

Appian The Civil Wars

BOOK II.

standards even now). 97. The fight was long and hard and fortune varied in every quarter of the battlefield, until the evening when Caesar just managed to secure victory and promptly destroyed Scipio's camp, not allowing even darkness to keep him from thorough exploitation and completion of his victory.¹⁴⁴ The enemy escaped in small groups wherever they could, and Scipio himself, the moment he had handed the command over to Afranius, fled by sea aboard twelve undecked ships.

His army had a combined strength of about 80,000 men, who had been trained for a long time and had been given confidence and courage by the previous battle; yet it, like Pompeius', was completely shattered in this way at the second encounter. Caesar's glory was magnified into an irresistible good fortune, and the losers no longer ascribed any credit to Caesar's character and ability, but put all their own mistakes down to his good luck. Surely this campaign, like the other, reached such a swift resolution because it collapsed through the misjudgement of the commanders, who failed either to wear Caesar down until he ran short of supplies, as he would in territory he did not control, or to carry their first victory through to conclusion.

98. The news reached Utica about three days later, and since Caesar was making directly for the town everyone fled. Cato restrained no one, and even provided ships for any prominent men who requested them. He himself stayed firmly at his post, and when the Uticans promised that they would ask for him to be spared even if they were not, he smiled and replied that he had no need of an accommodation with Caesar, and that Caesar was equally aware of the fact. He sealed all the valuables and handed over documentation for them all to the magistrates of Utica. In the evening he busied himself with a bath and dinner, and took his meal sitting down as had been his habit since the death of Pompeius.¹⁴⁵ His normal behaviour was unaltered, and he ate neither more nor less than usual. He talked with the others present about the people who had sailed off, asking whether the wind would be favourable for them and whether the interval before Caesar arrived in the morning was sufficient to allow them to make their escape. Even when he went to bed he made no change in his normal routine, except to embrace his son more warmly. When he discovered that his sword was not lying beside the bed in its usual place, he cried out that he was being betrayed to the enemy by his own household and asked what he was to use if attackers came in the night. When they begged him not to plan any action against his own life, but to sleep without his sword, he said

more convincingly, 'If I have a mind to, can I not strangle myself with my clothing, or crush my head against the wall, or break my neck by hurling myself to the ground, or finish myself off by holding my breath?' With more in the same vein, he persuaded them to put his sword beside him, and when it was laid there he asked for Plato's work on the soul¹⁴⁶ and began to read. 99. When he had come to the end of Plato's dialogue, he supposed that the attendants at the door were asleep, and stabbed himself below the breastbone. His internal organs tumbled out, and the attendants heard a groan and came rushing in. The doctors replaced the organs, which were still undamaged, sewed up the cuts, and applied bandages. He regained consciousness, and again dissembled: he blamed himself for the feebleness of his blow, but expressed his gratitude to those who had saved him and said he needed to go to sleep. They then went away, taking his sword, and shut the door in the belief that he was quiet. But although he gave the impression that he was asleep, he silently tore the bandages off with his hands and undid the stitches of the injury. Like a wild animal, he enlarged the wound with his nails, opened up his stomach with his fingers, and tore his intestines out, until he died. He was about fifty years old, and is agreed to have been the most uncompromising of all men in his views, once they were formed on any matter, and to have distinguished what was just, or right, or good, on grounds not so much of convention but of high-minded argument. He had been married to Marcia, Philippus' daughter, from her girlhood and been very fond of her and sired sons by her; none the less he gave her to his friend Hortensius, who wanted children but happened not to have a fertile wife, until she conceived by him too, when he took her back into his household again as though he had made a loan.¹⁴⁷ Such was Cato's character, and the people of Utica gave him a splendid burial. Caesar, however, said that Cato had grudged him the opportunity for a fine gesture,¹⁴⁸ and when Cicero composed an encomium on him with the title *Cato*, Caesar responded with an attack which he called *Anticato*.

100. When Juba and Petreius discovered what had happened, they could see no prospect of escape or salvation for themselves and stabbed each other over their evening meal. Caesar made Juba's kingdom subject to Roman taxes and appointed Sallustius Crispus to govern it.¹⁴⁹ He pardoned the people of Utica and Cato's son, and when he caught Pompeius' daughter with two of her children in Utica sent them unharmed to young Pompeius.¹⁵⁰ Of the 300, he put to death any he found. The commander-in-chief Lucius Scipio was caught by a storm at sea and on meeting enemy