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Nota di contenuto	; 1. Twelve steps to haven. Book 1: Letters 1-11 -- ; 2. Dropping in (it) at Seneca's. With text and translation of Letter 12 -- ; 3. You can get used to anything. Books 2-10 -- ; 4. The long and winding mode. Books 14-20+ -- ; 5. Booking us in. Letters 84-88 -- ; 6. Now and then; here and there: at Scipio's. Text and translation of Letter 86 -- ; 7. Bound for Vatia's. Text and translation of Letter 55 -- ; 8. Knocking the self: genuflexion, villafication, Vatia's. Letter 55 -- ; 9. The world of the bath-house: Scipio's. Scipio in Letter 86; with: Horace's common scents -- ; 10. The appliance of science: Scipio's. Aegialus in Letter 86; with: Virgil's funny farm.

John Henderson explores three letters of Seneca describing visits to Roman villas, and surveys the whole collection to show how these villas work as designs for contrasting lives. Seneca's own place is ageing drastically; a recent Epicurean's paradise is a seductive oasis away from the dangers of Nero's Rome; once a fortress of the dour Rome of yesteryear, the legendary Scipio's lair was now a shrine to the old morality: Seneca revels in its primitive bath-house, dark and cramped, before exploring the garden with the present owner. Seneca brings the philosophical epistle to Latin literature, creating models for moralizing which feature self-criticism, parody and re-animated myth. Virgil and Horace come in for rough handling, as the Latin moralist wrests ethical practice and writing away from Greek gurus and texts, and into critical thinking within a Roman context. Here is powerful teaching on metaphor and translation, on self-transformation and cultural tradition.
