

Please open the door
and give me a kiss.
You got me this way;
don't leave me like this.

*He waits, then knocks as the Hag crosses quickly
to a point just behind him.*

HAG
I hear you knocking. Looking for me?

EPIGENES
Turning violently.

What gives

you that idea . . . uh, sir or madam, as the case
may be?

HAG
You nearly broke down my door. The latch
is flapping.

EPIGENES
It wasn't me, lady, I'd die before
I'd touch your latch.

HAG
With that torch, you must be looking
for somebody—who?

EPIGENES
I'm, uh, trying to deliver a warrant.*

HAG
Pretty nice subpoena you've got. Perhaps
I can serve it for you?

EPIGENES
I'll handle this myself.

HAG
I know the neighborhood. Lad like you needs help
in these parts.

EPIGENES
I'd really prefer to pull this off
alone.

HAG
Oh, no. I insist. Forget your pride.
Besides, you can help me with my case.

EPIGENES
But, lady, you're not
on the docket!



HAG
It's been a while.

EPIGENES
We've built up such

a backlog . . .

HAG
I see.

EPIGENES . . . that we've had to defer all actions of more than sixty years' standing till there's another sitting. We're only opening cases where the matter at hand is under twenty years old. I suggest you file your affidavit . . .

HAG
Too tender.

EPIGENES . . . and wait.

HAG
No, honey. That was the old procedure. Under this new regime, you have to process our cases first.

EPIGENES
Oh, no. I can pass my turn. It's like the rules in craps.

HAG
Did you pass your turn at dinner? Just can that crap and let's get rolling.

EPIGENES
I'm afraid

I don't understand.
Turning back to the door of House III.
Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got some pressing business behind this door. I'll knock.

HAG
Grabbing him away and spinning him around.
Enter by the main door only. So bang away on this.

EPIGENES
But that's a triumphal archway. How would I know if I'd knocked or not?

HAG
Fess up; you love me.
You're just surprised they let me out.

EPIGENES
I am.

HAG
It's madness. My reputation's ruined! But I don't care. So pucker up.

EPIGENES
I'm paralyzed; my pucker's stuck. And what about your lover?

HAG
Lover?

EPIGENES
The eminent artist.

HAG
What artist?

EPIGENES
The still-life man. * The one who lays out those tasteful arrangements of corpses. Once he catches you out, you're dead.

Shooing her away.
So quick, now. Back inside.

Balking.
HAG
I know what you're up to.

EPIGENES
And I sure as hell know what you're up to. And the answer, lady, is no.

HAG
And I sure as heaven got you in the draw. I refuse to let you go.

EPIGENES
You're out of your head, you relic!

HAG
Poor fevered lad. I'm putting you to bed. My bed.

END