

## *Tiberius Cunctator: Fabius Maximus in Suetonius' Life of Tiberius*

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**1. Suet. Tib. 21.5:** Ordinem aestivorum tuorum ego vero <laudo>, mi Tiberi, et inter tot rerum difficultates καὶ τοσαύτην ἀποθυμίαν τῶν στρατευομένων non potuisse quemquam prudentius gerere se quam tu gesseris, existimo. Ii quoque qui tecum fuerunt omnes confitentur versum illum in te posse dici, ‘**unus homo nobis vigilando restituit rem.**’

In truth I praise the conduct of your summer campaigns, dear Tiberius, and I am sure that no one could have acted with better judgment than you did amid so many difficulties and such apathy of your army. All who were with you agree that the well-known line could be applied to you: “One restored the republic to us man by being attentive.” (unless noted, all translations my own)

**2. Ennius Ann. fr. 363-5 Skutsch:**  
**Unus homo nobis cunctando restituit rem.**  
Noenum rumores ponebat ante salutem.  
Ergo postque magisque viri nunc gloria claret.

**One man restored the republic to us by delaying.**  
He did not place ill-repute before safety.  
Therefore both afterwards and now the glory of the man shines.

### **3. CIL 11.1828 = CIL I<sup>2</sup> p.193, no. 3 = ILS 56 = InscrIt 13.3.80 (text drawn from EDCS)**

[Q(uintus) Fabius]  
Q(uinti) f(ilius) Maximus  
dictator bis, co(n)s(ul) V, cen=  
sor, interrex II, aed(ilis) cur(ulis),  
q(uaestor) b(is), tr(ibunus) mil(itum) II, pontifex, augur. 5  
Primo consulatu Ligures sube=  
git; ex iis triumphavit. Tertio et  
quarto Hannibalem compluri=  
bus victori(i)s ferocem **subsequen=  
do coercuit.** Dictator magistro 10  
equitum Minucio, quoius popu=  
lus imperium cum dictatoris  
imperio aequaverat, et exercitui  
profligato subvenit et eo nomi=  
ne ab exercitu Minuciano pa=  
ter appellatus est. Consul quin=  
tum Tarentum cepit, triumphha=  
vit. **Dux aetatis suae cautissi=  
mus et re[i] militaris peritissimus**  
**habitus est.** Princeps in senatum 20  
duobus lustris lectus est.

[Quintus Fabius] Maximus, son of Quintus, dictator twice, consul five times, censor, *interrex* twice, curule aedile, quaestor twice, tribune of the soldiers twice, pontifex, augur. In his first consulship he subjugated the Ligurians; from this he celebrated a triumph. In his third and fourth consulships he checked Hannibal, fierce from his many victories, by following him closely. As dictator he aided

Minucius, his master of horse, whose and command the people had leveled with the command of the dictator, the army when it had been routed and was called “father” by Minucius’ army. As consul for the fifth time he captured Tarentum and celebrated a triumph. He was considered the most cautious leader of his age, and the most experienced in military matters. He was selected as the leader of the senate in two *lustra*.

**4. Suet. Aug. 25.4:** Nihil autem minus perfecto duci quam festinationem temeritatemque convenire arbitrabatur. Crebro itaque illa iactabat, σπεῦδε βραδέως, ἀσφαλῆς γὰρ ἐστ’ ἀμενεΐων ἢ θρασὺς στρατηλάτης, et ‘sat celeriter fieri quidquid fiat satis bene.’

**5. App. Hann. 15.13:** ὁ δὲ Μινούκιος, αὐτοῦ καταγνοὺς ἀπειρίαν, ἀπέθετο τὴν ἀρχήν, καὶ τὸ μέρος τοῦ στρατοῦ παρέδωκε τῷ Φαβίῳ, ἡγουμένῳ, πρὸς ἄνδρα τεχνίτην μάχης ἕνα καιρὸν εἶναι τὴν ἀνάγκην. Οὗ δὴ καὶ ὁ Σεβαστὸς ὕστερον πολλάκις ἐμέμνητο, οὐκ ὦν εὐχερῆς οὐδ’ οὗτος ἐς μάχας μᾶλλον τόλμη ἢ τέχνη χρῆσθαι.

**6. Suet. Tib. 24.1:** Principatum, quamvis neque occupare confestim **neque** agere **dubitasset**, [et] statione militum hoc est vi et specie dominationis assumpta, diu tamen recusavit impudentissimo mimo nunc adhortantis amicos increpans ut ignaros quanta belva esset imperium, nunc precantem senatum et procumbentem sibi ad genua ambiguus responsis et **callida cunctatione** suspendens, ut quidam patientiam rumperent atque unus in tumultu proclamaret, ‘aut agat aut desistat!’

**7. Suet. Tib. 25.1:** **Cunctandi causa erat metus undique imminetium discriminum**, ut saepe lupum se auribus tenere diceret

**8. Suet. Tib. 28.1:** Sed et adversus convicia malosque rumores et famosa de se ac suis carmina firmus ac patiens subinde iactabat in civitate libera linguam mentemque liberam esse debere...

He thought that there was nothing that befitted a leader less than haste and rashness. Thus, he frequently used to say, ‘hasten slowly!’, ‘for a safe commander is better than a bold one,’ and ‘whatever is done well is done quickly enough.’

Then Minucius, recognizing his own inexperience, laid down his command and handed his part of the army over to Fabius, who believed that for a skilled commander the only time to fight is when it is necessary. Later on, in fact, Augustus brought to mind this maxim, who was not reckless, nor did he prefer to win by boldness rather than by craft.

**Although he did not hesitate** to take on and exercise the power of the principate immediately, with a military guard of soldiers assumed (that is to say, with the force and appearance of domination), he nevertheless refused the principate in title for a long time, at one moment upbraiding his friends who urged him to accept it with barefaced hypocrisy, saying that they did not realize what a monster the empire was, at another keeping the senate in suspense by his evasive answers and **calculating delaying** when they implored him to yield and fell at his feet, so that some lost their patience and one shouted out in the tumult, ‘Either do it or be done with it!’

**The cause of his delaying was fear of the dangers which threatened him on every side**, and often led him to say that he was ‘holding a wolf by the ears’

But when it came to insults, hostile rumors, and slanderous songs about himself and his family he calmly and patiently would say that in a free state speech and thought ought to be free...

**9. Suet. Tib. 66.1:** Urebant insuper anxiam mentem varia undique convicia, nullo non damnatorum omne probri genus coram vel per libellos in orchestra positos ingerente.

The varied insults coming from all sides burned his anxious mind, as each and every one of the condemned headed every kind of abuse to his face and through signs set up in the orchestra

**10. Suet. Tib. 50.1:** Odium adversus necessitudines in Druso primum fratre detexit, prodita eius epistula qua secum de **cogendo ad restituendam libertatem Augusto** agebat....

He uncovered the hatred he felt towards his family first in his brother Drusus, when he produced a letter in which he discussed with him compelling Augustus to restore freedom....

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