this way yourself.
11. Find and translate the adjective which describes the chorus. What does Tacitus say they were doing (line 6)?
12. In Roman weddings, when a newly-wed couple made their way from the bride's house to that of the bridegroom, it was customary for the bridegroom's (male) friends to accompany them with rude jokes and uninhibited songs aimed at the bridegroom, on such topics as his forthcoming wedding night and his previous sex life. Perhaps Silius' friends are continuing to do this at the party – it certainly suits Tacitus' choice of the word **procax**.
13. You have often met **circum** used as a preposition with an accusative noun:

- (i) **Sextus currum perite circum metam dirigebat.**

Sextus was skilfully steering his chariot round the turning-point.

But **circum** can also be used on its own as an adverb, literally meaning *around, all around*; it is often a good idea to add a pronoun like *them* or *him* to avoid awkward English. Study this example:

- (ii) **fures in triviis constiterunt. silva circum silebat.**

The thieves halted at the cross-roads. Around them the wood was silent.

There is no **eos** after **circum**, but adding *them* produces natural English.

Translate this sentence:

- (iii) **nos in media arena eramus. spectatores circum clamabant.**

In the same way, in this version of part of line 6, you may find it helpful to translate **circum** as if it were **circumeum** or **circumeos**. Translate it:

- (iv) **iuxta Messalinam Silius recumbebat. strepebat circum chorus procax.**

14. Find and translate the ablative absolute phrase in lines 5-7 (**iuxtaque ... choro.**) This is one of the times when a literal translation (beginning with *with*) produces natural English – though it is not the only possible translation.
15. Memory test: you met **circum** and **strepo** earlier, combined in a single verb **circumstrepunt**. How quickly can you recall the situation where the word occurred?
16. Perhaps the two words **circum** and **strepo** came into Tacitus' mind because he had used them (as one word) earlier, in his chapter 32. (You may have had the same experience yourself, when you find a particular word, perhaps one that you don't often use, popping into your head twice or more times within a fairly short period.)
- *17. What are the similarities and differences between the two situations where Tacitus has used **strepo** and **circum**, as two words here and one in Section V?
- *18. Which consonant is repeated several times in lines 6-7, especially in the last three words? Do you think this is just coincidence, or a deliberate sound effect? Questions like these are partly a matter of opinion, not fact, and what seems effective to one person may seem pure accident to another. See what you think. Try reading lines 6-7 up to **choro** aloud, substituting the letter **l** for every **c** or **ch**. Then read the original version again (note that **ch-** in **ch-oro** is not like English **ch-** in *church* but is an emphatic **c**, like the **c-** in "You cat!"). Does the repeated **c** have a harsh or rough effect, suitable to the coarse and cacophonous chorus? (†)

*19. Which (one or more) of the following adjectives would you use to describe the behaviour of Silius and/or Messalina here? (†)

- (a) irresponsible
- (b) delightful
- (c) frivolous
- (d) fascinating
- (e) bizarre

Give reasons for your choice(s), referring to the text when possible to back up your answer. Are there further adjectives you would add?

20. Translate this sub-section.

*21. You have read Section V. Messalina hadn't. What facts are known to us, the readers, but were either unknown to Messalina and Silius or ignored by them? What difference, if any, is made by knowing something the characters don't know (a situation known as dramatic irony)? Here are some possible results of the reader's knowledge:

- (a) contrast: the reader compares the difference between what the characters are doing and what they ought to be doing
- (b) increasing tension: the reader's tension increases when (e.g.) a heroine steadily and unknowingly makes her way towards a place where (we know) an ambush is waiting for her
- (c) curiosity: the reader wonders "What will happen when these two groups of people meet?"

Did any of these three or other features strike you when reading this sub-section? (NB There are no "right answers" here.) (†)(†)

Answers

13. (iii) *We were in the middle of the arena. The spectators were shouting around us.*

There is no **nos** after **circum**, but adding *us* produces natural English.

(iv) *Next to Messalina, Silius was reclining. An impudent chorus was bellowing around him or them.*

Notes

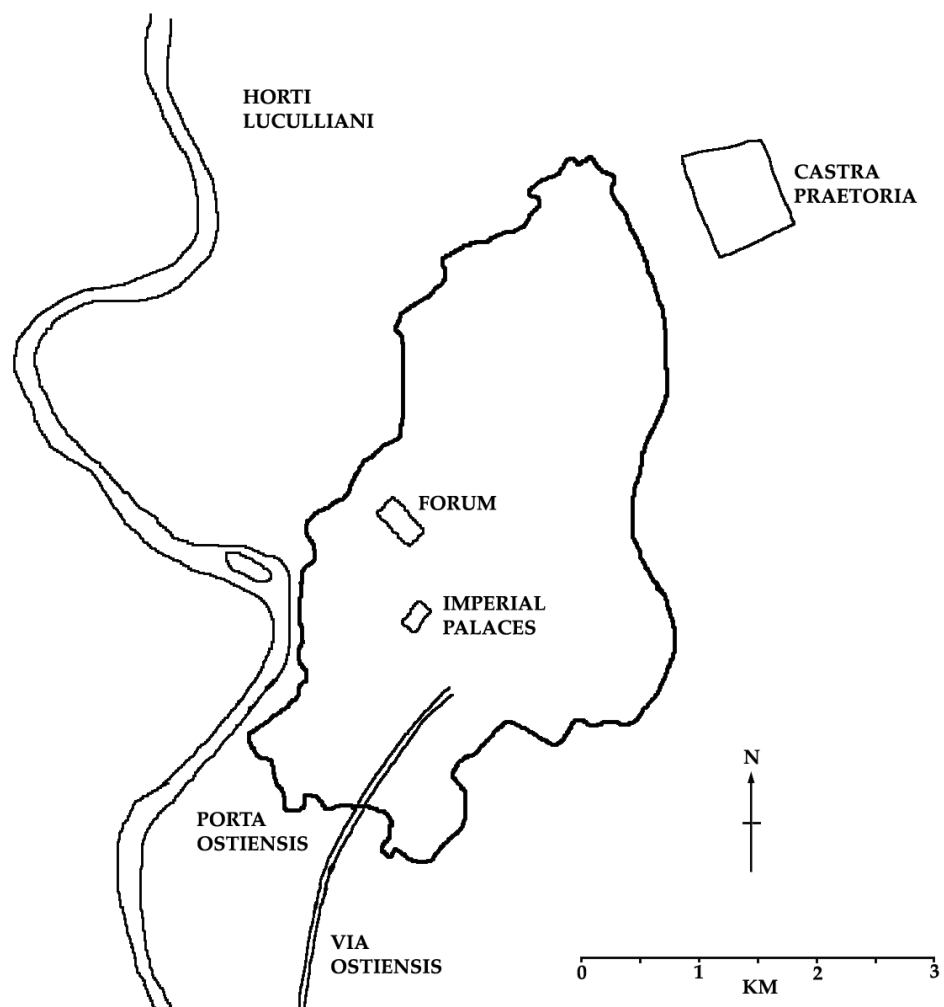
-
1. Read lines 7-11 (**ferunt ... vertit**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. Does **ferunt** suggest that Tacitus is using a written account here (one of the **scripta** mentioned in Section III d, lines 8-9) or a detail passed down by word of mouth (one of the **audita** in Section III d)?
 3. **ferunt** introduces an indirect statement, as you would expect. Read the sub-section again, aloud if possible, and as you do so, notice the accusative noun(s) which tell you who the indirect statement is about (not very difficult) and the infinitive which tells you what that person did (rather harder – you have to wait a bit before you get there). What is the tense of the infinitive? (See *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 34, paragraph 8 if in difficulty.)
 4. Vettius was a well-known doctor, mentioned by Pliny the Elder. He may also have been one of Messalina's many lovers.
 5. What was the first thing that Vettius did (**cum ... ascendisset**, lines 7-8)? What question did the others shout up to him (lines 8-9)?
 6. Had Vettius climbed up deliberately in order to keep watch, or just for fun? Which phrase in lines 7-9 tells you this?
 7. What was his answer to the question?
 8. What part has Ostia played in the story so far?
 9. (For experts only) You may recall that Ostia is regarded as a small town for preposition purposes (for example *to Ostia* is **Ostiam**, not **ad Ostiam**), so it may seem surprising to find the preposition **ab** in front of it. The explanation is that here **ab** has an unusual meaning – *in the area of* or *in the direction of*. When it has this meaning, **ab** is not omitted.
 10. Tacitus offers two explanations for Vettius' reply. (You met a previous example of double explanation in Section II.) One explanation is that Vettius was speaking literally, the other is that he was speaking metaphorically, i.e., using a metaphor.
If you are clear about the difference between literal and metaphorical, proceed to question 11; if you are unsure, compare these two ways of using the word *flew*:
 - (i) literally: The bird flew to the highest branch.
 - (ii) metaphorically: Christine flew down the street after the thief.
 In (i) the word *flew* is used in the simplest, most physical way.
In (ii) *flew* is not being used literally (unless Christine had wings and went through the air) but is used as a metaphor to convey the speed with which she ran towards her target.
 11. Tacitus' first explanation is introduced in line 9 by **sive, whether ...**. It is a literal explanation (**coeperat ea species**, line 10); Vettius is forecasting the weather. You have often met the pronoun **is, ea, id** in its non-nominative cases (**eam, eos**, etc.); here Tacitus is using the nominative (**ea**) with **species** to mean *such a phenomenon* or a *phenomenon of this sort*. What particular sight or phenomenon is he referring to? (Look back at Vettius' words if necessary.)
 12. What tense is **coeperat**? Translate **ea species coeperat**, adding *to appear* after your translation of **coeperat** if it makes your translation clearer.
 - *13. Vettius' weather report (if that is what his reply was) tells you in what direction he saw the **tempestas**, and how serious it looked. What sign(s) would make an observer, possibly many miles away, say "Terrible weather they're having over there"?
 14. Tacitus' second explanation is that Vettius did not mean a real storm-cloud, but was using **tempestas atrox** metaphorically, as a lively way of referring to something else, in the direction of Ostia. If **tempestas atrox** is being used as a metaphor, what is it most likely to refer to?
 - (a) the storm of Claudius' anger
 - (b) a storm of abuse from the praetorian guard
 - (c) a storm of fury from Messalina, claiming she had been let down
 The next chapters will make it clear, if you have not already guessed, whether the **tempestas** was a literal storm or a metaphorical one.
 15. **vox** can be used to refer not just to what somebody (e.g. Vettius) uses, i.e. his voice, but also to what he produces with his voice, as if Tacitus had used **verba**.
 16. Find and translate a word in line 10 which makes it clear that Vettius was not deliberately using the words **tempestas atrox** to give his friends a genuine warning. (There are two possible answers – one an adverb, the other a perfect passive participle.)

-
17. Whether Vettius was forecasting heavy rain or making a joke about Claudius coming back in a temper, something happened later (**postea**, line 10), which made his words seem rather different (**in praesagium vertit**, lines 10-11; **vertit** is singular because although Vettius uttered several words, they are described by the singular noun **vox**.) What happened to Vettius' jokey remark later on, according to lines 10-11? What do you think made people recall Vettius' words and take them seriously? (To answer this you will need to guess what happened to Messalina, Silius and the others, if you do not know already.)
18. (i) Visualise the events of this sub-section. Imagine the sounds as well as the sights, guided by this description, which is loosely based on Tacitus' words. (Ignore for the moment the fact that some words are in italics):
- A large group of Romans are partying very noisily in the garden (think of Italian football fans). Vettius, *for no serious purpose*, (perhaps to show his skill, strength or sobriety) does his party trick, climbing a tree which is not merely **alta** but **praealta**. People shout their question (not a very original one) up at him. He shouts back his notorious reply, *either* a genuine weather report or a jokey comment about trouble ahead, which he only uttered *by chance*, not seriously – but people remember it *afterwards* and it *is treated as if it had been a message from the gods*.
- (ii) Look back at lines 7-11 and find the five Latin words or phrases which correspond to the words and phrases in italics in (i).
19. Translate this sub-section.
20. Revisit question 2 in this sub-section. Does this anecdote about Vettius sound like one of the **audita** or one of the **scripta**?
- *21. Complete the title given above to Section VIc. Do you agree with what the completed title says?

Notes

1. Read lines 1-5 (... **digrediuntur**), aloud if possible.
2. Translate the first seven words. Unusually, the first five words (**non ... sed**) can be translated in the same order that they have in the original Latin, and the sixth and seventh words can then be translated in reverse order.
3. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
4. Read this sub-section again.
5. What (and who) come speedily to Messalina (lines 1-2)? Note that there are two nominatives, not one, in the opening line.
6. Compare three ways of translating **qui** (line 2) together with **adferrent** (line 3). Which one is wrong?
 - (a) who brought news
 - (b) who were to bring news
 - (c) to bring news

If unsure, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, pages 67-68, section 23, paragraphs 1-2 for two different ways of using the relative pronoun **qui**.
7. Who was the news about, and what two things did the messengers say about that person?
8. How is that person described? (If you need to check the case of **ultioni**, its endings are like those of **leo**, *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 10, section 1, paragraph 3.)
9. Does the messengers' description agree with the description of Claudius' behaviour in Section V? If there is a discrepancy, suggest a reason for it. (†)
10. How do Messalina and Silius respond to the news? (Look for a plural verb in lines 3-5.)
11. Where does Messalina aim for (line 4)? The map of Rome below includes three places which are important from this point of the story onwards: the gardens of Lucullus, the road to Ostia and the barracks of the Praetorian Guard. One key site, the place of the wedding, cannot be included, because its whereabouts are unknown. Silius' family home (a possible site) is unlikely to have been far from the centre.
12. If you are unsure about the word order of **Lucullianos in hortos**, see note 5 of Section Ic.



-
13. The magnificent gardens of Lucullus were named after the famously wealthy man who owned them a century earlier. The way in which Messalina gained possession of them was mentioned in the notes for Section Ia.
14. Where does Silius go? Why might this be a very suitable and respectable place for him to be seen? Take into account what you know about (a) this part of Rome, and (b) Silius' official status, mentioned in line 3 of Section III. Silius had been named to hold office during the closing months of AD 48, and must by now have been close to the time when he would normally be taking up his position. (For the time of year, see Section VIa, line 1.)
15. Study these examples, which lead up to Tacitus' description of Silius' purpose:

- (i) **domina tacet, ut iram dissimulet.**

The mistress is silent, in order to hide her anger.

(The verb **dissimulare** is related to the noun **dissimulatio**, which was described in note 17 of Section IIa.)

Check

Now translate the following sentence:

- (ii) **rex nihil dicit, ut dolorem dissimulet.**

Finally translate the following sentence:

- (iii) **Silius ad forum festinat, ut metum dissimulet.**

The phrase **dissimulando metui** in line 4 can be translated in exactly the same way as **ut metum dissimulet** in example (iii) above. Instead of **ut** and the subjunctive, Tacitus has used the dative case of the gerundive of **dissimulare** (literally for fear being concealed, or for the purpose of being concealed; *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 82, section 26, paragraph 2 has examples of gerundives used more normally).

- *16. Why is Silius determined not to show fear? This partly depends on whether you think Silius believes escape is possible.
- (a) Is it the case that he knows the game is up, but is determined to meet death calmly and bravely, as a Roman should - especially a Roman who was on the point of becoming consul (see note 14 above)?
- (b) Or does he hope to get away with it? If so, might he be taking care to present himself in the forum relaxed and unafraid ("just another day at the office"), lest signs of fear should be treated as evidence of guilt?
- (c) Or is there another answer altogether? (†)
17. Translate this sub-section. The last sentence works best if you translate **digrediuntur** straight after the two names, then repeat each name where needed (M and S separate, M for destination 1, S to destination 2).

Answers

16. (ii) The king says nothing, in order to hide his grief.

Notes

Section VIIb

Lines 5-8 (*illa ... irent*)

Messalina's best hope

illa tamen, quamquam res adversae 5
consilium eximerent, ire obviam et aspici a marito statim
constituit, quod saepe ei fuerat subsidium; misitque ut
Britannicus et Octavia in complexum patris irent.

- 5 ille, illa, illud - *that, he, she, the following*
tamen - *however*
quamquam - *although*
res, rei - *thing, matter, condition*
adversus, adversa, adversum - *hostile, unfavourable, unfortunate*
6 consilium, consilii - *plan, judgement*
eximo, eximere, exemi, exemptus - *take away*
eo, ire, ii - *go*
obviam - *in the way*
et - *and, also, even*
aspicio, aspicere, aspexi, aspectus - *look at, see, notice*
a - *from, by*
maritus, mariti - *husband*
statim - *at once*

- 7 constituo, constituere, constitui - *decide*
qui, quae, quod - *which*
saepe - *often*
is, ea, id - *he, she, it; that*
sum, esse, fui - *be*
subsidium, subsidii - *support, means of salvation, life-line*
mitto, mittere, misi, missus - *send*
ut - *that, so that*
8 Britannicus, Britannici - *Britannicus, son of Claudius and Messalina*
et - *and, also, even*
Octavia, Octaviae - *Octavia, daughter of Claudius and Messalina*
in - *into*
complexus, complexus - *embrace*
pater, patris - *father*
eo, ire, ii - *go*

-
1. Read lines 5-8 (**illa ... irent**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
 3. Read this sub-section again.
 4. Who is **illa** (line 5)?
 5. What effect did her situation have on her (lines 5-6)?
 6. What two things did she immediately decide to do? If puzzled by the infinitive **aspici**, study the six infinitives of 3rd-conjugation verbs (verbs like **traho**) included in the list of other forms of the verb on *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, pages 34-35, section 7f, paragraphs 6-11.
 - *7. Why does Tacitus feel it necessary to add **aspici a marito**? Was it particularly important for Messalina that she should be seen by the emperor? If so, why?
 8. What does Tacitus say about the second part of Messalina's plan (line 7)? What does **saepe** tell you about Messalina's character?
 - *9. Is the tone of **quod saepe ei fuerat subsidium** cynical, matter-of-fact or aggressive? (You might consider how the comment should be read aloud, and compare it with what may be a similar remark in Section IIc, line 9.) (†)
 10. **subsidium** literally means an armed force held back in reserve in case reinforcements are needed. Tacitus is using this military word as a metaphor to describe a very un-military situation. In what way does Messalina's situation resemble that of the military commander?
 - *11. There are a variety of English translations for **subsidium** here. Many of them are metaphors, like **subsidium** itself (*life-line, escape route, etc.*). Perhaps you can add or invent others. Some picturesque slang expressions (e.g. *get-out-of-jail-free card*) catch Tacitus' meaning nicely but miss out on Tacitus' dignity, and so might belong to class discussion rather than written translation.
 12. In line 7, **misit** has the unusual meaning of *sent orders*. What orders did Messalina send? (Check if necessary if you are unsure who the two people named in line 8 were.)
*Suggest a reason why Tacitus wrote **patris** and not **Claudii**.
 13. Tacitus does not say where Octavia and Britannicus were; perhaps they were at the imperial palace. Evidently they had not been present at the wedding (are you surprised?).
 14. You may find it easier to see what **in complexum patris** means than to translate it. One way is to translate **complexum** as *arms*; another is to use a verb (*to embrace* or *to be embraced by* – or both?).
 - *15. What was Messalina's purpose in sending this order? In the circumstances, do you think she was justified in using small children in this way? (†)
 16. (Memory test) From which direction would Claudius be expected to come?
 17. Translate this sub-section.
 - *18. There is a puzzle about Tacitus' description of Messalina here. He says in lines 5-6 **res adversae consilium eximerent**, but in line 7 he uses the verb **constituere** to refer to what she did. Is Tacitus contradicting himself? Was Messalina now unable to think rationally and just behaving by instinct? Was she blindly following an impulse to make for the **horti Luculliani** but then reverting to a well-tryed plan – her default setting, as it were? Or is there some other explanation? (†)

Section VIIIc

Lines 8-13 (*atque ... praevalebat*)

To the Ostia road

atque

interim, tribus omnino comitantibus - tam repens erat
solitudo - postquam per urbem pedibus ivit, vehiculo, quo 10
purgamenta hortorum eripiuntur, Ostiensem viam intrat.
nullam misericordiam civibus commovit quia flagitiorum
deformitas praevalebat.

8 atque - *and*
9 interim - *meanwhile*
tres, tria - *three*
omnino - *in total, only*
comito, comitare, comitavi, comitatus -
accompany, follow
tam - *so*
repens, repentis - *sudden*
sum, esse, fui - *be*
10 solitudo, solitudinis - *solitude, desertion,*
desolation
postquam - *after, when*
per - *through, along, over*
urbs, urbis - *city, the City, Rome*
pes, pedis - *foot, footstep*
eo, ire, ii/ivi - *go*
vehiculum, vehiculi - *cart*
qui, quae, quod - *who, which*

11 purgamenta, purgamentorum - *refuse*
hortus, horti - *garden*
eripio, eripere, eripui + dat. - *take away,*
remove
Ostiensis, Ostiis, Ostiense - *of Ostia,*
leading to Ostia
via, viae - *street, road*
intro, intrare, intravi, intratus - *enter*
12 nullus, nulla, nullum - *not any, no*
misericordia, misericordiae - *pity*
civis, civis - *citizen*
commoveo, commovere, commovi,
commotus - *move, arouse, evoke*
quia - *because*
flagitium, flagitii - *scandal*
13 deformitas, deformitatis - *appalling nature*
praevaleo, praevalere, praevalui - *prevail,*
carry more weight

1. Read lines 8-13 (**atque ... praevalebat**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. Messalina turns round and heads for the via Ostiensis. If you look back at the map, you will see that the via Ostiensis is virtually at the opposite end of the city from the **horti Luculliani**.
5. How many people does she have accompanying her? Which word in line 9 draws attention to the smallness of the number?
- *6. Find and translate the nominative noun in line 10 which refers to Messalina's present state. In what way does this contrast with her situation in Sections III and VI? What comment does Tacitus make in lines 9-10 about the change? Does his comment suggest anything about the loyalty of the many friends who came to the party?
7. How did she travel at first? Refer to the map on page 71 for her starting-point, her goal and (with the aid of the scale) the distance she travelled, then translate **per** either in the usual way or (if appropriate) with something stronger like *for the full length of* or *from end to end of*.
8. It may be worth bearing in mind that Messalina had already travelled some way in the direction of the **horti Luculliani**. As the emperor's wife, would she have had much experience of walking through Rome, as opposed to being carried in a litter or sedan chair?
9. Where does she get to in line 11? At this point she hitches a lift. What on (line 10)?
10. Translate **purgamenta hortorum**. One difference between Latin and English here is that Latin thinks of items of rubbish and so **purgamenta** is plural, but English prefers the singular rubbish. And just as English might say 'bathroom door' instead of 'door of the bathroom', you may prefer to shorten the phrase *refuse of gardens*.
11. Study this example:
 - (i) **hoc est plaustrum quo agri mei arantur.**
This is the plough with which my fields are ploughed.

Now translate this sentence:

 - (ii) **haec est pugio qua Caesar interfectus est.** (pugio dagger)

Now translate the following phrase

 - (iii) **vehiculum quo segetes portantur.** (segetes crops)

Translate the following description of Messalina's method of travel in lines 10-11:

 - (iv) **vehiculum quo purgamenta hortorum eripiuntur.**
- *12. What is your main impression of Messalina's method of travel?
 - (a) it is a relief for her after her long walk
 - (b) there is a strong contrast with her previous journeyings through Rome
 - (c) Tacitus is hinting that Messalina is worthless ("She's rubbish!")
 - (d) none of the above (if so, say what impression you have)

Choose more than one possibility if you wish. (†)
13. How sorry were the citizens for Messalina? Quote and translate the two-word phrase which tells you what was uppermost in their minds.
- *14. **deformitas**, *appalling nature*, is related to the adjective **deformis**, *ugly*, giving us the word 'deformity'. Which of these descriptions might Tacitus therefore be suggesting (as well as *appalling*) about Messalina's crimes?
 - (a) treacherous
 - (b) sordid
 - (c) squalid
 - (d) reckless
 - (e) dishonest

Choose more than one adjective if you wish. (†)
15. Translate this sub-section.
16. Chapter 33 and the first half of chapter 34 are omitted for reasons of space. They relate that Claudius feels doubtful (or rather the freedmen do) about the loyalty of the commander of the Praetorian Guard. Narcissus suggests that for one day the Guard needs to be commanded by somebody known to be loyal, and suggests himself for the job. Claudius agrees, and when he starts the journey back to Rome from Ostia, Narcissus travels with him in the same carriage.

Check

Answers

11. (ii) *This is the dagger with which Caesar was killed.*
- (iii) *A cart on which (or with which) crops are carried.*

Section VIII

Lines 13-18 (et ... iussit)

Narcissus intervenes

et iam erat in aspectu Claudii
clamitabatque ut audiret Octaviae et Britannici matrem.
Narcissus tamen obstrepuit, Silium et nuptias referens; 15
simul codicillos libidinum indices tradidit, quibus visus
Caesaris averteret. nec multo post urbem ingredienti
offerebantur liberi, sed Narcissus amoveri eos iussit.

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 13 | et - <i>and, also, even</i>
iam - <i>now</i>
sum, esse, fui - <i>be</i>
in - <i>in, on</i>
aspectus, aspectus - <i>sight, view</i>
Claudius, Claudii - <i>Claudius</i> | 16 | simul - <i>at the same time, together</i>
codicilli, codicillorum - <i>writing-tablet, notebook, note</i>
libido, libidinis - <i>pleasure, lust</i>
index, indicis - <i>indication, proof</i>
trado, tradere, tradidi, traditus - <i>hand over</i>
qui, quae, quod - <i>who, which</i>
visus, visus - <i>gaze, attention</i> |
| 14 | clamito, clamitare, clamitavi - <i>demand loudly, shout repeatedly</i>
ut - <i>that, so that</i>
audio, audire, audivi, auditus - <i>hear</i>
Octavia, Octaviae - <i>Octavia, daughter of Claudius and Messalina</i>
et - <i>and, also, even</i>
Britannicus, Britannici - <i>Britannicus, son of Claudius and Messalina</i>
mater, matris - <i>mother</i> | 17 | Caesar, Caesaris - <i>the emperor</i>
averto, avertere, averti, aversus - <i>turn away, distract</i>
nec - <i>and not, nor</i>
multo - <i>much</i>
post - <i>after, afterwards</i>
urbs, urbis - <i>city, the City, Rome</i>
ingredior, ingredi, ingressus sum - <i>enter</i> |
| 15 | Narcissus, Narcissi - <i>Narcissus</i>
tamen - <i>however</i>
obstrepo, obstrepere, obstrepui - <i>shout against, shout down</i>
Silius, Sillii - <i>Gaius Silius, a young nobleman</i>
et - <i>and, also, even</i>
nuptiae, nuptiarum - <i>wedding, marriage</i>
refero, referre, rettuli, relatus - <i>bring back, recall</i> | 18 | offero, offerre, obtuli, oblatus - <i>offer</i>
liberi, liberorum - <i>children</i>
sed - <i>but</i>
Narcissus, Narcissi - <i>Narcissus</i>
amoveo, amovere, amovi, amotus - <i>remove</i>
is, ea, id - <i>he, she, it; that</i>
iubeo, iubere, iussi, iussus - <i>order</i> |

1. Read lines 13-18 (**et ... iussit**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. They include two tricky words each linked with the preposition **ob**:
 - (i) **ob** means *in front of* or *in the path of*, often with the idea of preventing something or making difficulties for someone. You have probably met **obsto**, *I stand in somebody's way*, as well as English words like *obstruct* and *obstacle*. Another verb you have met before, **strepo**, *I shout*, is combined with **ob** in line 15 to make **obstrepo**, *I shout in somebody's way* and so *I shout somebody down*, *I drown somebody's words*. (You may have met the English adjective *obstreperous* and its possible relative *stroppy*.)
 - (ii) **ob** can also join with **fero**, *I bring* or *I put*, to make **offero**. (If you are unsure why **obfero** turns into **offero**, say each word two or three times: which one is easier to say?)
ob+fero = offero = I bring or put something in front of somebody. **offero** is often translated as *I offer*, as you would expect, but can also mean *I put somebody in someone's path*:
regi pauperes offerebantur.
The poor men were being brought before the king or being put in the king's path.
regi is dative not genitive; it is as if the **pauperes** were being offered to him.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. Where was Messalina by now (line 13)?
5. Throughout the fourteen chapters in which Tacitus relates this episode in the lives of Claudius and Messalina, this is the only time he mentions a meeting between them. Notice how long it lasts.
6. **clamito** was mentioned in a note on the difference between **venio** and **ventito** (question 7 of Section 1c). In view of the situation in line 14, do you think **clamitabatque** refers to the repeated nature of the shouts, or their noise, or both? Translate accordingly.
7. What was Messalina demanding?
- *8. Why did she not refer to herself as **uxorem**? (†)
9. How did Narcissus deal with Messalina (**Narcissus ... obstrepuerit**, line 15)?
10. What did Narcissus remind Claudius about (**Silium ... referens**, line 15)?
11. What did he do at the same time (**simul ... tradidit**, line 16)? Translate the phrase which describes the **codicilli**. (If unsure of the case and number of **libidinum**, notice from the vocabulary that it is a 3rd-declension noun, changing its endings like **leo**.)
- *12. **libidinum** could refer to occasions when Messalina had committed adultery with Silius, or be a list of several different adulterers. Which would have the stronger effect on Claudius? (†)
- *13. Several wax tablets (**codicilli**) could be strung together to make a booklet, which gives you some idea of the possible length of the list. There seems little doubt that Narcissus kept himself well-informed of Messalina's activities. Does it sound as if the list in the **codicilli** was put together immediately after the wedding, or prepared earlier and kept up to date? (†)
14. Two points of grammar:
 - (i) Is **quibus** dative plural (to..., for...), or ablative plural (by..., with..., from)?
 - (ii) **visus** (notice the pronunciation) is from the 4th-declension noun **visus** (changing its endings like **manus**, *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 11, section 1, paragraph 4. It is being used in the plural, whereas English uses a singular ('she fixed her gaze or attention', not 'fixed her gazes or attentions').
15. Is **averteret** in line 17 indicative or subjunctive? Which is the correct translation of **quibus ... averteret** (lines 16-17)?
 - (a) with which he distracted
 - (b) with which to distract
 If stuck, refer back to question 6 in Section VIIa.
16. Might Narcissus' use of the **codicilli** here have had another purpose, as well as distracting Claudius? (What might Claudius feel, on reading the list?)
17. Why was Narcissus near enough to Claudius to act as he does in lines 15-17? (If puzzled, see note 16 in Section VIIc.)
- *18. "More like the angry words of a victim of injustice than the humble appeal of a guilty person begging for mercy." Do you agree with this description of the way Messalina behaves in line 14? Is she making a good point when she says she's entitled to a hearing? (†)
- *19. Does this behaviour give Messalina the best chance of saving herself? Is she using very different tactics from those in line 6? Might different tactics suit different situations (private and public)? (†)

-
20. When did the next event narrated by Tacitus occur (line 17)?
21. What was Caesar doing at this point?
22. Study note 2(ii) above for details of **offero**, then translate these sentences, checking as you go:

Check

- (i) **servi liberos Caesari offerebant.**
- (ii) **liberi Caesari offerebantur.**
- (iii) To translate this sentence, use your answer to question 21 and begin your translation with “as” or “when”. You will probably find it helpful to use *him* or *his* in the second part of the sentence.

Caesari urbem ingredienti liberi offerebantur.

The translation of **urbem ingredienti offerebantur liberi** in lines 17-18 is the same as that of sentence (iii), except that *Caesar* is replaced by *he*. Tacitus has just mentioned Caesar, so he does not repeat the name, nor does he include a dative pronoun meaning *him* like **ei**. A Roman reader would know, from the phrase **urbem ingredienti**, into whose path the children were being put.

23. The people who received Messalina’s instructions about the children (**misitque ... irent**, lines 7-8) were evidently waiting with them at the porta Ostiensis, where the via Ostiensis enters the city (see map on page 71).
24. What is the tense of **offerebantur**?

This tense might indicate a series of attempts made by the children’s minders (*were repeatedly put in his path*) or it could refer to a continuous effort (*were being put in his path*). Either way, the effort or attempts were stopped by an action for which Tacitus uses the perfect tense (**iussit**, *ordered*). Here is a similar example:

servi effugere conabantur, sed dominus eos conspexit.

The slaves were trying to escape (continuous action, so imperfect tense), *but the master spotted them* (single action, so perfect tense).

25. Who over-rode Messalina’s instruction about the children, and what order did he give instead? (If unsure about the ending of **amoveri**, study **doceri**, *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 34, section 7f, paragraph 7.)
- *26. It is clear that the orders of Narcissus were obeyed. Why did the servants with the children obey the ex-slave, and not obey the emperor’s wife? There are various possible explanations, including an event mentioned in note 16 at the end of Section VIIc.
27. Translate this sub-section.
- *28. In the power struggle between Messalina and Narcissus, how likely is the loser to stay alive? Why?
29. Refer to the Time Chart in the Introduction to Section I to find out how old Octavia and Britannicus were in AD 48. One can only guess how they felt during these events – scared out of their wits, perhaps?

Answers

22. (i) *The slaves were putting the children in Caesar’s way.*
Or, *The slaves were putting the children in front of Caesar or in Caesar’s path.*
- (ii) *The children were being put in Caesar’s way or in front of Caesar or in Caesar’s path.*
- (iii) *As (or When) Caesar was entering the city, the children were being put in front of him or in his path.*

Notes

Section VIII (*Annales* XI.35 and 37) - Decisions

Section VIIIa

Lines 1-7 (...acceleratur)

Court-martial

mirum inter haec silentium Claudii: omnia liberto
oboediebat; qui contionem militum in castris paravit. apud
eos praemonente Narcisso princeps pauca verba fecit:
continuus dehinc clamor militum nomina reorum et poenas
flagitantium. ductus Silius ad tribunal non defensionem,
non moras temptavit, sed precatus est ut mors
acceleraretur.

5

1	mirus, mira, mirum - <i>strange, surprising</i> inter - <i>among, between</i> hic, haec, hoc - <i>this</i> silentium, silentii - <i>silence</i> Claudius, Claudii - <i>Claudius</i> omnis, omne - <i>all, every</i> libertus, liberti - <i>freedman, ex-slave</i>	4	continuus, continua, continuum - <i>continuous, persistent</i> dehinc - <i>thereafter, from then on</i> clamor, clamoris - <i>shout, uproar</i> miles, militis - <i>soldier</i> nomen, nominis - <i>name</i> reus, rei - <i>defendant, guilty person</i> et - <i>and, also, even</i>
2	oboedio, oboedire, oboedivi + dat. - <i>obey</i> qui, quae, quod - <i>who, which</i> contio, contionis - <i>assembly</i> miles, militis - <i>soldier</i> in - <i>in, on</i> castra, castrorum - <i>camp</i> paro, parare, paravi, paratus - <i>prepare, make ready</i> apud - <i>among, with, in, at the house of</i>	5	poena, poenae - <i>punishment</i> flagito, flagitare, flagitavi, flagitatus - <i>demand</i> duco, ducere, duxi, ductus - <i>lead</i> Silius, Sillii - <i>Gaius Silius, a young nobleman</i> ad - <i>to, at</i> tribunal, tribunalis - <i>platform</i> non - <i>not</i> defensio, defensionis - <i>defence</i>
3	is, ea, id - <i>he, she, it; that</i> praemoneo, praemonere, praemonui, praemonitus - <i>forewarn</i> Narcissus, Narcissi - <i>Narcissus</i> princeps, principis - <i>chief, chieftain, emperor</i> pauci, paucae, pauca - <i>few</i> verbum, verbi - <i>word</i> facio, facere, feci, factus - <i>make, do</i>	6	non - <i>not</i> mora, morae - <i>delay</i> tempto, temptare, temptavi, temptatus - <i>try, attempt</i> sed - <i>but</i> precor, precari, precatus sum - <i>pray (to), pray for</i> ut - <i>that, so that</i> mors, mortis - <i>death</i>
		7	accelero, accelerare, acceleravi, acceleratus - <i>hasten, speed up</i>

-
1. Read lines 1-7, aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
 3. Read this sub-section again.
 4. What was Claudius saying meanwhile? Translate the adjective which Tacitus uses to comment on this behaviour (line 1).
 5. How did he take all his decisions (lines 1-2)?
 6. Why is **oboedire** used with the dative? (Hint: What is its literal translation?)
 7. What did the **libertus** do next? Where (line 2)? Refer to the map on page 71 for its location.
 - *8. Who broke the news to the Praetorian Guard (perhaps confirming rumours they had heard already)? Suggest a reason why he doesn't let Claudius tell his own story. (†)
 9. Memory check: what was the Praetorian Guard's attitude to Claudius? Why? If unsure, refer to the Introduction to Section I on pages 4-5 for the Guard's actions after Caligula's murder and the relevance of Claudius' brother.
 - *10. Which of these is the literal translation of **praemonente Narcisso** and which of the other translations do you prefer? Do you prefer a translation of your own?
 - (a) during the warning from Narcissus
 - (b) with Narcissus giving a warning in advance
 - (c) while forewarning Narcissus
 - (d) with a word of warning first from Narcissus
 11. How much did the emperor say?
 12. What was the immediate reaction (line 4)? See your answer to question 9 for the reason.
 13. What is the case of **militum**? Find a present participle in lines 4-5 which tells you what they were doing.
 14. What information, and what action, did the soldiers loudly demand?
 15. What was Silius doing when last mentioned by Tacitus? What has obviously happened to him since then? (Tacitus sometimes misses out links in a chain of events in order to speed up his story; you may feel cheated by the missing link here, or you may feel it would be an unnecessary detail.)
 16. What happened to Silius in line 5?
 17. You may previously have studied the plan of a legionary fortress. The Praetorian Guard's base, like a fortress, possessed a headquarters (**principia**) and a platform (**tribunal**) from which the commander might address the Guard. If you have a vivid imagination, consider the possible feelings of an accused person when led onto a tribunal in front of a crowd behaving as the Guard were doing in lines 4-5. Line 6 shows whether Silius was intimidated.
 18. What did Silius not do, according to lines 5-6?
 19. What was Silius' only request?
 - *20. Which of these adjectives (one or more) describes Silius' attitude?
 - (a) resigned
 - (b) contemptuous
 - (c) dignified
 - (d) casual
 - (e) brave

Optional: suggest a better alternative to the above.

21. Translate this sub-section.
22. Silius is not mentioned again. Tacitus leaves it to the reader (or listener) to draw an obvious conclusion about what happened to him. Perhaps Tacitus felt that Silius' fate was less important than that of his partner.
- *23. This sub-section contains two sentences or half-sentences with no verb. Find them. Tacitus could easily have included **erat** in each of them, but didn't: should he have done? When translating the two groups of words, ought 'was' to be included?

Compare:

two climbers missing with two climbers are missing;

and:

supper in oven with your supper is in the oven.

In Tacitus' two sentences and the two pairs of English examples, what (if anything) does the writer gain by not including **erat** or (in the English sentences) *are, your, is* and *the*? (†)

1. Read lines 7-9 (**interim ... gerebat**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines, noting in particular:
 - (i) **prolatare** to make something longer, to extend it.
 - (ii) **nonnullus** literally *not none*; you could let the two negatives cancel each other out and say *some*, but a better translation would be:
not without or with a certain amount of.
 - (iii) You have previously met **gerere** with the meaning *wear*, e.g. **rex togam gerebat**. In line 9 **gerere** refers not to the wearing of clothes but to the displaying of a good or bad quality. *To display or show* would be suitable, as in "She was showing plenty of common sense".
 - (iv) As a mini-test on both (ii) and (iii), translate:

Check

ille miles est stultus, mendax, obesus: in pugna tamen nonnullam virtutem gerebat.

3. Read this sub-section again.
4. Where was Messalina by now (line 7)? Is this where she had intended to go (refer to Section VIIa, line 4, if necessary)? If Messalina's movements have been related accurately by Tacitus (or by the person from whom he got his information), a rough calculation will indicate that she has covered a lot of ground on foot during the day.
5. The infinitives **prolatare** and **componere** in lines 7-8 are what are known as historic infinitives. Historic infinitives are sometimes used instead of the imperfect, in pairs or longer groups, as part of a vivid or quickly-moving narrative (see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 64, section 21, paragraph 6). What two things was Messalina doing, or trying to do?
6. What does Tacitus mean by **prolatare vitam**?
7. What are the *preces* (line 8)?
 - (a) appeals to the emperor
 - (b) prayers to the gods
8. What two emotions does Tacitus say were felt by Messalina, as she fought for her life? What is the case of **nonnulla spe** and **ira**? Choose an appropriate preposition for translating it, then translate the whole phrase. (See note 2 for advice on the tricky word **nonnulla**. There is a particular problem over translating it with **spe**, because spoken English sometimes uses the phrase 'some hope' ironically, e.g. 'He was trying to defy gravity – some hope!')
- *9. In view of Messalina's situation, do you find it surprising that she felt these emotions? Or are they just what you would expect of her? Consider the two nouns separately if you wish – e.g. you might find one emotion more surprising than the other. (†)
- *10. Who was Messalina angry with? Herself, Silius, Claudius, Narcissus or everyone except herself? (†)
- *11. **componere preces** means that Messalina either hoped for a meeting with Claudius and was mentally preparing for it, or was putting her appeal into a written message which she hoped could reach him. Spoken or written, might she have thought it a good tactic to express anger even in her **preces**? (†)

Check

12. Translate what Tacitus could have written in lines 8-9:

tam superba erat Messalina ut ultro (actually) irasceretur.

An unpleasant quality of Messalina is mentioned, followed by the emotion that resulted.

In lines 8-9, however, Tacitus begins with the emotions (**spes** and **ira**), and puts the quality later by way of explanation (**tantum ... gerebat**), as if saying 'Yes – that's just how arrogant she was'. Spoken English will sometimes similarly put a result before an explanation, e.g. 'I tore it up in front of him, I was so angry (or I was that angry)'.

One way of translating the sentence **tantum superbiam ...** etc. is to treat it as if it were **tanta erat superbia quam ... gerebat**.

13. Explain what is meant by **tum**.
14. Translate this sub-section.
15. See Robert Graves, *Claudius the God*, chapter 29, for three successive (imaginary) letters to Claudius from Messalina in the gardens, ending with an angry one.

Answers

2. (iv) *That soldier is stupid, dishonest and fat; nevertheless, he displayed (or possessed) a certain amount of courage (or some courage) in the battle.*
12. *So arrogant was Messalina that she was actually angry.*

Section VIIIc

Lines 10-14 (*ac ... adesset*)

The emperor softens?

ac nisi caedem eius Narcissus 10

properavisset, vertisset perniciis in accusatorem. nam
Claudius domum regressus, ubi cena vinoque incaluit,
imperavit ut femina misera (hoc enim verbo Claudium
usum esse ferunt) ad causam dicendam postridie adesset.

- 10 ac - *and*
nisi - *unless, if ... not*
caedes, caedis - *murder, slaughter, execution*
is, ea, id - *he, she, it; that*
Narcissus, Narcissi - *Narcissus*
- 11 propero, properare, properavi, properatus -
hurry, hasten
verto, vertere, verti, versus - *turn, direct*
perniciis, pernicii - *ruin, death*
in - *into; on*
accusator, accusatoris - *accuser*
nam - *for*
- 12 Claudius, Claudii - *Claudius*
domus, domi - *home, house, household*
regredior, regredi, regressus sum - *return*
ubi - *where, when*
cena, cenae - *dinner*
vinum, vini - *wine*
incalesco, incalescere, incalui - *grow warm, relax*

- 13 impero, imperare, imperavi + dat. - *order, command*
ut - *that, so that*
femina, feminae - *woman*
miser, misera, miserum - *miserable, wretched*
hic, haec, hoc - *this*
enim - *for*
verbum, verbi - *word*
Claudius, Claudii - *Claudius*
- 14 utor, uti, usus sum + abl. - *use*
fero, ferre, tuli, latus - *carry, bring; report, say*
ad - *to, at*
causa, causae - *reason, cause; case (of law)*
dico, dicere, dixi, dictus - *say, speak*
postridie - *on the next day*
adsum, adesse, adfui - *be present, arrive*

1. Read lines 10-14 (**ac ... adesset**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. Notice:

Check

- (i) **vertere** to *turn* or to *change* (line 11) can be used when a change of course causes a plot (or missile) to misfire and rebound on the plotter (or person who fired the missile), as in this sad archery story:
sagitta (arrow) in ipsum sagittarium vertit!
- (ii) **utoris** a deponent verb, and so its endings are passive, e.g. **usus est**, but its meanings are active, e.g. *he used*. It is combined here with two ablative words. (English 'makes use of something'; Latin 'makes use with something'; one explanation is that **uti** originally meant *to serve oneself*, so **fraude utor** = *I serve myself with trickery* = *I make use of trickery*.)

3. Read this sub-section again.

Check

4. Study these sentences, which lead up to **nisi ... accusatorem** (lines 10-11):

- (i) **Narcissus caedem Messalinae properavit.**

But Tacitus is considering how things could have turned out differently, so the first half of his sentence (after **ac**) begins with **nisi**, meaning *Unless* or (better) *If ... not*:

- (ii) **nisi Narcissus caedem eius properavisset ...**

The second part of the sentence tells you what (in Tacitus' opinion) would have happened if the execution had not been brought forward. See 2 above for the meaning of **vertere**.

- (iii) ..., **vertisset pernicies in accusatorem.** (note **pernicies** is nominative singular).

Notice that **properavisset** and **vertisset** are subjunctive. They are not saying what did happen, but are saying what would have happened if things had been different. Test yourself with another example of the same sort:

- (iv) **si senex circumspexisset, vehiculum (cart) vidisset.**

The subjunctive verbs tell you that he didn't look round and didn't see the cart.

For further examples, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 76, section 24, paragraph 2.

- *5. Who is the **accusator**? Explain in your own words what Tacitus means by his comment about destruction rebounding.
6. Others besides Tacitus have commented on **pernicies** and how it can misfire. An Old Testament psalmist rejoices at his enemies' downfall, saying 'They have digged a pit before me, and are fallen into the midst of it themselves'. Shakespeare has a particularly vivid version (though you will probably need to look up the meanings): 'hoist with their own petard'.
7. Tacitus adds a reason why Narcissus had to act fast or perish. Where did Claudius go (line 12) and what refreshment did he have there?
8. What is Tacitus suggesting by **incaluit**, in addition to warmth?
 - (a) Claudius became drunk
 - (b) Claudius became relaxed and comfortable
 - (c) Claudius became angry and hot-tempered
9. When Claudius was in this mood, he gave an order about the **femina misera** (line 13). Who did he mean? (Ignore the bracketed words in lines 13-14 for the moment.) What order did Claudius give about her (**adesset**, line 14)? When was she to do this, and for what purpose? (If stuck, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 82, section 26, paragraph 2a.)
10. Examine the words in the bracket (**hoc ... ferunt**). **ferunt** has a special meaning here, which you previously met at the start of the story of Vettius Valens, the doctor who climbed a tree (Section VIc, line 7).
11. According to Tacitus, what do people say about Claudius (**hoc ... verbo ... usum esse**, lines 13-14)?
12. Which of the two words **femina** and **misera** is Tacitus referring to in the phrase **hoc verbo**? Why? What might Claudius' use of the word indicate about his attitude to Messalina?
13. What reaction would you expect from Narcissus and the other freedmen on hearing Claudius' order about Messalina, or learning about it from others? (Your answers to 5 above, also to question 28 in Section VIIId, may be helpful.)
14. We have no means of deciding how reliable the report of Claudius' words in line 13 is. But if it is true, it would explain the extremely risky strategy which Narcissus now proceeded to follow.
15. Translate this sub-section.

Answers

2. (i) *The arrow rebounded onto the archer himself!* Or *The arrow was diverted onto the archer himself!* (Many other translations are possible)
4. (i) *Narcissus hastened the execution of Messalina.* Or *Narcissus acted quickly over the execution of Messalina.*
 (ii) *Unless Narcissus had hastened her execution ...* or (better) *If Narcissus had not hastened her execution ...*
 (iii) *..., destruction would have rebounded onto the accuser.*
 (iv) *If the old man had looked round, he would have seen the cart.*

Section VIII d

Lines 15-19

Arrival

quod ubi Narcissus audivit et languescere iram redire 15
amorem vidit, timebat, si moraretur, propinquam noctem et
uxorii cubiculi memoriam; igitur prorumpit denuntiatque
centurionibus et tribuno, qui aderat, exsequi caedem: ita
imperatorem iubere.

- 15 qui, quae, quod - *who, which*
ubi - *where, when*
Narcissus, Narcissi - *Narcissus*
audio, audire, audivi, auditus - *hear*
et - *and, also, even*
languesco, languescere, languui - *droop, grow weak*
ira, irae - *anger*
redeo, redire, redii - *return, go back, come back*
- 16 amor, amoris - *love*
video, videre, vidi, visus - *see*
timeo, timere, timui - *be afraid, fear*
si - *if*
moror, morari, moratus sum - *delay*
propinquus, propinqua, propinquum - *approaching, next*
nox, noctis - *night, darkness*
et - *and, also, even*

- 17 uxorius, uxoria, uxorium - *conjugal, belonging to one's wife*
cubiculum, cubiculi - *bedroom*
memoria, memoriae - *memory*
igitur - *therefore, and so*
prorumpo, prorumpere, prorupi - *break out, rush out*
denuntio, denuntiare, denuntiavi, denuntiatus + dat. - *order*
- 18 centurio, centurionis - *centurion*
et - *and, also, even*
tribunus, tribuni - *tribune*
qui, quae, quod - *who, which*
adsum, adesse, adfui - *be present*
exsequor, exsequi, exsecutus sum - *carry out, accomplish*
caedes, caedis - *murder, slaughter, execution*
ita - *in this way, so*
- 19 imperator, imperatoris - *emperor, general*
iubeo, iubere, iussi, iussus - *order*

1. Read lines 15-19 (**quod ... iubere**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. Translate the three sentences in (i):

(i) **canis culinam intravit. coquus eum conspexit. coquus iratus erat.**

Now translate these two:

(ii) **canis culinam intravit. cum coquus eum conspexisset, iratus erat.**

In the next example, part of the relative pronoun **qui**, **quae** or **quod** is being used at the beginning of a sentence to link it to the previous one. Translate it, translating **quem** just as you translated **eum** in the previous example and adjusting the word order where necessary:

Check

(iii) **canis culinam intravit. quem cum coquus conspexisset, iratus erat.**

(iv) In the next two examples, **hoc** and the more usual **quod** are used to refer not to a person or animal but to a fact or event. Both sentences can be translated in the same way:

rex hostium subito periit. ubi consul hoc nuntiavit, omnes cives gaudebant.

rex hostium subito periit. quod ubi consul nuntiavit, omnes cives gaudebant.

The difference here between Latin and English is noticeable (English would not normally say “Which when the cook had seen” or “Which when the consul reported”). The cause of the difference is that Latin is keener than English to link or connect one sentence with the next. This use of **quem** as in (iii) and **quod** as in (iv), together with other parts of **qui**, is a common way of linking Latin sentences, known as the connecting use of the relative pronoun. For further examples, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, pages 21-22, section 5, paragraph 7.

5. Translate **quod ubi Narcissus audivit** (line 15), treating **quod** as if it were **hoc**. What event in Section VIIIc is **quod** referring back to? Refer both to Claudius’ order and a key word in the order.
6. After hearing these words uttered by Claudius, what two emotions did Narcissus observe in him? What was happening to each emotion (**languescere ... vidit**, lines 15-16?)
- *7. What part of the verb are **languescere** and **redire**? What case are **iram** and **amorem**? Line 14 contains two very short indirect statements about Claudius’ feelings. Both follow the same unusual pattern (infinitive+accusative rather than the other way round) and are put one after the other without any **et** or **-que**. Does the parallel word order suggest the increase in **amor** corresponds to the decrease in **ira**, so that as one falls, the other rises? († Definitely no “official right answer” to the last question – what seems absurdly fanciful to one person can seem blindingly obvious to another.)
8. What emotion did Narcissus feel (line 16)?
9. Narcissus feared danger if he followed a particular course of action. Translate **si moraretur**, which tells you what course of action (or inaction) seemed dangerous to him.
10. In Narcissus’ mind, what was the danger period? Why? Translate and explain the phrase **uxorii cubiculi memoriam** (line 17). You may need to say whose **memoria** would be dangerous.
11. In considering Claudius’ state of mind that night (as imagined by Narcissus), it may be worth remembering the relative ages of Claudius and Messalina. You might recall also how much confidence Messalina had in her physical appearance (e.g. Section VIIb, line 6) and how afraid the freedmen had been of a face-to-face meeting between her and Claudius (Section IVa, lines 5-6).
12. Translate **timebat ... memoriam** (lines 16-17). You may find it helpful to repeat Narcissus for the moment, in front of **timebat**. The sentence is tricky to translate, because it combines two different ways of expressing Narcissus’ fear:
 - (a) Narcissus feared that if he delayed, X would happen (verb)
 - (b) Narcissus feared Y and Z (two nouns)
 The first part of (a) has been combined with the second part of (b):
 - (c) Narcissus feared that if he delayed, Y and Z (Y and Z being nouns).

The mixture works more smoothly in Latin than in English. One solution is to split your translation of **timebat** and say *he was afraid, if he delayed, of...* which is inelegant but leads easily into the translation of **propinquam ... memoriam**. Reorganising the sentence more drastically can be the best solution as long as you leave no Latin word unaccounted for.

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- *13. After setting out Narcissus' problem, Tacitus describes his response. Study the four words **igitur... centurionibus** (lines 17-18). How many are verbs? What tense are they in? Is their position unusual in any way? Notice Tacitus' choice of words (**prorumpit** rather than **exiit**; **denuntiat** rather than **imperavit**). Which of the following adjectives best describes Narcissus' action as narrated by Tacitus?
- (a) vigorous
 - (b) thoughtful
 - (c) active
 - (d) explosive
 - (e) an alternative of your own choice. (†)
14. Is the pace of the narrative quickening or slowing down (line 18)?
15. Is **aderat** singular or plural? Who must it therefore refer to?
- Why does Tacitus add the fact that this man was present? Isn't it obvious he must have been there, because Narcissus gave him an order?
- And why does Tacitus specially mention the tribune's presence but not that of the centurions? (Hint: which is the higher rank, centurion or tribune? Who would have carried out the execution if the tribune had not happened to be there ...?)
- *16. Previous notes have practised the difference between direct and indirect statement, and the three words **ita imperatorem iubere** provide a good opportunity for you to test yourself:
- What is Tacitus saying in lines 18-19?
- (a) the emperor gave this order
 - (b) Narcissus said that the emperor gave this order
- How do you know? (Your answer should mention the case of a noun and the form of a verb.) How would you make the meaning clear in translation? Is it misleading to translate the last three words in Section VIII as *Those were the emperor's orders*?
17. If **ita imperatorem iubere** is a statement by Narcissus, is it true?
- *18. Why did Narcissus behave in this way, rather than leaving it to the emperor to give the order? Was he not running a risk in doing this? Or was it more dangerous not to send the order? Do you agree with the comment that Narcissus is walking an incredibly thin tightrope? (†)
19. Translate this sub-section.

Answers

- 4. (iii) *The dog entered the kitchen. When the cook saw it (or had caught sight of it), he was angry.*
- (iv) *The enemy king suddenly died. When the consul reported this, all the citizens rejoiced.*
(The translation is the same for both sentences.)

Notes

Section IX (*Annales* XI.37-38) - Towards an execution

Section IXa

Lines 1-6 (... *quaerendum*)

The aftermath

missus quoque unus e libertis: is raptim in hortos
praegressus repperit Messalinam, humi fusam; adsidebat
mater Lepida, quae florenti filiae haud concors fuerat; sed
supremis eius necessitatibus ad misericordiam versa
suadebat ne percussorem opperiretur: transiisse vitam
neque aliud quam mortem decoram quaerendum.

5

1	mitto, mittere, misi, missus - <i>send</i> quoque - <i>also, too</i> unus, una, unum - <i>one, a single</i> e - <i>from, out of</i> libertus, liberti - <i>freedman, ex-slave</i> is, ea, id - <i>he, she, it; that</i> raptim - <i>hurriedly</i> in - <i>into</i> hortus, horti - <i>garden</i>	4	supremus, suprema, supremum - <i>last, extreme</i> is, ea, id - <i>he, she, it; that</i> necessitas, necessitatis - <i>need, time of need, crisis</i> ad - <i>to, at</i> misericordia, misericordiae - <i>pity</i> vertor, verti, versus sum - <i>turn, change</i>
2	praegredior, praegredi, praegressus sum - <i>precede, go on ahead</i> reperio, reperire, repperi, repertus - <i>find</i> Messalina, Messalinae - <i>Messalina, third wife of the Emperor Claudius</i> humi - <i>on the ground</i> fundo, fundere, fudi, fusus - <i>pour, pour out, sprawl</i> adsideo, adsidere, adsedi - <i>sit beside</i>	5	suadeo, suadere, suasi + dat. - <i>urge, persuade</i> ne - <i>not to</i> percussor, percussoris - <i>executioner</i> opperior, opperiri, oppertus sum - <i>await</i> transeo, transire, transii, transitus - <i>cross over, be over, be finished</i> vita, vitae - <i>life</i>
3	mater, matris - <i>mother</i> Lepida, Lepidae - <i>Lepida</i> qui, quae, quod - <i>who, which</i> floreo, florere, florui - <i>prosper</i> filia, filiae - <i>daughter</i> haud - <i>not</i> concors, concordis + dat. - <i>in harmony, on friendly terms with</i> sum, esse, fui - <i>be</i> sed - <i>but</i>	6	neque - <i>and not, nor</i> alius, alia, aliud - <i>other, another</i> quam - <i>than</i> mors, mortis - <i>death</i> decorus, decora, decorum - <i>right, fitting, decent</i> quaero, quaerere, quaesivi, quaesitus - <i>search for, look for, ask</i>

1. Read lines 1-6 (... **quaerendum**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. In particular:
 - (i) Study the endings of **praegredior**. Is it a deponent verb or an ordinary one? Translate its perfect participle **praegressus**. (If unsure, use the participles **ingressus** and **egressus** as a guide.)
 - (ii) **florens** is a present participle (from **florere to prosper**) and can be translated either as *prospering* or by the adjective *prosperous*.
 - (iii) **necessitas** can mean not only *a need* (**necessitas aquae, the need for water**) but also *a time of need*, so **supremae necessitates** can refer to someone's last hours of need when death is near.
 - (iv) What comment did Tacitus make previously about **miser cordia**, when relating Messalina's journey along the Ostian road?
 - (v) You met **vertere** earlier, describing a situation in which a plot or missile turns or changes course and hits the plotter not the target. This time, **versa** (the perfect participle of **vertere**) is used to describe a person who turns or changes from one attitude to another.
 - (vi) Use the information in the vocabulary to find (or check) the gender of **aliud**. Compare it with **alius**. Does **neque aliud** mean *and nobody else* or *and nothing else*?
 - (vii) **decorus, honourable**, occurs in a famous line by the poet Horace: **dulce et decorum est pro patria mori** *It is sweet and glorious to die for one's country* – you may have read a bitter comment on this in a poem by Wilfred Owen.

3. Read this sub-section again.

4. Who was sent on in advance (lines 1-2)?

5. Where did he find Messalina?

6. What state was she in?

- (a) furious
- (b) resolute
- (c) dejected
- (d) thoughtful

Translate a two-word phrase in line 2 which supports your answer.

7. Who was sitting by her (lines 2-3)

8. If you are good at visualising, imagine the scene. Is Messalina completely flat on the ground? Does her head rest in Lepida's lap? Or do you have a different picture altogether?

9. How had the two women got on previously?

10. What case is **filiae**? (If unsure, look again at **concors** in the vocabulary.) Find and translate another word in line 3 in the same case, which tells you what period of Messalina's life Tacitus is referring to.

11. The phrase **haud concors**, describing Lepida's previous relationship with her daughter, is an understatement. (It is like describing China as "not a particularly small country".) When Messalina's mother Lepida remarried, Messalina attempted to seduce her new step-father Appius Silanus, and when he rejected her advances, she had him murdered.

12. What emotion had Lepida now come round to, instead of her previous ill-feeling?

13. According to Tacitus, what was the situation in which Lepida's attitude to her daughter had changed? If unsure, see 2(iii) above.

14. The following list contains two pairs of words or phrases from lines 3-4, of roughly opposite meaning to each other. Match the two pairs.

- (a) **florenti**
- (b) **haud concors**
- (c) **supremis necessitatibus**
- (d) **ad misericordiam versa**

*15. What advice was Lepida giving to her daughter (... **opperiretur**, line 5)? Explain what she meant by this.

*16. What did she then say about her daughter's life? In what way, if any, was this true?

17. In Section IIb, line 4, you met a warning given by Silius to Messalina: **non exspectandum**, meaning they should not wait. Silius was using a gerundive, meaning that something had to be done (or in this case should not be done). For other examples of gerundives used in this way, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 83, section 26, paragraph 2b, and for examples of gerundives in English, such as memorandum *something which needs to be remembered* and Amanda *a girl deserving to be loved*, see Section IIb, question 4.

Translate these sentences. They lead up to the sentence in line 6, which contains the gerundive **quaerendum**. In the first sentence, the centurion tells the troops about his lost horse (if **reperire** has slipped your mind, look back at line 2):

Check

- (i) **equus meus est statim quaerendus et quam celerrime reperendus!**

The next sentence is similar to the advice which Lepida gave to Messalina. It grimly tells soldiers who are in a hopeless situation how they are to behave:

Check

- (ii) **vobis non fugiendum est: mors decora quaerenda est.**

The next sentence is very close to Lepida's words, as reported by Tacitus. No translation is given, but see Section IXa, question 2(vi) above for help with **nihil aliud**.

- (iii) **"nihil aliud quaerendum est quam mors decora."**

- (iv) Finally, translate Lepida's words in line 6. They are very similar to sentence (iii), but **neque** is used instead of **nihil**, to link the sentence to the one before. The word order is slightly different and the accusative **mortem decoram** is used, because the sentence is an indirect statement.

- *18. "This brutal and heartless advice is not very motherly and doesn't show much of the **misericordia** mentioned two lines earlier." Do you agree? (†)
- *19. What was Lepida in fact urging Messalina to do? Why might she feel this action was "better" than the fate which was threatening Messalina? Refer if necessary to a keyword in line 6. Do you agree with Lepida that one sort of death was more honourable (i.e. less shameful) than the other? (†)
20. Translate this sub-section.
21. A mega-note on present participles and the way in which words such as *while* can be useful when translating them. Follow your teacher's guidance over whether/when to study the note.

Check

- (i) Translate this sentence in two ways, one of which includes the word *while*:

captivi custodem dormientem interfecerunt.

- (ii) Translate this sentence, using *while* or *as*:

iuvenes puellam per viam currentem appellaverunt.

- (iii) The next sentence includes a present participle in the dative case. There are several possible translations, but use *while* for practice:

senex avarus filio in urbe habitanti numquam auxilium dedit.

The English translation of (iii) is unclear on its own, because we can't tell who is living in the city, the son or the mean old man. Normally the situation would be obvious from the previous sentences, but if necessary the writer could put *the latter was living* instead of *he was living* or even add (*i.e. the son*) after *he*.

- (iiia) If the translation of (iii) is unclear, is the original Latin also unclear? If not, why not?

Translate the following sentences, which all include present participles in the dative case and are based on sentences you have met earlier. They can each be translated using such words as *while/as/when*.

- (iv) **Caesari urbem ingredienti liberi offerebantur.**

- (v) **Messalina Silio egredienti semper adhaerebat.**

- (vi) **Lepida florenti filiae haud concors fuerat.**

22. Tacitus' account of Messalina's murder of her step-father Silanus is unfortunately in a missing bit of the *Annales*. However, the biographer Suetonius (in chapter 37 of his *Life of Claudius*) gives colourful details of the extraordinary plot by which Messalina and Narcissus (who at the time was an ally of Messalina) contrived to have Silanus executed on a false charge. Lepida's death-bed reconciliation with her daughter is perhaps more surprising than her previous dislike.

Answers

17. (i) *My horse is to be/should be/must be looked for at once and found as quickly as possible!*
(ii) *You are not to run away: you are to seek (or look for) an honourable death.*
Or (second part) *an honourable death should be sought or looked for.*
Or, helpful when translating line 6, *an honourable death is to be sought.*
21. (i) *The prisoners killed the sleeping guard or The prisoners killed the guard while he was sleeping.*
(ii) *The young men called out to the girl while (or as) she was running down the street.*
(iii) *The mean old man never gave help to his son while he was living in the city.*
(iiia) **habitanti** is in the dative case and so can only refer to the dative noun **filio**. Therefore the person living in the city has to be the son.
(iv) *As Caesar was entering the city, the children were pushed in front of him.*
(v) *Messalina always used to accompany Silius when he went out.*
(vi) *Lepida had not been on good terms with her daughter while the latter was prospering.*

Notes

1. Read lines 6-9 (**sed ... tribunus**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. Notice in particular:
 - (i) **honestus** unfortunately does not mean *honest*. It is linked to **honor**: if somebody is **honestus**, he receives **honor**, or he displays it. Which word in Lepida's speech Section IXa, (lines 5-6) has the same meaning as **honestus**?
 - (ii) The genitive singular of **questus** has the same spelling as the nominative, though it is pronounced differently (try saying each case aloud). This shows that **questus** is a 4th-declension noun, changing its endings like **manus**, not like **servus**. See *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 11, section 1, paragraph 4 if uncertain. Line 8 contains another 4th-declension noun and there is one more in line 12.
3. Read this sub-section again. There is a definite change of mood half-way through. As you re-read the sub-section, preferably aloud, see if you can spot the point where the mood changes.
4. Was Lepida successful when she appealed to Messalina's sense of honour? Why? (**sed ... animo**, lines 6-7)? What further explanation does Tacitus give (**per ... corrupto**)?
5. The following two sentences both end with a group of words introduced by *when*:
 - (i) I was on my way to the theatre tonight *when a funny thing happened*.
 - (ii) He had not gone more than three yards *when the lion sprang out at him*.

In each sentence the words in italics are not telling you the time of something, but telling you something new.

In the following shortened version of the events in lines 8-9, the words **Messalina lacrimabat** tell you that something was happening, and the words **percussores advenerunt** tell you the new event. Translate the sentence:

Check

Messalina lacrimabat, cum percussores advenerunt.

6. What were *pouring out* (literally *being poured out*) in line 8? Tacitus uses two nouns in the nominative plural, one of them described by an adjective. If there seems to be a shortage of nominative plurals, see 2 (ii) above.
7. Do any of the words **lacrimae ... ducebantur** suggest that Messalina feels that she is being treated unfairly?
- *8. What is the effect of using the passive verb **lacrimae effundebantur** rather than the active **Messalina lacrimas effundebat**? Is one version more matter-of-fact than the other, and less sympathetic to Messalina? (If puzzled, consider the difference between 'She was in floods of tears' and 'The tears were in full flow.')(†)
9. What happened at this point (**pulsae sunt fores**, line 9)? Treat **fores** as a singular (*gate*); the plural is used because the gate was made up of two leaves or halves.
(Experts might note that when new information is introduced by **cum** in the way described in question 5, the indicative (e.g. **pulsae sunt**) is used instead of the more usual subjunctive.)
10. (i) Study the following sentence:
sonitu clamantium cives sunt perterriti.
 - (a) What happened to the citizens?
 - (b) By what were they scared?
 - (c) The sound was the sound of people doing something. What?
 - (d) Translate the sentence.
- (ii) Using sentence (i) as a guide, translate lines 8-9 (**impetu ... fores**). *Arrive* may be a better translation of **venire** than the more usual *come*. Just as **clamantium** in part (i) of this question meant *of people shouting*, **venientium** can mean *of people arriving* – or you might borrow the title of Section IXb above. Tacitus said in Section VIII that certain people were ordered to go and execute Messalina; **venientium** tells us that they've reached her. (Memory test: do you remember the military rank(s) of these people?)
11. In lines 8-9, what does Tacitus mention first, the gate or the battering?
- *12. You have a choice between two different word-orders when translating *adstititque tribunus*:
 - (a) and there stood a tribune
 - (b) and a tribune stood there
 Which do you prefer, and why?
13. What does the tribune say or do at this point? Does this contribute in any way to the atmosphere built up by Tacitus? How would you describe the tribune's presence – aggressive or ominous?
14. If you answered the final part of question 3, were you right?
15. Translate this sub-section.

-
- *16. If you were directing a film, how would you present the events of lines 8-9? Here are some choices, which can be supplemented or replaced by ideas of your own:
- (i) (a) **lacrimae ... ducebantur** – long distance or close-up? Include Lepida as well as Messalina, or just show Messalina on her own?
(b) a quite different approach: only the sound of sobbing, without showing Messalina
 - (ii) show the battering of the gate from start to finish, or begin with a close-up showing Messalina's reaction to the sudden noise?
 - (iii) end with a close-up of the shattered gateway, or a distance shot of the whole scene? Include anyone standing "framed" in the gateway?
 - (iv) music – to convey violence, or suspense, or neither of these? (†)

Answers

5. *Messalina was weeping, when the executioners arrived.*

Notes

Section IXc

Lines 9-13 (*tunc ... est*)

The emperor softens?

tunc

primum Messalina fortunam suam intellexit ferrumque 10
acceptit; quod frustra iugulo aut pectori per trepidationem
admovens, ictu tribuni transigitur. corpus matri concessum
est.

- 9 tunc - *then*
10 primum - *first, for the first time*
Messalina, Messalinae - *Messalina*
fortuna, fortunae - *fortune, luck, status, misfortune*
suus, sua, suum - *his, her, their own*
intellego, intellegere, intellexi, intellectus - *understand*
ferrum, ferri - *iron, sword*
11 accipio, accipere, accepi, acceptus - *accept, take in, receive*
qui, quae, quod - *who, which*
frustra - *in vain*
iugulum, iuguli - *throat*
aut - *or*
pectus, pectoris - *chest, breast, heart*
per - *through, along, over*
trepidatio, trepidationis - *alarm, trembling, panic*

- 12 admoveo, admoveere, admovi, admotus - *bring near, bring forward, apply, put to*
ictus, ictus - *thrust, blow*
tribunus, tribuni - *tribune*
transigo, transigere, transegi, transactus - *stab, run through*
corpus, corporis - *body*
mater, matris - *mother*
12-13 concedo, concedere, concessi, concessus - *grant, hand over*

1. Read lines 9-13 (**tunc ... est**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. Notice in particular:
 - (i) **iugulum** gives its name to a well-known vein.
 - (ii) **ictus** is a 4th-declension noun. What case must **ictu** be?
3. Read this sub-section again.
4. What did Messalina do at this point (**tunc ... intellexit**, lines 9-10)? Does **primum** mean that she did this before going on to do something else, or that this was something she had not done before?
5. What was the **fortuna** which Messalina realised?
- *6. Messalina had previously clung to hope (**nonnulla spe**, Section VIII b, line 8). What made her change her mind now?
7. What was Messalina's next action (lines 10-11)? Choose a suitable translation for **accepit**. What decision had she evidently reached?
8. Translate the following sentences, which lead up to the full sentence **quod ... transigitur** (lines 11-12):

Check

- (i) **Messalina accepit ferrum, quod iugulo admovit.**

In note 4 of Section VIII d, you met the connecting use of the relative pronoun:

quod ubi Narcissus audivit ...

When Narcissus heard this (not 'which when Narcissus heard') ...

In the next sentence, **quod** is again being used as a connecting pronoun. Unlike **quod** in (i), it cannot be translated as *which*. Choose between *it* and *this*:

Check

- (ii) **Messalina ferrum accepit. quod iugulo admovit.**

In the next sentence, a present participle **admovens** is used instead of the verb **admovit**. You will find it helpful to use *while* (as in many examples in Section IX a, question 21), to show that two things happened (or were happening) at the same time.

Check

- (iii) **Messalina ferrum accepit. quod iugulo admovens, interfecta est.**

- (iv) Did Messalina wound herself fatally either in her throat or in her breast?

After answering the above question, look back at the word in italics; it explains why **aut** occurs in line 11. The easiest way to translate **aut**, chosen by Church and Brodribb, is to say **and**. This produces the translation *putting the dagger ineffectively to her throat and breast*. But what picture do you have in your mind? If you feel Tacitus is describing a series of timid and feeble jabs, this suggests a more adventurous translation, preferred by at least one scholar: *putting the dagger in vain now to ... and now to ...*

- (v) Finally translate the whole sentence **quod ... transigitur** (lines 11-12). **transigitur** (line 12) is in the historic present tense (see Section I c, note 11), and can be translated by either a present or a past tense.

- *9. Which of the following adjectives (if any) would you use at this point to describe (i) Messalina and (ii) the tribune?
 - (a) decisive
 - (b) pathetic (in the sense of useless)
 - (c) timid
 - (d) pathetic (in the sense of pitiful)
 - (e) swift

Give reasons for your choices, quoting where possible from the Latin text.

- *10. Is it understandable that Messalina should dither and fumble in lines 11-12, in view of the drastic step she was trying to take? (†)
- *11. Roughly how many words does Tacitus spend on Messalina's attempt at suicide, and how many words on the tribune's action? Is this deliberate or accidental? If Tacitus is emphasising a contrast, what is being contrasted? (Question 9 may be relevant here.) (†)
12. What happened to the body?
13. Translate this sub-section.
- *14. Compare the account of Messalina's death (Sections VIII [lines 7-9] and IX) with that of Silius (Section VIII, lines 5-6). You could mention some of the following, to which you might want to add further details:
 - (i) the other people present, in large or small numbers
 - (ii) the sounds (prominent in both accounts)
 - (iii) the personalities of Silius and Messalina, as shown by their behaviour (which of the two makes a better (or less bad) impression, and why?)

Support your points by referring where possible to the Latin text. (†)

-
- *15. The account of Messalina's death is much longer than that of Silius. What has been omitted in the case of Silius but included in the case of Messalina?
- *16. Messalina was a determined and ruthless killer. Did you become at all sympathetic to her at the very end, or simply feel that she got what she deserved?
17. The sentence **quod ... transigitur** is difficult mainly because **quod admovens** contains a double problem: the need to add a word like *as* or *while* when translating a present participle like **admovens**, and the connecting use of the relative pronoun **quod**, which in line 11 means **it**. If you have found lines 11-12 hard going, you may find it helpful to visit (or revisit) some of the following:
- (i) for the connecting use of the relative: Section VIIIId, note 4 and/or *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, pages 21-22, section 5, paragraph 7;
 - (ii) for present participles: Section IXa, note 21 and/or *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 61, section 20, paragraph 1, and page 63, paragraph 9, questions 3, 6 and 11.

Answers

8. (i) *Messalina took the sword, which she put to her throat.*
- (ii) *Messalina took the sword. She put it to her throat.*
- (iii) *Messalina took the sword. While putting it to her throat, she was killed.*

Notes

Section X (*Annales* XI.38 continued) - The aftermath

Section Xa

Lines 1-3 (... *celebravit*)

Claudius hears the news

nuntiatum est Claudio epulanti Messalinam perisse. ille
non ultra quaesivit, sed poposcit poculum et solita convivio
celebravit.

1 nuntio, nuntiare, nuntiavi, nuntiatum -
announce, report
Claudius, Claudii - *Claudius*
epulor, epulari, epulatus sum - *enjoy a*
banquet, have a feast
Messalina, Messalinae - *Messalina*
pereo, perire, perii - *die, perish*
ille, illa, illud - *he, she, it; that*

2 non - *not*
ultra - *more, further*
quaero, quaerere, quaesivi, quaesitus - *ask,*
inquire
sed - *but*
posco, poscere, poposci - *ask for, demand*
poculum, poculi - *drinking-vessel, cup*
et - *and*
solitus, solita, solitum - *usual, customary, normal*
convivium, convivii - *feast, entertainment, banquet*
3 celebros, celebrare, celebravi, celebratus -
celebrate

-
1. Read lines 1-3 (... **celebravit**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
 3. Read this sub-section again.
 4. What news item was reported (line 1)? Who to? What was he doing at the time?
 5. How many questions did Claudius ask (**ille ... quaesivit**, lines 1-2)?
 6. What did he send for (line 2)?
 - *7. Is Claudius' request in line 2 surprising? He is already in mid-feast; surely he has a cup of wine in front of him? Is Tacitus using **poculum** as shorthand for **aliud poculum**? Or for **ut poculum repletur**? (**replere to refill**) (†)
 8. (i) If **solita** is singular, what gender must it be? And what gender must it be if it is plural? (Refer if necessary to *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 13, section 2, paragraph 1, **bonus**.)
*(ii) Which of the following is a literal translation of **solita convivio celebravit** (lines 2-3)?
 - (a) he feasted on the things customary at a banquet
 - (b) he feasted in the style customary at a banquet
 - (c) he feasted in the style customary at his banquets*(iii) Is Tacitus saying that Claudius, in spite of the news of his wife's death, followed his normal banqueting routine, or is he emphasising that the emperor's banquets were just like those of other rich people? Which of the three translations in (ii) makes this clear?
 - *9. Why did Claudius make no response?
 - (a) he was drunk
 - (b) he was stunned by the news of Messalina's death
 - (c) he was still in a state of shock over her unfaithfulness and the "marriage" to Silius
 - (d) or is there another answer altogether? (†)
 10. Translate this sub-section.
 - *11. In what way has Claudius' dinner played an important part in the story already? See Section VIII, line 12, if it has slipped your memory. Can this be the same dinner? (†) (A dinner can be described as either **cena** or **epulae**, provided it is sufficiently grand.) If it is the same dinner, this shows how quickly the execution was carried out and reported.
 - *12. Was it by accident that the news was broken to Claudius at that particular moment? Might somebody have chosen the moment deliberately? Why? If unsure, consider Claudius' behaviour on being told (lines 1-2). (†)
 - *13. What would you expect Narcissus to feel about this lack of curiosity over Messalina's death?
 - (a) amusement
 - (b) relief
 - (c) irritationWhy?
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Section Xb

Lines 3-6 (*ne ... maerentes*)

Claudius' 'reaction'

ne proximis quidem diebus, odii gaudii irae
tristitiae ullius denique humani adfectus signa dedit, non
cum laetantes accusatores aspiceret, non cum filios
maerentes.

5

- | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| 3 | ne - <i>not</i>
proximus, proxima, proximum - <i>next, immediately following</i>
quidem - <i>indeed, certainly, in fact</i>
dies, diei - <i>day</i>
odium, odii - <i>hatred, spite, resentment</i>
gaudium, gaudii - <i>joy, gladness, delight</i>
ira, irae - <i>anger, wrath, rage</i> | 5 | cum - <i>when</i>
laetor, laetari, laetatus sum - <i>rejoice, be joyful</i>
accusator, accusatoris - <i>accuser</i>
aspicio, aspicere, aspexi, aspectus - <i>look at, behold, see</i>
non - <i>not</i>
cum - <i>when</i>
filius, filii - <i>son</i> |
| 4 | tristitia, tristitiae - <i>unhappiness, sadness</i>
ullus, ulla, ullum - <i>any</i>
denique - <i>at last, finally, in fact, in short</i>
humanus, humana, humanum - <i>human, of a human being</i>
adfectus, adfectus - <i>emotion, feeling</i>
signum, signi - <i>mark, token, sign</i>
do, dare, dedi, datus - <i>give, furnish, offer</i>
non - <i>not</i> | 6 | maereo, maerere - <i>be sad, grieve, lament</i> |

1. Read lines 3-6 (**ne ... maerentes**), aloud if possible.
2. Study the vocabulary for these lines. In particular:
 - (i) To check the case of **ullius**, see *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 23, section 5, paragraph 10.
 - (ii) **denique** here means *in short* or *in fact*, introducing a *summary* of somebody's behaviour.
 - (iii) What declension does **adfectus** belong to?
 - (iv) What is the gender of **signum**? Is **signa** singular or plural?
3. Read this sub-section again, preferably aloud. You may notice that you have to wait some time for a verb, but when a verb appears it is in the familiar phrase **signa dedit**.
4. What four emotions does Tacitus list, in the genitive case, in lines 3-4? Which, if any, did Claudius show signs of? During what period of time (line 3)?
5. How does Tacitus sum up Claudius' behaviour? (Hint: it is as if he had written: **Claudius non signa dedit ullius humani adfectus**, with **non** and **ullius** as the keywords.)
6. Find and translate two accusative plural nouns in line 5, indicating two groups of people, and two present participles in lines 5-6, indicating what each group was doing. Who are the two groups of people, and what were they doing?
7. The gender of **filios** is masculine, but it refers to two people, one of each sex (just as the same two people were described by the masculine **eos** in the last line of Section VII). The word can be translated as if it were **liberos**, or **filium filiamque**.
8. How old were the **filii** referred to in line 5? If unsure, consult the Time Chart in the Introduction to Section I.
9. Who are the people described as Messalina's **accusatores**?
- *10. When Claudius caught sight of **laetantes accusatores**, which of the four emotions (**odium, gaudium, ira, tristitia**) would you expect him to show, and which emotion(s) on seeing the **filii maerentes**? (†)
11. What emotion *did* Claudius show on seeing the two groups?
- *12. Why did Claudius behave in this way? (The same question was asked in Section Xa question 9, in connection with his immediate "reaction" to the news; you may feel that the answer is the same as before, or that a different explanation is needed for Claudius' behaviour in the days after the execution.) (†)
13. What name, based on a letter of the Greek alphabet, is given to the word order of **laetantes accusatores ... filios maerentes**? (See note 21 in Section Ib if necessary.)
 The pattern produced by this word order is like the pattern of rhyme in the following verse:

Ring out the old, ring in the **new**,
 Ring, happy bells, across the *snow*:
 The year is going, let him go;
 Ring out the false, ring in the **true**. (Tennyson, *In Memoriam*)

new matches **true**, and *snow* matches *go*; one pair of rhymes encloses the other pair. In the same way, in lines 5-6, **laetantes** matches **maerentes**, and *accusatores* matches *filios*; the pair of participles encloses the two groups of people. In both Tennyson and Tacitus, the effect of the words would have been stronger when spoken aloud than when read silently.
14. Translate this sub-section.
- *15. (i) Read this sub-section aloud. (If you are studying this question in a group, it can be very helpful if members of the group take turns to read.) As you can see from the punctuation, the words fall naturally into a series of clusters, which should be reflected in your reading. (If you run out of breath during the long sequence **odii ... dedit**, you could allow yourself a slight pause between one or more items in the list of emotions.)
 - (ii) How many negatives has Tacitus used in this sub-section (twice followed by **cum**)? Should they be emphasised in reading? (†)
 - (iii) It may be helpful to read the sub-section aloud again at this point.
 - (iv) What is being emphasised in these lines by means of the list of emotions and the repeated negatives and the careful patterning of **laetantes...maerentes,accusatores...filios**?
 - (a) Claudius' feeble and colourless character
 - (b) nothing – there is no special emphasis
 - (c) Claudius' increasingly remarkable behaviour
 - (d) Claudius' unhappy situation (†)
 - (v) If you have the stamina for a final reading-aloud, aim not just to group the words appropriately, but to read with suitable expression. Steadily mounting amazement? (In which case, don't get too amazed too early in your reading.) Quite dead-pan, letting the colourful words speak for themselves? Scornful? Sardonic? (†)

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1. Read lines 6-8 (**iuvit ... demovendas**), aloud if possible.
 2. Study the vocabulary for these lines.
 3. Read this sub-section again.
 4. What group of people came to Claudius' aid (line 6)? What did they help him to do?
 5. What physical objects were the subject of a decree by the senate (line 7)?
 6. What did the senate decree about the objects referred to in question 5? (The gerundive **demovendas** is used because the senate decreed that something had to be done. If you are not confident about gerundives, see note 17 in Section IXa and if necessary *Cambridge Latin Grammar*, page 83, section 26, paragraph 2b.)
 7. Archaeology confirms Tacitus' words. An inscription found in Rome refers to a prayer for the safety or well-being (**salus**) of Claudius; the following words, which normally added a reference to the emperor's wife in this type of inscription, have been chiselled off.
 8. The removal of statues or inscribed words, as if Messalina had never existed, could be seen as an early example of political airbrushing. This process was perhaps most famous in the days of Lenin and Stalin in Communist Russia, when the images of prominent individuals who had fallen out of favour with the Soviet regime (e.g. Trotsky) were airbrushed, or removed, from group photos taken when they were still in power. The process was satirised by George Orwell in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.
 9. Translate this sub-section.

General questions

The following notes and questions refer to the whole of Sections I-X. There are probably more questions than you can cover in the time available and you should follow your teacher's guidance over which questions to tackle. In many cases you may find it helpful to study the question on your own at first, then discuss it with others.

1. The story of Messalina's downfall is related in chapters 28 and 29 of *Claudius the God* by Robert Graves. The novel takes the form of Claudius' memoirs. Robert Graves presents him not as the slow-witted dreamer portrayed by Tacitus but as a thoughtful and likeable eccentric. In particular, Graves imagines him as deeply in love with Messalina and ready to believe every word she said.

Be a bit wary, in an exam, of quoting incidents or sayings from *Claudius the God* as if they are in Tacitus (unless they are, of course).

The novel as a whole (and chapters 28 and 29 in particular) is strongly recommended.
2. Without referring back to previous notes and questions, find three places in the text where Tacitus uses a word or phrase (especially at the end of a sentence or sub-section) which takes the reader or listener by surprise or is in some other way striking or memorable. In each case, explain, if you can, why the word or phrase has this quality (e.g. "The phrase comes as a surprise because you would have expected so-and-so to..." or "The reader knows that the speaker is lying.").
3. Look again through the headings to Sections and sub-sections: which can you improve on? This can be a helpful way of fixing the story-line in your mind.
4. What are the qualities of the chief characters in this narrative (Claudius, Messalina, Silius and Narcissus)? Support your answer by quoting from the Latin text. Pick one of the four characters and assess him or her on a 5-point scale (5 high, 1 low) for (a) niceness and (b) brains, adding your reasons.
5. If you have access to a video of BBC television's adaptation of Robert Graves' two novels, *I, Claudius* and *Claudius the God* (televised under the umbrella title *I, Claudius*), view the relevant episodes and see how the chief characters are portrayed. This can be more fun (and probably more useful from a revision point of view) if you have first selected your own cast of film/TV actors in the leading roles. In addition, who would you cast as an invisible Tacitus, doing a "voice-over" while the actors act? (Think of a suitable tone of voice for reading the narrative aloud – passionate and emotional, or cold and dry? Then pick your actor.)
6. Which moments in Tacitus' narrative stick most in your mind?
7. (Strictly for those who enjoy "time-table" puzzles or detective stories) Is it possible to work out the order and approximate time at which the events of Sections II-VII occurred at Ostia, Rome and the **via Ostiensis**? Is Tacitus' narrative (written more than half a century after the events it describes) chronologically impossible?
8. "He can tell an exciting story and he knows a thing or two about what makes people tick, but he's often vague on factual detail, and bits of his narrative are too incredible by half." Discuss any parts, or all, of this four-part assessment of Tacitus, backing up your opinions from the Latin text.
9. What seems to you to have been Tacitus' purpose in relating the Messalina-Silius episode at length?
 - (a) to paint a vivid picture of squalid and immoral behaviour at the top of Roman society when Rome was ruled by emperors
 - (b) to give a clear and detailed account of the episode, making clear the time-table of events and the whereabouts of the chief characters
 - (c) to tell a good story, keeping his readers reading and his listeners listening
10. Find an account of a scandal and/or a wedding in a tabloid newspaper or celebrity magazine and compare it with Tacitus' narrative. Which of the following adjectives or phrases would you use to describe either or both accounts?
 - (a) vivid
 - (b) takes sides
 - (c) incomplete
 - (d) memorable
 - (e) thoughtful
 - (f) over the top
 - (g) incredible
11. The historic present tense was described in a note (11) on Section Ic, lines 9-10; you met further examples in the following places: II d line 14, IV c line 11, IV d line 13, V lines 1 and 3, VII a lines 2 and 5, VII c end of line 11, VIII d line 16 and IX c line 12. Study (some of!) these examples, to test the statement that Tacitus uses this tense for vivid/fast-moving action.

12. If time allows, revisit one or more of the four questions posed in Section III:

- (i) Did this really happen? Is it impossible? Which bits are likelier than others?
- (ii) Is this about a sex scandal, or an attempted political coup d'état? Judge from your impression of each of the two personalities: was s/he motivated by sex or by ambition?
- (iii) If this is a real plot to make Silius emperor, is it carried out in an incredibly stupid way? Silius had been chosen as consul for the forthcoming year. Messalina's skilful plotting had caused the deaths of several people. This hardly suggests that either Silius or Messalina was stupid. Might Tacitus (or rather the people from whom he obtained his information) not have got hold of the full story?
- (iv) Were Silius and Messalina really married to each other by the end of Section III, or was this a "fake" marriage, intended to deceive, or even just a bit of fun? No answer to this question has been generally accepted. One scholar says, "It was in no sense a legal marriage"; another says "Messalina was married twice, once to Claudius and once to Silius"! Perhaps if Messalina and Silius persuaded enough people (or enough of the right people) to regard them as married, then they were married? (See the note on question (iv) on page 44 at the end of Section III.) One day the mystery may be solved, but at present the "wedding" is one of the most puzzling incidents in the history of the early Roman Empire.

Postscript

(Not part of the exam text, but included for those who wonder what happened next)

Messalina's death created a vacancy. You can probably guess by now how Claudius' next wife was chosen. If you have access to a translation of the next chapters of *Annales XI*, you will find Tacitus' account of the extraordinary process in which three possible candidates were discussed. The eventual choice was Claudius' niece Agrippina, whose son by a previous husband was Domitius, later known as Nero. When Claudius died in suspicious circumstances, he was succeeded not by his son Britannicus but by Nero, his step-son.

The results were disastrous.

Claudius is in many ways a controversial emperor, about whom professional historians have reached wildly different opinions.

Freedmen like Narcissus were personally appointed by the emperor and owed their power to him. They were much disliked by senators. In the same way, Prime Ministers and Presidents have sometimes been criticised, rightly or wrongly, for "kitchen cabinets" of close advisers, not always elected, meeting regularly to discuss day-to-day political matters, more freely and confidentially than elected members of government or permanent officials. This may be relevant to your assessment of Tacitus' reliability. If we try to check Tacitus' account against the other writers who dealt with these events, Suetonius and Dio, they generally agree with Tacitus, but they wrote long after Claudius' death, so they could be following the same anti-Claudius source, rather than being independent witnesses, independently corroborating Tacitus' story.

There was less opportunity for senators to exert political power. And Roman history tended to be written by senators, not by a man selling vegetables in the street in the Subura. So it is not surprising that emperors – in particular the earlier ones, the Julio-Claudians who sprang from alliances between the two powerful families, the Julii and the Claudii – get a bad press from Roman historians (especially those who used ex-slaves as important agents). Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio are in agreement (corroboration by independent witnesses? or all of similar background? or all making use of the same earlier writer, now lost, who shared their prejudices?). Faced with a writer like Tacitus and a tale like the fall of Messalina, the historian can do roughly one of three things:

- (a) reject it all as rubbish written by a prejudiced man with a chip on his shoulder
- (b) examine it on its merits, checking it where possible for consistency with other evidence, including archaeological, and for sheer (im)probability
- (c) accepting every word of it

For the honest and conscientious historian, there can only be one choice!