

A History in Anecdotes: Tales of the Triumviral Proscriptions
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1. Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar* 4.1.1-6

ANTONY These many then shall die; their names are pricked.
 OCTAVIUS Your brother too must die; consent you, Lepidus?
 LEPIDUS I do consent--
 OCTAVIUS Prick him down, Antony.
 LEPIDUS Upon condition Publius shall not live,
 Who is your sister's son, Mark Antony.
 ANTONY He shall not live; look, with a spot I damn him.

2. provisions of the edict (see App. *B.Civ.* 4.8-11)

1. anyone who helped a proscribed escape or harbored him would be proscribed also;
2. those who brought the head of a victim would receive a large cash reward—or, if a slave, a lesser cash reward and freedom;
3. informers would be rewarded also.

3. “The material is plentiful, and many Romans have composed accounts of them for themselves in numerous books; but for reasons of space I shall place on record, by way of summary, only a few instances of each kind...” (App. *B.Civ.* 4.16, trans. Carter)

the tales are given at 4.17-29 (stories of death) and 4.36-51 (stories of escape)

also stories at Val. Max. 5.3.4 (Cicero), 5.7.3 (Octavius Balbus), 6.7.2 (Q. Lucretius Vespillo), 6.7.3 (Cornelius Lentulus Cruscullio), 6.8.5 (C. Plotius Plancus), 6.8.6 (Urbinius Panapio), 6.8.7 (Antius Restio), 7.3.8 (Volusius), 7.3.9 (Sentius Saturninus Vetulo), 9.5.4 (Caesetius Rufus), 9.11.5 (C. Toranius), 9.11.6 (L. Villius Annalis), 9.11.7 (Vettius Salassus)

and see Pliny *NH* 7.134 (L. Fidustius), 13.25 (L. Plotius Plancus), 34.6 (Verres), 37.81 (Nonius); Dio 47.10-11 (eight stories all together), and 47.7.4-5 (Titus Vinus) and 47.8.3-5 (Cicero); Macr. *Sat.* 1.11.16-20 (Urbinius Panapio, Labienus, Antius Restio).

4. “This nonetheless must be observed: that wives showed the greatest loyalty to the proscribed; freedmen a moderate amount; slaves some; sons none.” (Vell. Pat. 2.67.2)

Appian's tales overlapping with Velleius Paterculus

	Stories of Death: first catalogue (4.17-29)	Stories of Escape: second catalogue (4.36-51)
wives	chs. 23-4	chs. 39-40
freedmen	ch. 26	ch. 44
slaves	ch. 26	ch. 43
sons	chs. 18 and 21	ch. 41-2

“I have mentioned this woman (i.e., Ligarius’ wife) here, because she failed in her attempt to save husband’s life, and committed suicide to accompany him. I shall write about the women whose love for their husbands achieved its aim in my section on the men whose lives were saved.” (App. *B.Civ.* 4.23)

5. the wife of Vettius Salassus

Salassus, who was on the run and did not know what to do, entered Rome at night, when he thought the danger had passed. His house had been sold, and the only person to recognize him was the doorkeeper who had been sold along with the house. The doorkeeper took him into his quarters and promised to hide him and feed him so far as he could. Salassus told him to summon his wife from her house. She pretended that although she was anxious to come, she was afraid because to do so at night would be suspicious even to her maids, and said she would come in the morning. At daybreak she went to fetch the executioners, while the doorkeeper ran back to her house to hurry her up, thinking she was simply being slow. Salassus feared that the doorkeeper had gone off to spring a trap on him and ran up to the roof to await events. When he saw, not the doorkeeper, but his wife bringing the executioners he threw himself off the roof. (App. *B.Civ.* 4.24; see also the version at Val. Max. 9.11.7)

6. Turia and Q. Lucretius Vespillo

Proscribed by the triumvirs, Q. Lucretius was hidden by his wife Turia between the ceiling and the roof of their bedroom. So with one slave girl for accomplice she kept him safe from imminent death not without great risk to herself. When others of the proscribed barely escaped in alien and hostile regions at the price of cruel tortures of body and mind, he, thanks to her extraordinary fidelity, kept his life in his bedroom and the bosom of his spouse. (Val. Max. 6.7.2, trans. Shackleton-Bailey)

Lucretius roamed about with two faithful slaves but was forced by lack of food to go back to his wife in Rome, carried in a litter by the slaves as a weakened man would be. One of the slaves broke his leg and Lucretius went on by supporting himself on the other man. When he reached the gates, where his own father had been arrested after being proscribed by Sulla, he saw a detachment of soldiers running out. Overwhelmed by the coincidence, he hid with the slave in a tomb. Some tomb-robbers came to rifle the tombs, and the slave allowed the robbers to strip him while Lucretius escaped to the gates. Lucretius waited for him there, and after sharing his own clothing with him reached his wife and was concealed by her between double roofs, until friends were able to secure his pardon from the proscribers. Afterwards, when peace came, he held a consulship. (App. *B.Civ.* 4.44)

7. Quid ego nunc interiora [no]stra et recondita consilia s[e]rmonesque arcanos eruam? ut repentinis nu[n]tiis ad praesentia et imminetia pericula evocatus tuis consiliis cons[er]vatus sim?—ut neque audac[i]us experiri casus temere passa sis et mod[es]tiora cogitanti fida recaptacula pararis sociosque consilioru[m] tuorum ad me servandum delegeris sororem tuam et virum eius C. Cl[uv]ium, coniuncto omnium periculo? Infinita sint, si attingere coner.—Sat [es]t mihi tibi que salutariter m[e] latuisse.] (2.4-10)

Why should I now divulge our private and hidden plans and our secret conversations? How I was saved by your plans when I was provoked by unexpected news to court immediate and imminent danger; how you did not allow me to tempt fate in a rash way; how you made me think more calmly and prepared a secure hiding place for me; how you made your sister and her husband, Gaius Cluvius, partners in your plans to save me, at a risk shared between all of you. It would be an endless task, if I tried to touch on everything. It is enough for me and you that I was safely hidden.

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