Justinian (r.527-65) was perhaps the most important Byzantine emperor of late antiquity. His virtually obsessive aim was to re-establish the Roman Empire as it had been during the reign of Augustus, and he began the reconquest of the Western Empire. After a conflict with the Ostrogoths lasting some 25 years, he managed to establish a weak foothold in Italy that barely outlasted his lifetime. Among his more lasting contributions, however, is the compilation of laws known as the *Corpus iuris civilis*, which became the most influential work of legal scholarship in the West. The *Corpus*, which attempted to sort out the entangled and sometimes contradictory Roman legal system, was divided into three sections: the *Codex*, which was a summary of previous Roman law; the *Digest*, which was a complication of legal opinion; and the *Institutes*, a legal textbook.

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**Book I. Of Persons**

I. Justice and Law.

JUSTICE is the constant and perpetual wish to render every one his due.

1. Jurisprudence is the knowledge of things divine and human; the science of the just and the unjust.

2. Having explained these general terms, we think we shall commence our exposition of the law of the Roman people most advantageously, if we pursue at first a plain and easy path, and then proceed to explain particular details with the utmost care and exactness. For, if at the outset we overload the mind of the student, while yet new to the subject and unable to bear much, with a multitude and variety of topics, one of two things will happen---we shall either cause him wholly to abandon his studies, or, after great toil, and often after great distrust to himself (the most frequent stumbling block in the way of youth), we shall at last conduct him to the point, to which, if he had been led by an easier road, he might, without great labor, and without any distrust of his own powers, have been sooner conducted.

3. The maxims of law are these: to live honesty, to hurt no one, to give every one his due.

4. The study of law is divided into two branches; that of public and that of private law. Public law regards the government of the Roman empire; private law, the interest of the individuals. We are now to treat of the latter, which is composed of three elements, and consists of precepts belonging to the natural law, to the law of nations, and to the civil law.

II. Natural, Common, and Civil Law.

The law of nature is that law which nature teaches to all animals. For this law does not belong exclusively to the human race, but belongs to all animals, whether of the earth, the air, or the water. Hence comes the union of the male and female, which we term matrimony; hence the procreation and bringing up of children. We see, indeed, that all the other animals besides men are considered as having knowledge of this law.
1. Civil law is thus distinguished from the law of nations. Every community governed by laws and customs uses partly its own law, partly laws common to all mankind. The law which a people makes for its own government belongs exclusively to that state and is called the civil law, as being the law of the particular state. But the law which natural reason appoints for all mankind obtains equally among all nations, because all nations make use of it. The people of Rome, then, are governed partly by their own laws, and partly by the laws which are common to all mankind. We will take notice of this distinction as occasion may arise.

2. Civil law takes its name from the state which it governs, as, for instance, from Athens; for it would be very proper to speak of the laws of Solon or Draco as the civil law of Athens. And thus the law which the Roman people make use of is called the civil law of the Romans, or that of the Quirites; for the Romans are called Quirites from Quirinum. But whenever we speak of civil law, without adding the name of any state, we mean our own law; just as the Greeks, when "the poet" is spoken of without any name being expressed, mean the great Homer, and we Romans mean Virgil.

The law of the nations is common to all mankind, for nations have established certain laws, as occasion and the necessities of human life required. Wars arose, and in their train followed captivity and then slavery, which is contrary to the law of nature; for by that law all men are originally born free. Further, by the law of nations almost all contracts were at first introduced, as, for instance, buying and selling, letting and hiring, partnership, deposits, loans returnable in kind, and very many others.

3. Our law is written and unwritten, just as among the Greeks some of their laws were written and others were not written. The written part consists of leges (lex), plebiscita, senatusconsulta, constitutions of emperors, edicta of magistrates, and responsa of jurisprudents [i.e., jurists].

4. A lex is that which was enacted by the Roman people on its being proposed by a senatorian magistrate, as a consul. A plebiscitum is that which was enacted by the plebs on its being proposed by a plebeian magistrate, as a tribune. The plebs differ from the people as a species from its genus, for all the citizens, including patricians and senators, are comprehended in the populi (people); but the plebs only included citizens [who were] not patricians or senators. Plebiscita, after the Hortensian law had been passed, began to have the same force as leges.

5. A senatusconsultum is that which the senate commands or appoints: for, when the Roman people was so increased that it was difficult to assemble it together to pass laws, it seemed right that the senate should be consulted in place of the people.

6. That which seems good to the emperor has also the force of law; for the people, by the Lex Regia, which is passed to confer on him his power, make over to him their whole power and authority. Therefore whatever the emperor ordains by rescript, or decides in adjudging a cause, or lays down by edict, is unquestionably law; and it is these enactments of the emperor that are called constitutions. Of these, some are personal, and are not to be drawn into precedent, such not being the intention of the emperor. Supposing the emperor has granted a favor to any man on account of his merit, or inflicted some punishment, or granted some extraordinary relief, the application of these acts does not extend beyond the particular individual. But the other constitutions, being general, are undoubtedly binding on all.

7. The edicts of the praetors are also of great authority. These edicts are called the ins honorarium, because those who bear honors [i.e., offices] in the state, that is, the magistrates,
have given them their sanction. The curule aediles also used to publish an edict relative to certain subjects, which edict also became a part of the ins honorarium.

8. The answers of the jurisprudenti are the decisions and opinions of persons who were authorized to determine the law. For anciently it was provided that there should be persons to interpret publicly the law, who were permitted by the emperor to give answers on questions of law. They were called jurisconsulti; and the authority of their decision and opinions, when they were all unanimous, was such, that the judge could not, according to the constitutiones, refuse to be guided by their answers.

9. The unwritten law is that which usage has established; for ancient customs, being sanctioned by the consent of those who adopt them, are like laws.

10. The civil law is not improperly divided into two kinds, for the division seems to have had its origin in the customs of the two states, Athens and Lacedaemon. For in these states it used to be the case, that the Lacedaemonians rather committed to memory what they observed as law, while the Athenians rather observed as law what they had consigned to writing, and included in the body of their laws.

11. The laws of nature, which all nations observe alike, being established by a divine providence, remain ever fixed and immutable. But the laws which every state has enacted, undergo frequent changes, either by the tacit consent of the people, or by a new law being subsequently passed.

III. The Law of Persons.

All our law relates either to persons, or to things, or to actions. Let us first speak of persons; as it is of little purpose to know the law, if we do not know the persons for whose sake the law was made. The chief division in the rights of persons is this: men are all either free or slaves.

1. Freedom, from which men are said to be free, is the natural power of doing what we each please, unless prevented by force or by law.

2. Slavery is an institution of the law of nations, by which one man is made the property of another, contrary to natural right.

3. Slaves are denominated servi, because generals order their captives to be sold, and thus preserve them, and do not put them to death. Slaves are also called mancipia, because they are taken from the enemy by the strong hand.

4. Slaves either are born or become so. They are born so when their mother is a slave; they become so either by the law of nations, that is, by captivity, or by the civil law, as when a free person, above the age of twenty, suffers himself to be sold, that he may share the price given for him.

5. In the condition of slaves there is no distinction; but there are many distinctions among free persons; for they are either born free, or have been set free.

X. Concerning marriage.

Roman citizens are bound together in lawful matrimony when they are united according to law, the males having attained the age of puberty, and the females a marriageable age, whether they are fathers or sons of a family; but, of the latter, they must first obtain the consent of their parents, in whose power they are. For both natural reason and the law require this consent; so much so, indeed, that it ought to precede the marriage. Hence the question has arisen, whether the daughter of a madman could be married, or his son marry? And as
opinions were divided as to the son, we decided that as the daughter of a madman might, so may the son of a madman marry without the intervention of the father, according to the mode established by our constitutio.

1. We may not marry every woman without distinction; for with some, marriage is forbidden. Marriage cannot be contracted between persons standing to each other in the relation of ascendant and descendant, as between a father and daughter, a grandfather and his granddaughter, a mother and her son, a grandmother and her grandson; and so on, ad infinitum. And, if such persons unite together, they only contract a criminal and incestuous marriage; so much so, that ascendants and descendants, who are only so by adoption, cannot intermarry; and even after the adoption is dissolved, the prohibition remains. You cannot, therefore, marry a woman who has been either your daughter or granddaughter by adoption, although you may have emancipated her.

2. There are also restrictions, though not so extensive, on marriage between collateral relations. A brother and sister are forbidden to marry, whether they are the children of the same father and mother, or of one of the two only. And, if a woman becomes your sister by adoption, you certainly cannot marry; but, if the adoption is destroyed by emancipation, you may marry her; as you may also, if you yourself are emancipated. Hence it follows, that if a man would adopt his son-in-law, he ought first to emancipate his daughter; and if he would adopt his daughter-in-law, he ought previously to emancipate his son.

3. A man may not marry the daughter of a brother, or a sister, nor the granddaughter, although she is in the fourth degree. For when we may not marry the daughter of any person, neither may we marry the granddaughter. But there does not appear to be any impediment to marrying the daughter of a woman whom your father has adopted; for she is no relation to you, either by natural or civil law.

4. The children of two brothers or two sisters, or of a brother and sister, may marry together.

5. So, too, a man may not marry his paternal aunt, even though she be so only by adoption; nor his maternal aunt; because they are regarded in the light of ascendants. For the same reason, no person may marry his great-aunt, either paternal or maternal.

6. There are, too, other marriages from which we must abstain, from regard to the ties created by marriage; for example, a man may not marry his wife's daughter, or his son's wife, for they are both in the place of daughters to him; and this must be understood to mean those who have been our stepdaughters or daughters-in-law; for if a woman is still your daughter-in-law, that is if she is still married to your son, you cannot marry her for another reason, as she cannot be the wife of two persons at once. And if your step-daughter, that is, if her mother is still married to you, you cannot marry her, because a person cannot have two wives at the same time.

7. Again, a man is forbidden to marry his wife's mother, and his father's wife, because they hold the place of mothers to him; a prohibition which can only operate when the affinity is dissolved; for if your step-mother is still your step-mother, that is, if she is still married to your father, she would be prohibited from marrying you by the common rule of law, which forbids a woman to have two husbands at the same time. So if your wife's mother is still your wife's mother, that is, if her daughter is still married to you, you cannot marry her, because you cannot have two wives at the same time.

8. The son of a husband by a former wife, and the daughter of a wife by a former husband, or the daughter of a husband by a former wife,
and the son of a wife by a former husband, may lawfully contract marriage, even though they have a brother or sister born of the second marriage.

9. The daughter of a divorced wife by a second husband is not your step-daughter; and yet Julian says we ought to abstain from such a marriage. For the betrothed wife of a son is not your daughter-in-law; nor your betrothed wife your son’s step-mother; and yet it is more decent and more in accordance with law to abstain from such marriage.

10. It is certain that the relationship of slaves is an impediment to marriage, even if the father and daughter or brother and sister, as the case may be, have been enfranchised.

11. There are other persons also, between whom marriage is prohibited for different reasons, which we have permitted to be enumerated in the books of the Digests or Pandects, collected from the old law.

12. If persons unite themselves in contravention of the rules thus laid down, there is no husband or wife, no nuptials, no marriage, nor marriage portion, and the children born in such a connection are not in the power of the father. For, with regard to the power of a father, they are in the position of children conceived in prostitution, who are looked upon as having no father, because it is uncertain who he is; and are therefore called spurii, either from a Greek word sporadas, meaning "at hazard," or as being sine patre, without a father. On the dissolution of such a connection there can be no claim made for the demand of a marriage portion. Persons who contract prohibited marriages are liable also to further penalties set forth in our imperial constitutiones.

13. It sometimes happens that children who at their birth were not in the power of their father are brought under it afterwards. Such is the case of a natural son, who is given to the curia, and then becomes subject to his father’s power. Again, a child born of a free woman, with whom marriage was not prohibited by any law, but with whom the father only cohabited, will likewise become subject to the power of his father if at any time afterwards instruments of dowry are drawn up according to the provisions of our constitutio. And this constitutio confers the same benefits on any children who may be subsequently born of the same marriage.

Book IX. Title XIII. Concerning the ravishment of virgins or widows or nuns.

We decree that ravishers of respectable or free-born virgins, whether betrothed or not, and of widows of all kinds, including freedwomen and the slaves of others, shall, guilty the worst of crimes, be visited with capital punishment, especially if the virgins or widows were dedicated to God, since the crime committed in that case is not only an outrage on men, but is also in mockery of the Omnipotent God himself, particularly because corrupted virginity or chastity cannot be restored. And they are deservedly condemned to the punishment of death, because ravishers of this sort are also guilty of murder.

1. In order, therefore, that such reckless conduct may not increase through lack of punishment, we ordain by this general law that those who commit a crime of this kind, and those who assist them at the time of the seizure, may, if they are discovered in the act of ravishment itself, and are seized during the commission of the crime, be killed, as convicted criminals, by the parents of the virgins or widows, free-born or otherwise, or by their relatives, guardians, curators, patrons or masters. We ordain that this shall be true so much more as to those who dare to ravish married women, because they are guilty of a double crime, adultery and ravishment, and the crime of adultery should, for this addition, be punished the more severely. We also number
among such criminals the man who attempts to forcibly ravish the woman who is betrothed to him. If the ravisher, after the commission of such detestable crime, has been able to defend himself or escape by flight, the exalted praetorian prefects and the glorious city prefect in this imperial city and the eminent praetorian prefects of Illyria and Africa, in the provinces, as well as the masters of the soldiery in the various regions of our empire, also the worshipful prefect of Egypt, the count of the Orient, the vicars and proconsuls and all the worshipful dukes and the honorable rectors of the provinces, and all other judges of whatever rank, found in the places, shall be equally zealous and solicitous to arrest them, and after lawful proof, recognized by law, and without giving them any right to object to the place of trial, punish those seized in (guilty of) such crime with the severest punishment and condemn them to death. Nor shall they, according to the ancient law of Constantine, have any right to appeal, if they wish to do so. If the women who have been ravished are slaves or freedwomen, their ravishers shall be visited only with the aforesaid punishment, without loss, however, of their property. But if such crime is perpetrated on a free-born woman, the judges, with the help of the parents, husbands, guardians or curators, must take care that all of the property, movable, immovable and self moving, of the ravishers and of those who gave them aid, becomes that of the women ravished. If such women are unmarried and free-born and they will marry someone other than the ravisher, such property, or as much thereof as they wish, may be given as their dowry. But if they want no husband and wish to retain their maidenly chastity, they shall have complete ownership of such property and no judge or other person shall undertake to prevent this.

2. The ravished virgin or widow, or other woman, shall have no right to demand her ravisher as her husband, but her parents may unite her in lawful marriage to any man they wish, excepting the ravisher, since Our Serenity will in no manner and at no time comply with the wish of those who, in our republic, seek a marriage in a hostile manner. For whoever wants to marry a woman, whether free-born or a freedwoman, should, according to our laws and ancient custom, go to the parents or other proper person and enter into a lawful marriage with their consent.

3. The punishment herein mentioned, that is to say, that of death and loss of property, shall be inflicted not only on the ravishers but also against their attendants in the attack and ravishment. All other abettors of the crime or persons who give shelter or any aid to them, whether male or female, and of whatever station, grade or rank, shall be subject to capital punishment (without loss of property), and they shall all pay this penalty whether such crime was perpetrated with or against the will of the virgins or other women. For if the ravishers, through fear of the severity of the punishment, refrain from this crime, no opportunity for sinning is left to the woman, willing or unwilling, since her very wish to sin is induced by the wiles of the wicked man who contemplates ravishment. Unless he urges her, unless he circumvents her by odious artifices, he would not induce her to consent to such dishonor. If the parents, who are most concerned in the punishment, show forbearance, or lay aside their grief, they shall be punished by deportation.

4. If any of the persons who aid in this crime are slaves, we order that they shall be burned to death, without distinction as to sex, as provided by the law of Constantine.

5. All provisions of the Julian law as to ravishment of virgins, widows or nuns contained in the ancient books of law or in imperial constitutions, shall not be in force in the future, and this law alone shall be sufficient on this subject for all, and which shall also apply to nuns, whether virgins or widows. Given at Constantinople November 17 (533).
The Qur'an (610-22)

The Qur'an [or “Recitation”] is a collection of the speeches made by Muhammad, remembered by his followers, and collected, written down and edited after his death. For Muslims Muhammad is in no way the author of the Qur'an, which is understood as the direct word of God given to Muhammad. Although scholars have some idea of the order of the speeches, the standard text is organized in a remarkable way. Divided into chapters, or surahs, after the first surah, each surah is arranged according to length, the longest coming first. Muslims' early education often consists in learning large parts of the Qur'an and so this arrangement presents little difficulty. For new readers it can make the text somewhat confusing. The message of Muhammad, however, was not difficult to grasp - stark and absolute monotheism, the evil of sin, the revelation of God in the Qur'an and through Muhammad, and the creation of a new Muslim community. This message is repeated throughout the Qur'an.

Surah 1: The Opening

In the name of God the Compassionate the Caring
Praise be to God lord sustainer of the worlds
the Compassionate the Caring
master of the day of reckoning
To you we turn to worship and to you we turn in time of need
Guide us along the road straight
the road of those to whom you are giving not those with anger upon them not those who have lost the way

Surah 2: The Cow

2.222: And they ask you about menstruation. Say: It is a discomfort; therefore keep aloof from the women during the menstrual discharge and do not go near them until they have become clean; then when they have cleansed themselves, go in to them as God has commanded you; surely God loves those who turn much (to Him), and He loves those who purify themselves.
2.223: Your wives are a tilth for you, so go into your tilth when you like, and do good beforehand for yourselves, and be careful (of your duty) to God, and know that you will meet Him, and give good news to the believers.
2.228: And the divorced women should keep themselves in waiting for three courses; and it is not lawful for them that they should conceal what God has created in their wombs, if they believe in God and the last day; and their husbands have a better right to take them back in the meanwhile if they wish for reconciliation; and they have rights similar to those against them in a just manner, and the men are a degree above them, and God is Mighty, Wise.
2.233: And the mothers should suckle their children for two whole years for him who desires to make complete the time of suckling; and their maintenance and their clothing must be borne by the father according to usage; no soul shall have imposed upon it a duty but to the extent of its capacity; neither shall a mother be made to suffer harm on account of her child, nor a father on account of his child, and a similar duty (devolves) on the (father's) heir, but if both desire weaning by mutual consent and counsel, there is no blame on them, and if you wish to engage a wet-nurse for your children, there is no blame on you so long as you pay what you promised for according to usage; and be careful of (your
duty to) God and know that God sees what you do.

2.234: And (as for) those of you who die and leave wives behind, they should keep themselves in waiting for four months and ten days; then when they have fully attained their term, there is no blame on you for what they do for themselves in a lawful manner; and God is aware of what you do.

2.236: There is no blame on you if you divorce women when you have not touched them or appointed for them a portion, and make provision for them, the wealthy according to his means and the straitened in circumstances according to his means, a provision according to usage; (this is) a duty on the doers of good (to others).

2.240: And those of you who die and leave wives behind, (make) a bequest in favor of their wives of maintenance for a year without turning (them) out, then if they themselves go away, there is no blame on you for what they do for lawful deeds by themselves, and God is Mighty, Wise.

2.241: And for the divorced women (too) provision (must be made) according to usage; (this is) a duty on those who guard (against evil).

Surah 4: The Women

In the name of God, the Beneficent, the Merciful.

4.1: O people! be careful of (your duty to) your Lord, Who created you from a single being and created its mate of the same (kind) and spread from these two, many men and women; and be careful of (your duty to) God, by Whom you demand one of another (your rights), and (to) the ties of relationship; surely God ever watches over you.

4.3: And if you fear that you cannot act equitably towards orphans, then marry such women as seem good to you, two and three and four; but if you fear that you will not do justice (between them), then (marry) only one or what your right hands possess; this is more proper, that you may not deviate from the right course.

4.4: And give women their dowries as a free gift, but if they of themselves be pleased to give up to you a portion of it, then eat it with enjoyment and with wholesome result.

4.7: Men shall have a portion of what the parents and the near relatives leave, and women shall have a portion of what the parents and the near relatives leave, whether there is little or much of it; a stated portion.

4.12: And you shall have half of what your wives leave if they have no child, but if they have a child, then you shall have a fourth of what they leave after (payment of) any bequest they may have bequeathed or a debt; and they shall have the fourth of what you leave if you have no child, but if you have a child then they shall have the eighth of what you leave after (payment of) a bequest you may have bequeathed or a debt; and if a man or a woman leaves property to be inherited by neither parents nor offspring, and he (or she) has a brother or a sister, then each of them two shall have the sixth, but if they are more than that, they shall be sharers in the third after (payment of) any bequest that may have been bequeathed or a debt that does not harm (others); this is an ordinance from God: and God is Knowing, Forbearing.

4.15: And as for those who are guilty of an indecency from among your women, call to witnesses against them four (witnesses) from among you; then if they bear witness confine them to the houses until death takes them away or God opens some way for them.

4.23: Forbidden to you are your mothers and your daughters and your sisters and your paternal aunts and your maternal aunts and brothers' daughters and sisters' daughters and your mothers that have suckled you and your foster-sisters and mothers of your wives and your step-daughters who are in your guardianship, (born) of your wives to whom you have gone in, but if you have not gone in to them, there is no blame on
you (in marrying them), and the wives of your sons who are of your own loins and that you should have two sisters together, except what has already passed; surely God is Forgiving, Merciful.

4.25: And whoever among you has not within his power amleness of means to marry free believing women, then (he may marry) of those whom your right hands possess from among your believing maidens; and God knows best your faith: you are (sprung) the one from the other; so marry them with the permission of their masters, and give them their dowries justly, they being chaste, not fornicating, nor receiving paramours; and when they are taken in marriage, then if they are guilty of indecency, they shall suffer half the punishment which is (inflicted) upon free women. This is for him among you who fears falling into evil; and that you abstain is better for you, and God is Forgiving, Merciful.

4.32: And do not covet that by which God has made some of you excel others; men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn; and ask God of His grace; surely God knows all things.

4.34: Men are the maintainers of women because God has made some of them to excel others and because they spend out of their property; the good women are therefore obedient, guarding the unseen as God has guarded; and (as to) those on whose part you fear desertion, admonish them, and leave them alone in the sleeping-places and beat them; then if they obey you, do not seek a way against them; surely God is High, Great.

4.124: And whoever does good deeds whether male or female and he (or she) is a believer -- these shall enter the garden, and they shall not be dealt with a jot unjustly.

4.128: And if a woman fears ill usage or desertion on the part of her husband, there is no blame on them, if they effect a reconciliation between them, and reconciliation is better, and avarice has been made to be present in the (people's) minds; and if you do good (to others) and guard (against evil), then surely God is aware of what you do.

4.130: And if they separate, God will render them both free from want out of His amleness, and God is Ample-giving, Wise.

**Surah 47: Muhammad**

47:1. In the name of God, the Gracious, the Merciful.

47:2. Those who disbelieve and hinder men from the way of God - He renders their works vain.

47:3. But as for those who believe and do righteous deeds and believe in that which has been revealed to Muhammad - and it is the truth from their Lord - He removes from them their sins and sets right their affairs.

47:4. That is because those who disbelieve follow falsehood while those who believe follow the truth from their Lord. Thus does God set forth for men their lessons by similitudes.

47:5. And when you meet in regular battle those who disbelieve, smite their necks; and, when you have overcome them, by causing great slaughter among them, bind fast the fetters - then afterwards either release them as a favor or by taking ransom - until the war lays down its burdens. That is the ordinance. And if God had so pleased, He could have punished them Himself, but He has willed that He may try some of you by others. And those who are killed in the way of God - He will never render their works vain.

47:6. He will guide them to success and will improve their condition.

47:7. And will admit them into the Garden that He has made known to them.

47:8. O ye who believe! if you help the cause of God, He will help you and will make your steps firm.

47:9. But those who disbelieve, perdition is
their lot; and He will make their works vain.

47:10. That is because they hate what God has revealed; so He has made their works vain.

47:11. Have they not traveled in the earth and seen what was the end of those who were before them? God utterly destroyed them, and for the disbelievers there will be the like thereof.

47:12. That is because God is the Protector of those who believe, and the disbelievers have no protector.

47:13. Verily, God will cause those who believe and do good works to enter the Gardens underneath which streams flow; while those who disbelieve enjoy themselves and eat even as the cattle eat, and the Fire will be their last resort.

47:14. And how many a township, mightier than thy town that has driven thee out, have WE destroyed, and they had no helper.

47:15. Then, is he who takes his stand upon a clear proof from his Lord like those to whom the evil of their deeds is made to look attractive and who follow their low desires?

47:16. A description of the Garden promised to the righteous: Therein are streams of water which corrupts not; and streams of milk of which the taste changes not; and streams of wine, a delight to those who drink; and streams of clarified honey. And in it they will have all kinds of fruit, and forgiveness from their Lord. Can those who enjoy such bliss be like those who abide in the Fire and who are given boiling water to drink so that it tears their bowels?

47:17. And among them are some who seems to listen to thee till, when they go forth from thy presence, they say to those who have been given knowledge, ‘What has he been talking about just now?’ These are they upon whose hearts God has set a seal, and who follow their own evil desires.

47:18. But as for those who follow guidance, He adds to their guidance, and bestows on them righteousness suited to their condition.

47:19. The disbelievers wait not but for the Hour, that it should come upon them suddenly. The Signs thereof have already come. But of what avail will their admonition be to them when it has actually come upon them.

47:20. Know, therefore, that there is no god other than God, and ask protection for thy human frailties, and for believing men and believing women. And God knows the place where you move about and the place where you stay.

47:21. And those who believe say, ‘Why is not a Surah revealed?’ But when a decisive Surah is revealed and fighting is mentioned therein, thou seest those in whose hearts is a disease, looking towards thee like the look of one who is fainting on account of approaching death. So woe to them!

47:22. Their attitude should have been one of obedience and of calling people to good. And when the matter was determined upon, it was good for them if they were true to God.

47:23. Would you not then, if you are placed in authority, create disorder in the land and sever your ties of kinship?

47:24. It is these whom God has cursed, so that He has made them deaf and has made their eyes blind.

47:25. Will they not, then, ponder over the Qur'an, or, is it that there are locks on their hearts?

47:26. Surely, those who turn their backs after guidance has become manifest to them, Satan has seduced them and holds out false hopes to them.

47:27. That is because they said to those who hate what God has revealed, ‘We will obey you in some matters, and God knows their secrets.

47:28. But how will they fare when the angels will cause them to die, smiting their faces and their backs?

47:29. That is because they followed that which displeased God, and disliked the seeking of HIS pleasure. So He rendered their works vain.
47:30. Do those in whose hearts is a disease suppose that God will not bring to light their malice?
47:31. And if WE pleased, WE could show them to thee so that thou shouldst know them by their marks. And thou shalt, surely, recognize them by the tone of their speech. And God knows your deeds.
47:32. And WE will, surely, try you, until WE make manifest those among you who strive for the cause of God and those who are steadfast. And WE will make known the true facts about you.
47:33. Those, who disbelieve and hinder men from the way of God and oppose the Messenger after guidance has become manifest to them, shall not harm God in the least; and He will make their works fruitless.
47:34. O ye who believe! obey God and obey the Messenger and make not your works vain.
47:35. Verily, those who disbelieve and hinder people from the way of God, and then die while they are disbelievers - God certainly, will not forgive them.
47:36. So be not slack and sue not for peace, for you will, certainly, have the upper hand. And God is with you, and He will not deprive you of the reward of your actions.
47:37. The life of this world is but a sport and a pastime, and if you believe and be righteous, He will give you your rewards, and will not ask of you your wealth.
47:38. Were He to ask it of you and press you, you would be niggardly, and He would bring to light your malice.
47:39. Behold! You are those who are called upon to spend in the way of God; but of you there are some who are niggardly. And whoso is niggardly, is niggardly only against his own soul. And God is Self-Sufficient, and it is you who are needy. And if you turn your backs, He will bring in your place another people; then they will not be like you.

**Surah 81: The Overturning**

In the Name of God the Compassionate the Caring

81:1 When the sun is overturned
81:2 When the stars fall away
81:3 When the mountains are moved
81:4 When the ten-month pregnant camels are abandoned
81:5 When the beasts of the wild are herded together
81:6 When the seas are boiled over
81:7 When the souls are coupled
81:8 When the girl-child buried alive
81:9 Is asked what she did to deserve murder
81:10 When the pages are folded out
81:11 When the sky is flayed open
81:12 When Jahim is set ablaze
81:13 When the garden is brought near
81:14 Then a soul will know what it has prepared
81:15 I swear by the stars that slide,
81:16 Stars streaming, stars that sweep along the sky
81:17 By the night as it slips away
81:18 By the morning when the fragrant air breathes
81:19 This is the word of a messenger ennobled,
81:20 Empowered, ordained before the lord of the throne,
81:21 Holding sway there, keeping trust
81:22 Your friend has not gone mad
81:23 He saw him on the horizon clear
81:24 He does not hoard for himself the unseen
81:25 This is not the word of a satan struck with stones
81:26 Where are you going?
81:27 This is a reminder to all beings
81:28 For those who wish to walk straight
81:29 Your only will is the will of God lord of all beings.

**Surah 98: The Testament**
98:0 In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful
98:1 Those who disbelieved among the people of the scripture, as well as the idol worshipers, insist on their ways, despite the proof given to them.
98:2 A messenger from GOD is reciting to them sacred instructions.
98:3 In them there are valuable teachings.
98:4 In fact, those who received the scripture did not dispute until the proof was given to them.
98:5 All that was asked of them was to worship GOD, devoting the religion absolutely to Him alone, observe the contact prayers (Salat), and give the obligatory charity (Zakat). Such is the perfect religion.
98:6 Those who disbelieved among the people of the scripture, and the idol worshipers, have incurred the fire of Gehenna forever. They are the worst creatures.
98:7 Those who believed and led a righteous life are the best creatures.
98:8 Their reward at their Lord is the gardens of Eden with flowing streams, wherein they abide forever. GOD is pleased with them, and they are pleased with Him. Such is the reward for those who reverence their Lord.

Procopius, *The Secret History* (c.550)

Procopius of Caesarea (c.490-560s) is the most important source for information about the reign of the emperor Justinian (482-565) and his wife Theodora. From 527 to 531 Procopius was a counsel the great general of the time, Belisarius. He was given the title *illustris* in 560 and in may have been prefect of Constantinople in 562-3. Procopius wrote a number of official histories, including *On Wars* (552), and *On Buildings* (561). He also left a *Secret History*, probably written c. 550 and published after his death, which was a massive attack on the character of Justinian and his wife Theodora. Parts are so vitriolic, even pornographic, that for some time translations from Greek were only available into Latin. The *Secret History* claims to provide explanations and additions that the author could not insert into his work on *On Wars* for fear of retribution from Justinian and Theodora. Since both before and after writing the secret history, Procopius wrote approvingly of the emperor, it was suggested in the past that he was not the author of the work, but it is now generally accepted that Procopius wrote it.

Introduction

In what I have written on the Roman wars up to the present point, the story was arranged in chronological order and as completely as the times then permitted. What I shall write now follows a different plan, supplementing the previous formal chronicle with a disclosure of what really happened throughout the Roman Empire. You see, it was not possible, during the life of certain persons, to write the truth of what they did, as a historian should. If I had, their hordes of spies would have found out about it, and they would have put me to a most horrible death. I could not even trust my nearest relatives. That is why I was compelled to hide the real explanation of many matters glossed over in my previous books.

These secrets it is now my duty to tell and reveal the remaining hidden matters and
motives. Yet when I approach this different task, I find it hard indeed to have to stammer and retract what I have written before about the lives of Justinian and Theodora. Worse yet, it occurs to me that what I am now about to tell will seem neither probable nor plausible to future generations, especially as time flows on and my story becomes ancient history. I fear they may think me a writer of fiction, and even put me among the poets.

However, I have this much to cheer me, that my account will not be unendorsed by other testimony: so I shall not shrink from the duty of completing this work. For the men of today, who know best the truth of these matters, will be trustworthy witnesses to posterity of the accuracy of my evidence.

Still another thing for a long time deferred my passion to relieve myself of this untold tale. For I wondered if it might be prejudicial to future generations, and the wickedness of these deeds had not best remain unknown to later times: lest future tyrants, hearing, might emulate them. It is deplorably natural that most monarchs mimic the sins of their predecessors and are most readily disposed to turn to the evils of the past.

But, finally, I was again constrained to proceed with this history, for the reason that future tyrants may see also that those who thus err cannot avoid retribution in the end, since the persons of whom I write suffered that judgment. Furthermore, the disclosure of these actions and tempers will be published for all time, and in consequence others will perhaps feel less urge to transgress.

For who now would know of the unchastened life of Semiramis or the madness of Sardanapalus or Nero, if the record had not thus been written by men of their own times? Besides, even those who suffer similarly from later tyrants will not find this narrative quite unprofitable. For the miserable find comfort in the philosophy that not on them alone has evil fallen. Accordingly, I begin the tale. First I shall reveal the folly of Belisarius, and then the depravity of Justinian and Theodora.

Chapter I: How the Great General Belisarius was Hoodwinked by His Wife

The father of Belisarius's wife, a lady whom I have mentioned in my former books, was (and so was her grandfather) a charioteer, exhibiting that trade in Constantinople and Thessalonica. Her mother was one of the wenches of the theater; and she herself from the first led an utterly wanton life. Acquainted with magic drugs used by her parents before her, she learned how to use those of compelling qualities and became the wedded wife of Belisarius, after having already borne many children.

Now she was unfaithful as a wife from the start, but was careful to conceal her indiscretions by the usual precautions; not from any awe of her spouse (for she never felt any shame at anything) and fooled him easily with her deceptions), but because she feared the punishment of the Empress. For Theodora hated her, and had already shown her teeth. But when that Queen became involved in difficulties, she won her friendship by helping her, first to destroy Silverius, as shall be related presently, and later to ruin John of Cappadocia, as I have told elsewhere. After that, she became more and more fearless, and casting all concealment aside, abandoned herself to the winds of desire.

There was a youth from Thrace in the house of Belisarius: Theodosius by name, and of the Eunomian heresy by descent. On the eve of his expedition to Libya, Belisarius baptized this boy in holy water and received him in his arms as a member henceforth of the family, welcoming him with his wife as the ir son, according to the Christian rite of adoption. And Antonina not only embraced Theodosius with reasonable fondness as her son by holy word, and thus cared for him, but soon, while her husband was away on his campaign, became wildly in love with him; and, out of her senses with this malady, shook off all fear and shame of God and man. She began by enjoying him surreptitiously, and ended by dallying with him in the presence of the men servants and waiting maids. For she was now possessed by passion.
and, openly overwhelmed with love, could see no hindrance to its consummation.

Once, in Carthage, Belisarius caught her in the very act, but allowed himself to be deceived by his wife. Finding the two in an underground room, he was very angry; but she said, showing no fear or attempt to keep anything hidden, "I came here with the boy to bury the most precious part of our plunder, where the Emperor will not discover it." So she said by way of excuse, and he dismissed the matter as if he believed her, even as he saw Theodosius's trousers belt somewhat unmodestly unfastened. For so bound by love for the woman was he, that he preferred to distrust the evidence of his own eyes.

As her folly progressed to an indescribable extent, those who saw what was going on kept silent, except one slave, Macedonia by name. When Belisarius was in Syracuse as the conqueror of Sicily, she made her master swear solemnly never to betray her to her mistress, and then told him the whole story, presenting s witnesses two slave boys attending the bed-chamber.

When he heard this, Belisarius ordered one of his guards to put Theodosius away; but the latter learned of this in time to flee to Ephesus. For most of the servants, inspired by the weakness of the husband's character, were more anxious to please his wife than to show loyalty to him, and so betrayed the order he had given. But Constantine [a friend of Belisarius'], when he saw Belisarius's grief at what had befallen him, sympathized entirely except to comment, "I would have tried to kill the woman rather than the young man." Antonina heard of this, and hated him in secret. How malicious was her spite against him shall be shown; for she was a scorpion who could hide her sting.

But not long after this, by the enchantment either of philtres or of her caresses, she persuaded her husband that the charges against her were untrue. Without more ado he sent word to Theodosius to return, and promised to turn Macedonia and the two slave boys over to his wife. She first cruelly cut out their tongues, it is said, and then cut their bodies into little bits which were put into sacks and thrown into the sea. One of her slaves, Eugenius, who had already wrought the outrage on Silverius, helped her in this crime.

And it was not long after this that Belisarius was persuaded by his wife to kill Constantine. What happened at that time concerning Presidius and the daggers I have narrated in my previous books. For while Belisarius would have preferred to let Constantine alone, Antonina gave him no peace until his remark, which I have just repeated, was avenged. And as a result of this murder, much enmity was aroused against Belisarius in the hearts of the Emperor and all the most important of the Romans.

So matters progressed. But Theodosius said he was unable to return to Italy, where Belisarius and Antonina were now staying, unless Photius [Antonina's son, possibly by a previous marriage] were put out of the way. For this Photius was the sort who would bite if anyone got the better of him in anything, and he had reason to be choked with indignation at Theodosius. Though he was the rightful son, he was utterly disregarded while the other grew in power and riches: they say that from the two palaces at Carthage and Ravenna Theodosius had taken plunder amounting to a hundred centenaries, as he alone had been given the management of these conquered properties.

But Antonina, when she learned of Theodosius's fear, never ceased laying snares for her son and planning deadly plots against his welfare, until he saw he would have to escape to Constantinople if he wished to live. Then Theodosius came to Italy and her. There they stayed in the satisfaction of their love, unhindered by the complaisant husband; and later she took them both to Constantinople. There Theodosius became so worried lest the affair became generally known, that he was at his wit's end. He saw it would be impossible to fool everybody, as the woman was no longer able to conceal her passion and indulge it secretly, but thought nothing of being in fact and in reputation an avowed adulteress.
Therefore he went back to Ephesus, and having his head shaved after the religious custom, became a monk. Whereupon Antonina, insane over her loss, exhibited her grief by donning mourning; and went around the house shrieking and wailing, lamenting even in the presence of her husband what a good friend she had lost, how faithful, how tender, how loving, how energetic! In the end, even her spouse was won over to join in her sorrow. And so the poor wretch wept too, calling for his beloved Theodosius. Later he even went to the Emperor and implored both him and the Empress, till they consented to summon Theodosius to return, as one who was and would always be a necessity in the house of Belisarius.

But Theodosius refused to leave his monastery, saying he was completely resolved to give himself forever to the cloistered life. This noble pronouncement, however, was not entirely sincere, for he was aware that as soon as Belisarius left Constantinople, it would be possible for him to come secretly to Antonina. Which, indeed, he did.

Chapter IV: How Theodora Humiliated Belisarius

Soon after this, a further disaster befell [Belisarius]. The plague, which I have described elsewhere, became epidemic at Constantinople, and the Emperor Justinian was taken grievously ill; it was even said he had died of it. Rumor spread this report till it reached the Roman army camp. There some of the officers said that if the Romans tried to establish anyone else at Constantinople as Emperor, they would never recognize him. Presently, the Emperor's health bettered, and the officers of the army brought charges against each other, the generals Peter and John the Glutton alleging they had heard Belisarius and Buzes making the above declaration.

This hypothetical mutiny the indignant Queen took as intended by the two men to refer to herself. So she recalled all the officers to Constantinople to investigate the matter; and she summoned Buzes impromptu to her private quarters, on the pretext she wished to discuss with him matters of sudden urgency.

Now underneath the palace was an underground cellar, secure and labyrinthian, comparable to the infernal regions, in which most of those who gave offense to her were eventually entombed. And so Buzes was thrown into this oublielette, and there the man, though of consular rank, remained with no one cognizant of his fate. Neither, as he sat there in darkness, could he ever know whether it was day or night, nor could he learn from anyone else; for the man who each day threw him his food was dumb, and the scene was that of one wild beast confronting another. Everybody soon thought him dead, but no one dared to mention even his memory. But after two years and four months, Theodora took pity on the man and released him. Ever after he was half blind and sick in body. This is what she did to Buzes.

Belisarius, although none of the charges against him were proved, was at the insistence of the Empress relieved of his command by the Emperor; who appointed Martinus in his place as General of the armies of the East. Belisarius's lancers and shield-bearers, and such of his servants as were of military use, he ordered to be divided between the other generals and certain of the palace eunuchs. Drawing lots for these men and their arms, they portioned them as the chances fell. And his friends, and all who formerly had served him, were forbidden ever to visit Belisarius. It was a bitter sight, and one no one would ever have thought credible, to see Belisarius a private citizen in Constantinople, almost deserted, melancholy and miserable of countenance, and ever expectant of a further conspiracy to accomplish his death.

Then the Empress learned he had acquired great wealth in the East, and sent one of the eunuchs of the palace to confiscate it. Antonina, as I have told, was now quite out of temper with her husband, but on the most friendly and intimate terms with the Queen, since she had got rid of John of Cappadocia.
So, to please Antonina, Theodora arranged everything so that the wife would appear to have asked mercy for her husband, and from such peril to have saved his life; and the poor wretch not only became quite reconciled to her, but let her make him her humblest slave for having saved him from the Queen. And this is how that happened.

One morning, Belisarius went to the palace as usual with his few and pitiful followers. Finding the Emperor and Empress hostile, he was further insulted in their presence by baseborn and common men. Late in the evening he went home, often turning around as he withdrew and looking in every direction for those who might be advancing to put him to death. Accompanied by this dread, he entered his home and sat down alone upon his couch. His spirit broken, he failed even to remember the time when he was a man; sweating, dizzy and trembling, he counted himself lost; devoured by slavish fears and mortal worry, he was completely emasculated.

Antonina, who neither knew just what arrangement of his fate had been made nor much cared what would become of him, was walking up and down nearby pretending a heartburn; for they were not exactly on friendly terms. Meanwhile, an officer of the palace, Quadratus by name, had come as the sun went down, and passing through the outer hall, suddenly stood at the door of the men's apartments to say he had been sent here by the Empress. And when Belisarius heard that, he drew up his arms and legs onto the couch and lay down on his back, ready for the end. So far had all manhood left him.

Quadratus, however, approached only to hand him a letter from the Queen. And thus the letter read: "You know, Sir, your offense against us. But because I am greatly indebted to your wife, I have decided to dismiss all charges against you and give her your life. So for the future you may be of good cheer as to your personal safety and that of your property; but we shall know by what happens to you how you conduct yourself toward her."

When Belisarius read this intoxicated with joy and yearning to give evidence of his gratitude, he leapt from his couch and prostrated himself at the feet of his wife. With each hand fondling one of her legs, licking with his tongue the sole of first one of her feet and then the other, he cried that she was the cause of his life and of his safety: henceforth he would be her faithful slave, instead of her lord and master.

The Empress then gave thirty gold centenaries of his property to the Emperor, and returned what was left to Belisarius. This is what happened to the great general to whom destiny had not long before given both Gelimer and Vitiges to be captives of his spear! But the wealth that this subject of theirs had acquired had long ago gnawed jealous wounds in the hearts of Justinian and Theodora, who deemed it grown too big for any but the imperial coffers. And they said he had concealed most of Gelimer's and Vitiges's moneys, which by conquest belonged to the State and had handed over only a small fraction, hardly worth accepting by an Emperor. Yet, when they counted the labors the man had accomplished, and the cries of reproach they might arouse among the people, since they had no credible pretext for punishing him, they kept their peace: until now, when the Empress, discovering him out of his senses with terror, at one fell stroke managed to become mistress of all his fortune.

Chapter VIII: The Character and Appearance of Justinian

Now this went on not only in Constantinople, but in every city: for like any other disease, the evil, starting there, spread throughout the entire Roman Empire. But the Emperor was undisturbed by the trouble, even when it went on continually under his own eyes at the hippodrome. For he was very complacent and resembled most the silly ass, which follows, only shaking its ears, when one drags it by the bridle. As such Justinian acted, and threw everything into confusion.
As soon as he took over the rule from his uncle, his measure was to spend the public money without restraint, now that he had control of it. He gave much of it to the Huns who, from time to time, entered the state; and in consequence the Roman provinces were subject to constant incursions, for these barbarians, having once tasted Roman wealth, never forgot the road that led to it. And he threw much money into the sea in the form of moles, as if to master the eternal roaring of the breakers. For he jealously hurled stone breakwaters far out from the mainland against the onset of the sea, as if by the power of wealth he could outmatch the might of ocean.

He gathered to himself the private estates of Roman citizens from all over the Empire: some by accusing their possessors of crimes of which they were innocent, others by juggling their owners' words into the semblance of a gift to him of their property. And many, caught in the act of murder and other crimes, turned their possessions over to him and thus escaped the penalty for their sins.

Others, fraudulently disputing title to lands happening to adjoin their own, when they saw they had no chance of getting the best of the argument, with the law against them, gave him their equity in the claim so as to be released from court. Thus, by a gesture that cost him nothing, they gained his favor and were able illegally to get the better of their opponents.

I think this is as good a time as any to describe the personal appearance of the man. Now in physique he was neither tall nor short, but of average height; not thin, but moderately plump; his face was round, and not bad looking, for he had good color, even when he fasted for two days. To make a long description short, he much resembled Domitian, Vespasian's son. He was the one whom the Romans so hated that even tearing him into pieces did not satisfy their wrath against him, but a decree was passed by the Senate that the name of this Emperor should never be written, and that no statue of him should be preserved. And so this name was erased in all the inscriptions at Rome and wherever else it had been written, except only where it occurs in the list of emperors; and nowhere may be seen any statue of him in all the Roman Empire, save one in brass, which was made for the following reason.

Domitian's wife was of free birth and otherwise noble; and neither had she herself ever done wrong to anybody, nor had she assented in her husband's acts. Wherefore she was dearly loved; and the Senate sent for her, when Domitian died, and commanded her to ask whatever boon she wished. But she asked only this: to set up in his memory one brass image, wherever she might desire. To this the Senate agreed. Now the lady, wishing to leave a memorial to future time of the savagery of those who had butchered her husband, conceived this plan: collecting the pieces of Domitian's body, she joined them accurately together and sewed the body up again into its original semblance. Taking this to the statue makers, she ordered them to produce the miserable form in brass. So the artisans forthwith made the image, and the wife took it, and set it up in the street which leads to the Capitol, on the right hand side as one goes there from the Forum: a monument to Domitian and a revelation of the manner of his death until this day.

Justinian's entire person, his manner of expression and all of his features might be clearly pointed out in this statue.

Now such was Justinian in appearance; but his character was something I could not fully describe. For he was at once villainous and amenable; as people say colloquially, a moron. He was never truthful with anyone, but always guileful in what he said and did, yet easily hoodwinked by any who wanted to deceive him. His nature was an unnatural mixture of folly and wickedness. What in olden times a peripatetic philosopher said was also true of him, that opposite qualities combine in a man as in the mixing of colors. I will try to portray him, however, insofar as I can fathom his complexity.

This Emperor, then, was deceitful, devious, false, hypocritical, two-faced, cruel,
skilled in dissembling his thought, never moved to tears by either joy or pain, though he could summon them artfully at will when the occasion demanded, a liar always, not only offhand, but in writing, and when he swore sacred oaths to his subjects in their very hearing. Then he would immediately break his agreements and pledges, like the vilest of slaves, whom indeed only the fear of torture drives to confess their perjury. A faithless friend, he was a treacherous enemy, insane for murder and plunder, quarrelsome and revolutionary, easily led to anything evil, but never willing to listen to good counsel, quick to plan mischief and carry it out, but finding even the hearing of anything good distasteful to his ears.

How could anyone put Justinian's ways into words? These and many even worse vices were disclosed in him as in no other mortal nature seemed to have taken the wickedness of all other men combined and planted it in this man's soul. And besides this, he was too prone to listen to accusations; and too quick to punish. For he decided such cases without full examination, naming the punishment when he had heard only the accuser's side of the matter. Without hesitation he wrote decrees for the plundering of countries, sacking of cities, and slavery of whole nations, for no cause whatever. So that if one wished to take all the calamities which had befallen the Romans before this time and weigh them against his crimes, I think it would be found that more men had been murdered by this single man than in all previous history.

He had no scruples about appropriating other people's property, and did not even think any excuse necessary, legal or illegal, for confiscating what did not belong to him. And when it was his, he was more than ready to squander it in insane display, or give it as an unnecessary bribe to the barbarians. In short, he neither held on to any money himself nor let anyone else keep any: as if his reason were not avarice, but jealousy of those who had riches. Driving all wealth from the country of the Romans in this manner, he became the cause of universal poverty.

Now this was the character of Justinian, so far as I can portray it.

Chapter IX: How Theodora, Most Depraved of All Courtesans, Won His Love

He took a wife: and in what manner she was born and bred, and, wedded to this man, tore up the Roman Empire by the very roots, I shall now relate. Acacius was the keeper of wild beasts used in the amphitheater in Constantinople; he belonged to the Green faction and was nicknamed the Bearkeeper. This man, during the rule of Anastasius, fell sick and died, leaving three daughters named Comito, Theodora and Anastasia: of whom the eldest was not yet seven years old. His widow took a second husband, who with her undertook to keep up Acacius's family and profession. But Asterius, the dancing master of the Greens, on being bribed by another, removed this office from them and assigned it to the man who gave him the money. For the dancing masters had the power of distributing such positions as they wished.

When this woman saw the populace assembled in the amphitheater, she placed laurel wreaths on her daughters' heads and in their hands, and sent them out to sit on the ground in the attitude of suppliants. The Greens eyed this mute appeal with indifference; but the Blues were moved to bestow on the children an equal office, since their own animal-keeper had just died.

When these children reached the age of girlhood, their mother put them on the local stage, for they were fair to look upon; she sent them forth, however, not all at the same time, but as each one seemed to her to have reached a suitable age. Comito, indeed, had already become one of the leading hetaerae [high class prostitutes] of the day.

7 The Blues and Greens were two factions of the city, stemming from the Blue and Green chariot teams in the Hippodrome at Constantinople. Justinian, according to Procopius, was a fan of the Blues.
Theodora, the second sister, dressed in a little tunic with sleeves, like a slave girl, waited on Comito and used to follow her about carrying on her shoulders the bench on which her favored sister was wont to sit at public gatherings. Now Theodora was still too young to know the normal relation of man with maid, but consented to the unnatural violence of villainous slaves who, following their masters to the theater, employed their leisure in this infamous manner. And for some time in a brothel she suffered such misuse.

But as soon as she arrived at the age of youth, and was now ready for the world, her mother put her on the stage. Forthwith, she became a courtesan, and such as the ancient Greeks used to call a common one, at that: for she was not a flute or harp player, nor was she even trained to dance, but only gave her youth to anyone she met, in utter abandonment. Her general favors included, of course, the actors in the theater; and in their productions she took part in the low comedy scenes. For she was very funny and a good mimic, and immediately became popular in this art. There was no shame in the girl, and no one ever saw her dismayed: no role was too scandalous for her to accept without a blush.

She was the kind of comedienne who delights the audience by letting herself be cuffed and slapped on the cheeks, and makes them guffaw by raising her skirts to reveal to the spectators those feminine secrets here and there which custom veils from the eyes of the opposite sex. With pretended laziness she mocked her lovers, and coquettishly adopting ever new ways of embracing, was able to keep in a constant turmoil the hearts of the sophisticated. And she did not wait to be asked by anyone she met, but on the contrary, with inviting jests and a comic flaunting of her skirts herself tempted all men who passed by, especially those who were adolescent.

On the field of pleasure she was never defeated. Often she would go picnicking with ten young men or more, in the flower of their strength and virility, and dallied with them all, the whole night through. When they wearied of the sport, she would approach their servants, perhaps thirty in number, and fight a duel with each of these; and even thus found no allayment of her craving. Once, visiting the house of an illustrious gentleman, they say she mounted the projecting corner of her dining couch, pulled up the front of her dress, without a blush, and thus carelessly showed her wantonness. And though she flung wide three gates to the ambassadors of Cupid, she lamented that nature had not similarly unlocked the straits of her bosom, that she might there have contrived a further welcome to his emissaries.

Frequently, she conceived but as she employed every artifice immediately, a miscarriage was straightway effected. Often, even in the theater, in the sight of all the people, she removed her costume and stood nude in their midst, except for a girdle about the groin: not that she was abashed at revealing that, too, to the audience, but because there was a law against appearing altogether naked on the stage, without at least this much of a fig-leaf. Covered thus with a ribbon, she would sink down to the stage floor and recline on her back. Slaves to whom the duty was entrusted would then scatter grains of barley from above into the calyx of this passion flower, whence geese, trained for the purpose, would next pick the grains one by one with their bills and eat. When she rose, it was not with a blush, but she seemed rather to glory in the performance. For she was not only impudent herself, but endeavored to make everybody else as audacious. Often when she was alone with other actors she would undress in their midst and arch her back provocatively, advertising like a peacock both to those who had experience of her and to those who had not yet had that privilege her trained suppleness.

So perverse was her wantonness that she should have hid not only the customary part of her person, as other women do, but her face as well. Thus those who were intimate with her were straightway recognized from that very fact to be perverts, and any more respectable man who chanced upon her in the Forum.
avoided her and withdrew in haste, lest the hem of his mantle, touching such a creature, might be thought to share in her pollution. For to those who saw her, especially at dawn, she was a bird of ill omen. And toward her fellow actresses she was as savage as a scorpion: for she was very malicious.

Later, she followed Hecebolus, a Tyrian who had been made governor of Pentapolis, serving him in the basest of ways; but finally she quarreled with him and was sent summarily away. Consequently, she found herself destitute of the means of life, which she proceeded to earn by prostitution, as she had done before this adventure. She came thus to Alexandria, and then traversing all the East, worked her way to Constantinople; in every city plying a trade (which it is safer, I fancy, in the sight of God not to name too clearly) as if the Devil were determined there be no land on earth that should not know the sins of Theodora.

But when she came back to Constantinople, Justinian fell violently in love with her. At first he kept her only as a mistress, though he raised her to patrician rank. Through him Theodora was able immediately to acquire an unholy power and exceedingly great riches. She seemed to him the sweetest thing in the world, and like all lovers, he desired to please his charmer with every possible favor and requite her with all his wealth. The extravagance added fuel to the flames of passion. With her now to help spend his money he plundered the people more than ever, not only in the capital, but throughout the Roman Empire. As both of them had for a long time been of the Blue party, they gave this faction almost complete control of the affairs of state. It was long afterward that the worst of this evil was checked in the following manner.

Justinian had been ill for several days, and during this illness was in such peril of his life that it was even said he had died; and the Blues, who had been committing such crimes as I have mentioned, went so far as to kill Hypatius, a gentleman of no mean importance, in broad daylight in the Church of St. Sophia. The cry of horror at this crime came to the Emperor's ears, and everyone about him seized the opportunity of pointing out the enormity of what was going on in Justinian's absence from public affairs; and they enumerated from the beginning how many crimes had been committed. The Emperor then ordered the Prefect of the city to punish these offenses. This man was one Theodotus, nicknamed the Pumpkin. He made a thorough investigation and was able to apprehend many of the guilty and sentence them to death, though many others were not found out, and escaped. They were destined to perish later, together with the Roman Empire.

Justinian, unexpectedly restored to health, straightway undertook to put Theodotus to death as a poisoner and a magician. But since he had no proof on which to condemn the man, he tortured friends of his until they were compelled to say the words that would wrongfully ruin him. When everyone else stood to one side and only in silence lamented the plot against Theodotus, one man, Proclus the Quaestor, dared to say openly that the man was innocent of the charge against him, and in no way merited death. Thanks to him, Theodotus was permitted by the Emperor to be exiled to Jerusalem. But learning there that men were being sent to do away with him, he hid himself in the church for the rest of his life until he died. And this was the fate of Theodotus.

But after this, the Blues became the most prudent of men. For they ventured no longer to continue their offenses, even though they might have transgressed more fearlessly than before. And the proof of this is, that when a few of them later showed such courage, no punishment at all befell them. For those who had the power to punish, always gave these gangsters time to escape, tacitly encouraging the rest to trample upon the laws.

Chapter XVIII: How Justinian Killed a Trillion People
That Justinian was not a man, but a demon, as I have said, in human form, one might prove by considering the enormity of the evils he brought upon mankind. For in the monstrousness of his actions the power of a fiend is manifest. Certainly an accurate reckoning of all those whom he destroyed would be impossible, I think, for anyone but God to make. Sooner could one number, I fancy, the sands of the sea than the men this Emperor murdered. Examining the countries that he made desolate of inhabitants, I would say he slew a trillion people. For Libya, vast as it is, he so devastated that you would have to go a long way to find a single man, and he would be remarkable. Yet eighty thousand Vandals capable of bearing arms had dwelt there, and as for their wives and children and servants, who could guess their number? Yet still more numerous than these were the Mauretanians, who with their wives and children were all exterminated. And again, many Roman soldiers and those who followed them to Constantinople, the earth now covers; so that if one should venture to say that five million men perished in Libya alone, he would not, I imagine, be telling the half of it.

The reason for this was that after the Vandals were defeated, Justinian planned, not how he might best strengthen his hold on the country, nor how by safeguarding the interests of those who were loyal to him he might have the goodwill of his subjects: but instead he foolishly recalled Belisarius at once, on the charge that the latter intended to make himself King (an idea of which Belisarius was utterly incapable), and so that he might manage affairs there himself and be able to plunder the whole of Libya. Sending commissioners to value the province, he imposed grievous taxes where before there had been none. Whatever lands were most valuable, he seized, and prohibited the Arians from observing their religious ceremonies. Negligent toward sending necessary supplies to the soldiers, he was overstrict with them in other ways; wherefore mutinies arose resulting in the deaths of many. For he was never able to abide by established customs, but naturally threw everything into confusion and disturbance.

Italy, which is not less than thrice as large as Libya, was everywhere desolated of men, even worse than the other country; and from this the count of those who perished there may be imagined. The reason for what happened in Italy I have already made plain. All of his crimes in Libya were repeated here; sending his auditors to Italy, he soon upset and ruined everything.

The rule of the Goths, before this war, had extended from the land of the Gauls to the boundaries of Dacia, where the city of Sirmium is. The Germans held Cisalpine Gaul and most of the land of the Venetians, when the Roman army arrived in Italy. Sirmium and the neighboring country was in the hands of the Gepidae. All of these he utterly depopulated. For those who did not die in battle perished of disease and famine, which as usual followed in the train of war. Illyria and all of Thrace, that is, from the Ionian Gulf to the suburbs of Constantinople, including Greece and the Chersonese, were overrun by the Huns, Slavs and Antes, almost every year, from the time when Justinian took over the Roman Empire; and intolerable things they did to the inhabitants. For in each of these incursions, I should say, more than two hundred thousand Romans were slain or enslaved, so that all this country became a desert like that of Scythia.

Such were the results of the wars in Libya and in Europe. Meanwhile the Saracens were continuously making inroads on the Romans of the East, from the land of Egypt to the boundaries of Persia; and so completely did their work, that in all this country few were left, and it will never be possible, I fear, to find out how many thus perished. Also the Persians under Chosroes three times invaded the rest of this Roman territory, sacked the cities, and either killing or carrying away the men they captured in the cities and country, emptied the land of inhabitants every time they invaded it. From the time when they invaded Colchis, ruin has befallen themselves and the Lazi and the Romans.
For neither the Persians nor the Saracens, the Huns or the Slavs or the rest of the barbarians, were able to withdraw from Roman territory undamaged. In their inroads, and still more in their sieges of cities and in battles, where they prevailed over opposing forces, they shared in disastrous losses quite as much. Not only the Romans, but nearly all the barbarians thus felt Justinian's bloodthirstiness. For while Chosroes himself was bad enough, as I have duly shown elsewhere, Justinian was the one who each time gave him an occasion for the war. For he took no heed to fit his policies to an appropriate time, but did everything at the wrong moment: in time of peace or truce he ever craftily contrived to find pretext for war with his neighbors; while in time of war, he unreasonably lost interest, and hesitated too long in preparing for the campaign, grudging the necessary expenses; and instead of putting his mind on the war, gave his attention to stargazing and research as to the nature of God. Yet he would not abandon hostilities, since he was so bloodthirsty and tyrannical, even when thus unable to conquer the enemy because of his negligence in meeting the situation.

So while he was Emperor, the whole earth ran red with the blood of nearly all the Romans and the barbarians. Such were the results of the wars throughout the whole Empire during this time. But the civil strife in Constantinople and in every other city, if the dead were reckoned, would total no smaller number of slain than those who perished in the wars, I believe. Since justice and impartial punishment were seldom directed against offenders, and each of the two factions tried to win the favor of the Emperor over the other, neither party kept the peace. Each, according to his smile or his frown, was now terrified, now encouraged. Sometimes they attacked each other in full strength, sometimes in smaller groups, or even lay in ambush against the first single man of the opposite party who came along. For thirty-two years, without ever ceasing, they performed outrages against each other, many of them being punished with death by the municipal Prefect. However, punishment for these offenses was mostly directed against the Greens.

Furthermore the persecution of the Samaritans and the so-called heretics filled the Roman realm with blood. Let this present recapitulation suffice to recall what I have described more fully a little while since. Such were the things done to all mankind by the demon in flesh for which Justinian, as Emperor, was responsible. But what evils he wrought against men by some hidden power and diabolic force I shall now relate.

During his rule over the Romans, many disasters of various kinds occurred: which some said were due to the presence and artifices of the Devil, and others considered were effected by the Divinity, Who, disgusted with the Roman Empire, had turned away from it and given the country up to the Old One. The Scirtus River flooded Edessa, creating countless sufferings among the inhabitants, as I have elsewhere written. The Nile, rising as usual, but not subsiding in the customary season, brought terrible calamities to the people there, as I have also previously recounted. The Cydnus inundated Tarsus, covering almost the whole city for many days, and did not subside until it had done irreparable damage.

Earthquakes destroyed Antioch, the leading city of the East; Seleucia, which is situated nearby; and Anazarbus, most renowned city in Cilicia. Who could number those that perished in these metropoles? Yet one must add also those who lived in Ibora; in Amasea, the chief city of Pontus; in Polobota in Phrygia, called Polymede by the Pisidians; in Lychnidus in Epirus; and in Corinth: all thickly inhabited cities from of old. All of these were destroyed by earthquakes during this time, with a loss of almost all their inhabitants. And then came the plague, which I have previously mentioned, killing half at least of those who had survived the earthquakes.