

me: 'I pity and love her. I will not put her away – this were selfish. How can her follies injure me? We are what we are, and no one can harm us but ourselves.

Learning from other people's mistakes

The mistakes of those near us afford us an opportunity for self-control – we will not imitate their errors, but rather strive to avoid them. In this way what might be a great humiliation has its benefits."

Let no one imagine, however, that the tolerance of Antoninus was the soft acquiescence of weakness. After his death Marcus wrote: "Whatsoever excellent thing he had planned to do, he carried out with a persistency that nothing could divert. If he punished men, it was by allowing them to be led by their own folly – his foresight, wisdom, and calm deliberation were beyond those of any man I ever knew".

The studious, direct and manly ways of Marcus were not cast aside when he put on the toga virilis, as Faustina had predicted. In spite of the difference in their ages, Antoninus and Marcus mutually sustained each other.

Marcus and Little Faustina

Little Faustina was much more like her father than her mother, and very early showed her preference for her father's society. Marcus was her playmate and taught her to ride a pony astride, just as her father had taught him. The three would often ride over to the village of Lorium, twelve miles from Rome, where Antoninus had a summer villa. At Lanuvium, near at hand, the Emperor spent a part of his time, and he would occasionally join the party and listen to Marcus recite from Cicero and Cæsar.

Marcus become the prefect

When Marcus was sixteen, Hadrian appointed him prefect of festivities in Rome, to take the place of the regular officer, a man of years, who was out of the city. So well did Marcus fill the place and make up his report, that when they again met, the old Emperor kissed his cheek, calling him, "My brave Verissimus," and said, "If I had a son, I would want him just like you".

Marcus becomes the emperor

Not long after this the Emperor was taken violently ill. He called his counselors about his bedside and directed that Aurelius Antoninus should be his successor, and that, further, Antoninus should adopt Marcus Verus, so that Marcus should

succeed Aurelius Antoninus. Hadrian loved Marcus for his own sake, and he loved him, too, for the sake of the grandfather, his old soldier comrade, Annus Verus; and beside that he was intent on preserving the Spanish strain. In a short time Hadrian passed away, and Aurelius Antoninus was crowned Emperor of Rome, and Marcus Verus, aged seventeen, slim, slender and studious, took the name, Marcus Aurelius.



[The Story of Marcus Aurelius is from Elbert Hubbard's *Little Journeys to The Homes of The Great, Vol. 8*. To make it easier to read we have broken down long paragraphs into short ones and added subtitles. The text is unaltered.]

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June 5, 2021

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