

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0112%3Aact%3D1%3Ascene%3D2>

Enter DEMEA.
(...)

MICIO

aside. Did I not say it would be so? *To DEMEA.* What has he been doing?

DEMEA

What has he been doing? He, who is ashamed of nothing, and fears no one, nor thinks that any law can control him. But I pass by what has been previously done: what a thing he has just perpetrated!

MICIO

Why, what is it?

DEMEA

He has broken open a door,¹ and forced his way into another person's house, beaten to death the master himself, and all the household, and carried off a wench whom he had a fancy for. All people are exclaiming that it was a most disgraceful proceeding. How many, Micio, told me of this as I was coming here? It is in everybody's mouth. In fine, if an example must be cited, does he not see his brother giving his attention to business, and living frugally and soberly in the country? No action of his is like this. When I say this to him, Micio, I say it to you. You allow him to be corrupted.

MICIO

Never is there any thing more unreasonable than a man who wants experience, who thinks nothing right except what he himself has done.

DEMEA

What is the meaning of that?

MICIO

Because, Demea, you misjudge these matters. It is no heinous crime, believe me, for a young man to intrigue or to drink; it is not; nor yet for him to break open a door. If neither I nor you did so, it was poverty that did not allow us to do so. Do you now claim that as a merit to yourself which you then did from necessity? That is unfair; for if we had had the means to do so, we should have done the same. And, if you were a man, you would now suffer that other son of yours to act thus now, while his age will excuse it, rather than, when he has got you, after long wishing it, out of the way, he should still do so, at a future day, and at an age more unsuited.

¹ **Broken open a door:** The works of Ovid and Plautus show that it was no uncommon thing for riotous young men to break open doors; Ovid even suggests to the lover the expediency of getting into the house through the windows.

