

39. YOUR TEETH! : TO EGNATIUS



gnatius [p. 210], because he has snow-white teeth,
smiles all the time. If you're a defendant
in court, when the counsel draws tears,
he smiles: if you're in grief at the pyre
of pious sons, the lone lorn mother weeping,
he smiles. Whatever it is, wherever it is,
whatever he's doing, he smiles: he's got a disease,
neither polite, I would say, nor charming.
So a reminder to you, from me, good Egnatius.
If you were a *Sabine* [p. 231] or *Tiburtine* [p. 236]
or a fat Umbrian, or plump Etruscan,
or dark toothy *Lanuvian* [p. 217], or from north of the Po,
and I'll mention my own Veronese too,
or whoever else clean their teeth religiously,
I'd still not want you to smile all the time:
there's nothing more foolish than foolishly smiling.
Now you're Spanish: in the country of Spain
what each man pisses, he's used to brushing
his teeth and red gums with, every morning,
so the fact that your teeth are so polished
just shows you're the more full of piss.