

quidve trahat nos ad amicitias, usus rectumne;
or what draws us to friendships, interest or virtue

et quæ sit natura boni,
(moral rectitude;) and what is the nature of good,

quidque summum ejus. Inter hæc,
what also the sum of it (its perfection.) Amidst these

vicinus Cervius garrit aniles
(meanwhile,) our neighbor Cervius chats away old

fabellas ex re. Nam si
stories arising from the subject (of conversation.) For if

quis ignarus laudat sollicitas
any one foolishly (ignorantly) praises the care-haunted

opes Arelli, sic incipit:
treasures of Arellius, thus he begins:

“Rusticus mus fertur olim accepisse
“A country mouse is said once upon a time to have received

urbanum murem paupere cavo, vetus hospes
a city mouse into his poor cell, an old host

veteram amicum: asper, et attentivè
his old friend: rough (a blunt fellow,) and attentive

quæsitis; tamen ut solveret arctum
to what he has acquired; yet that he could open his narrow

animum hospitii. Quid
soul in acts of hospitality. Why (what need of)

multa? Ille invidit neque sepositi ciceris,
many words? He grudged him neither the hoarded nut,

nec longæ avenæ: et ferens aridum acinum
nor the long oat-grain: and bringing a dry raisin

ore, dedit, semesaque
in his mouth, presented it (to him,) and the half-eaten

frusta lardi, cupiens, varia
scraps of bacon, desiring, by his varied (the variety of the)

cæna, vincere fastidia, male
supper, to overcome the squeamishness of his guest, scarcely

tangentis superbo dente singula: quum
touching with his dainty tooth each separate dish: when

pater domus ipse porrectus in horna
the master of the house, himself stretched on the fresh

palea esset ador loliumque, relinquens
straw, was eating coarse corn and darnel, leaving

meliora dapibus.
the more delicate morsels of the entertainment (for his guest.)

Tandem urbanus ad hunc: ‘Quid
At length the city mouse (says) to him: ‘How

juvat te, amice,’ inquit, ‘vivere patientem
can it delight you, friend,’ says he, ‘to live contented

dorso prærupti nemoris? Vin’ tu
on the ridge of a rugged thicket? Will not you

præponere homines que urbem feris sylvis?
prefer men and the city to the wild woods?

Crede mihi. Carpe viam
Trust to me (let me advise you.) Take your journey

comes: quando terrestria
as a fellow-traveller (come along with me:) since terrestrial

vivunt sortita mortales animas,
animals live having obtained as their lot mortal souls,

neque est ulla fuga leti
neither is there any avoiding of (escape from) death

aut magno aut parvo. Quocirca, bone,
either for the great or small. Wherefore, good sir,

dum licet, vive beatus in jucundis
while it is permitted (you,) live happy in agreeable

rebus: vive memor quam brevis ævi
circumstances: live mindful of what short existence

sis.’ Ubi hæc dicta pepulere
you are.’ When these words impelled

agrestem, exilit levis domo:
the country mouse, he springs out nimbly from his house:

inde ambo peragunt propositum iter, aventes
then they both pursue their destined journey, wishing

subrepere mœnia urbis nocturni.
to creep stealthily within the walls of the city in the night.

Jamque nox tenebat medium spatium cœli;
And now the night possessed the middle region of the sky;

quum uterque ponit vestigia in locuplete domo:
when they both set foot in a wealthy mansion:

ubi vestis tincta rubro cocco canderet
where a carpet dyed with crimson coccus glittered upon

eburnos lectos: multaue fercula superessent de
the ivory couches: and many fragments remained of

magna cœna, quæ hesternæ inerant
a great supper, which being left from yesterday were

canistris exstructis procul. Ergo ubi locavit
in baskets piled upon one another. Then when he had placed

agrestem porrectum purpurea veste, veluti
his country friend stretched on a purple carpet, like

succinctus cursitat,
one girded for his work (a nimble host) he runs about,

continuatque dapes: nec non verniliter
and continues the courses: and also like a servant (with

affected civility) fungitur officiis ipsis.
performs all the ceremonies himself.

prælibans omne quod adfert.
first tasting of everything that he brings (serves up.)

Ille cubans gaudet mutata sorte,
The other reclining rejoices in his changed condition,

agitque convivam lætum bonis rebus;
and plays the part of the guest delighted with the good cheer;

quum subito ingens strepitus valvarum
when suddenly a great rattling at the folding doors

excussit utrumque lectis. Pavidè
drove both from their couches. Terrified (they began;

currere per totum conclave, que exanimè magis
to run all about the room, and half dead more and more

trepidare, simul alta domus personuit
to tremble, as soon as the lofty house resounded with (the

Molossis canibus. Tum ait
barking of) Molossian (mastiff) dogs. Thereupon says

rusticus: ‘Haud est mihi opus hac vita,
the country mouse: ‘I have no desire for such a life,

et valeas: sylvæ cavusque tatus ab insidiis
and so farewell: my wood and cave, safe from snares,

solabitur me tenui ervo.’”
shall comfort me with my humble store.’”