

## 67. OF SOMEONE'S ADULTEROUS DOOR



hail, sweet door, pleasing to a husband, pleasing  
to a father, and may *Jupiter*<sup>[p. 216]</sup> add his virtuous power to you,  
who served *Balbus*<sup>[p. 202]</sup> faithfully, they say, for a good while,  
when the old man owned the house himself,  
and served the son, on the contrary, quite badly, it's said,  
when you became a wedding gift with the old man dead.  
Come on, tell us, why exhibit this change  
deserting old loyalties of ownership?  
'It's not my fault (I please this *Caecilius*<sup>[p. 203]</sup>, I'm handed  
over to now), though it's said to be mine,  
it's no sin of mine that anyone can say anything:  
truly a door of your people answers you,  
me, to whom whenever some ill deed's discovered  
all cry out: "It's your fault, door."  
It's not enough to say that, with a word,  
but you must do what anyone might see and know.  
'How can I? No one asks or takes the trouble to know?'  
I will, tell me, don't hesitate.  
'Well first, the virgin, they say, who was handed over to us,  
was false. The husband wasn't the first to touch her,  
he whose sword hangs limper than a tender beet,  
never lifting the middle of his tunic:  
but they say the father violated his son's bed,  
and disgraced the unfortunate house,

either because his impious mind burned with blind lust,  
or because the son was useless, with barren seed,  
so it was necessary to search for one more vigorous,  
who could undo her virgin tie.'

You tell of an illustrious father with amazing piety.  
who comes in his own son's lap.

'And Brescia under the cliffs of *Cycnea* [p. 209],  
that golden *Mella* [p. 219] with sweet water runs by,  
Brescia dear mother of my Verona, says  
he isn't the only one known to have had her,  
but speaks of *Postumius* [p. 228] and *Cornelius* [p. 207] with passion,  
with whom she committed wicked adultery.

Here someone will have said? "How do you know,  
door, never allowed to leave your master's threshold,  
or overhear people, but fixed to this post,  
so accustomed to opening and closing the house?"

I've often heard her alone in a furtive voice  
speak to her maids about her sins,  
the names I've said being spoken, she expecting  
that I'd have neither speech nor hearing.

Besides, she added, someone else, whose name  
I don't want to say, lest he raise his red eyebrow.  
He's a tall man, who fought a great lawsuit once,  
about a false pregnancy in a lying womb.'