



of praetor,<sup>13</sup> he very steadfastly preferred a dignified life out of the public eye rather than this political service—or shall I say political turmoil—of ours.<sup>14</sup>

His maternal grandmother is Serrana Procula, from the municipality of Patavium.<sup>15</sup> You know the puritanism of that area; Serrana, however, is a model of strictness even to the Patavians. And he has, for an uncle, Publius Acilius, a man of almost unique dignity, good judgment, and integrity. To sum up, there is nothing in his entire family which would not make you happy even in your own.

Acilius himself possesses an abundance of energy and diligence, combined with the greatest modesty. He has already passed very creditably through the offices of quaestor, tribune, and praetor<sup>16</sup> and has thus already spared you the necessity of campaigning for him.<sup>17</sup> He has the countenance of a gentleman, a very healthy and ruddy complexion, an aristocratic attractiveness in his whole body, and a certain senatorial elegance. These are features which I think should not be overlooked, for this, a bridegroom's good looks, ought to be given to a girl as a reward for her chastity.

I don't know whether I should add that his father has substantial wealth. When I consider the priorities of you, for whom I am seeking an in-law, I suspect that I should leave his wealth unmentioned. When, however, I take into account current moral standards and even state laws, which arbitrate that a scrutiny of a man's financial status must be given top priority,<sup>18</sup> then I suspect that I should not pass over his wealth in silence. And certainly this consideration must be taken into account, when one is arranging a marriage, if we are planning for grandchildren—and for many of them at that.<sup>19</sup>

Perhaps you think that I have been overwhelmed by my affection for Acilius and that I have therefore exaggerated his merits beyond what the case will bear. But I promise you, on my honor, that you will find everything far better than what I am telling you now. Certainly I love the young man very warmly, as indeed he deserves; but it is characteristic of a lover not to overload with praise the one he loves.

## WEDDINGS

### A Wedding Song

The celebration of a Roman wedding included much laughter and singing. Songs were sung, sometimes by a trained chorus, sometimes by the wedding guests, during the banquet and then during the procession through the streets when the bride was escorted from her old home to her new one. Catullus, one of Rome's finest poets, who

<sup>13</sup> *praetor*: In the republican period (more than 100 years before the reign of Vespasian) the praetor had been an elected city magistrate whose main function was to oversee the administration of justice. In the imperial period men were sometimes appointed by the emperor (rather than publicly elected) to hold the honorary rank of praetor. Such distinction gave one the right to a seat in the Senate.

<sup>14</sup> Once appointed to the rank of praetor, Minicius Macrinus had the right to attend meetings of the Senate and to offer his "political services." In the republican period the Senate had controlled both the domestic and foreign affairs of Rome (see selection 264). Its members were therefore extremely powerful figures, and the Senate was the arena for heated debates and, frequently, political turmoil. By Pliny's time, 100 years into the imperial period, the Senate had lost much of its power, since the emperor now controlled state affairs, but Pliny still takes his position as a senator quite seriously and likes to stress both the political service and the turmoil of the Senate.

<sup>15</sup> *Patavium*: modern Padua, in northern Italy.

<sup>16</sup> *quaestor, tribune, and praetor*: elected magistrates (see Chapter X).

<sup>17</sup> Relatives were expected to assist in political campaigns. Acilius, however, has already campaigned successfully and will thus expect no political favors from his in-laws. On political campaigns, see selection 262.

<sup>18</sup> A certain property qualification, fixed by law, was necessary for admission to both the equestrian and the senatorial orders. See the introduction to Chapter I.

<sup>19</sup> The production of legal heirs was the main reason for marriage. For a most unromantic view of marriage, see selection 177: "When one of his brothers died, he [Crassus] married his widow and had his children by her."

even by strangers,  
and may he confirm, by his facial features,<sup>36</sup>  
his mother's fidelity. . . .

Close the doors, bridesmaids,  
We've joked long enough.  
Live well, newlyweds,  
and spend your youth  
in constant lovemaking.

## A Marriage Contract

The following marriage contract was drawn up in Egypt in 13 B.C. Since Egypt did not become a Roman province until 30 B.C., it is unlikely that the form of this contract was influenced by Roman procedure. Certain attitudes toward marriage, however, were shared by both the Roman and Egyptian cultures. Marriage was, for example, a practical rather than a romantic matter; the couple mentioned in this contract "have come together for the purpose of sharing their lives with one another." The basic function of a marriage was to provide a stable environment for the production and rearing of family heirs. The bride's family, moreover, was expected to provide a dowry; the dowry would help the groom's family defray the living expenses ("all necessities and clothing") of the new wife.

57

BGU 1052 (*Select Papyri* 3)

To Protarchus,<sup>37</sup> from Thermion daughter of Apion, accompanied by her guardian Apollonius son of Chaereas, and from Apollonius son of Ptolemaeus:—

Thermion and Apollonius son of Ptolemaeus agree that they have come together for the purpose of sharing their lives with one another. The above-mentioned Apollonius son of Ptolemaeus agrees that he has received from Thermion, handed over from her household as a dowry, a pair of gold earrings. . . .<sup>38</sup> From now on he will furnish Thermion, as his wedded wife, with all necessities and clothing according to his means, and he will not mistreat her or cast her out or insult her or bring in another wife; otherwise he must at once return the dowry and in addition half again as much. . . . And Thermion will fulfill her duties toward her husband and her marriage, and will not sleep away from the house or be absent one day without the consent of Apollonius son of Ptolemaeus and will not damage or injure their common home and will not consort with another man; otherwise she, if judged guilty of these actions, will be deprived of her dowry, and in addition the transgressor will be liable to the prescribed fine. Dated the 17th year of Caesar.<sup>39</sup>

<sup>36</sup>*facial features*: i.e., identical to those of his father. If a child looks like the bride's husband, her fidelity to her husband is established.

<sup>37</sup>*Protarchus*: government official to whom contracts were submitted for legal approval.

<sup>38</sup>The papyrus is mutilated or illegible at this spot.

<sup>39</sup>*Caesar*: here the emperor Augustus. Caesar was part of the surname of Julius Caesar, the dictator, and of his adopted son, Augustus Caesar, who became the first emperor. Each succeeding emperor assumed the name Caesar, and it thus became a title for the emperor. It is also the origin of the titles *czar* and *kaiser*.

Plutarch was a Greek philosopher and biographer who lived for a time in Rome about A.D. 90. In this passage from one of his moral essays, he discusses his concept of the ideal relationship between husband and wife.

58

Plutarch, *Moral Advice* 139 D, F; 140 A

When two voices sing in unison, the melody of the deeper voice prevails. So, too, in a temperate household every activity is carried out with both parties in agreement, but every activity also makes clear the sovereignty and choice of the husband. . . . That wife is worthless and unfit who has a sad countenance when her husband is eager to make jokes and be cheerful, or who makes jokes and laughs when he is serious. The first behavior reveals an unpleasant character, the second an inconsiderate one. . . . A wife should have no emotion of her own, but should share in the seriousness and playfulness and melancholy and laughter of her husband.

## WIVES

### The Duties of a Wife

From this epitaph, found at Rome, which dates back to the second century B.C., we learn what type of behavior was expected of a wife and matron.

59

*CIL* 1.2.1211 (*ILS* 8403)

Stranger,<sup>40</sup> I have only a few words to say. Stop and read them.—This is the unlovely tomb of a lovely woman. Her parents named her Claudia. She loved her husband with all her heart. She bore two sons; one of these she leaves here on earth, the other she has already placed under the earth.<sup>41</sup> She was charming in speech, yet pleasant and proper in manner. She managed the household well. She spun wool.—I have spoken. Go on your way.

### A Perfect Marriage

Perhaps because marriages were arranged unions rather than love matches, husbands and wives did not have romantic expectations of their life together. They did, however, hope that they would live in harmony (*concordia*). The passage translated here is taken from a letter written by Pliny to his friend Geminus and reporting the sad news of the death of a friend's wife. The couple had been married thirty-nine years and had lived, according to Pliny, in perfect harmony. Literary accounts such as these not only record the virtues of the specific people being discussed but also indicate the qualities that the Romans thought desirable in a marriage. Since almost all the literary accounts are written by men, we may be receiving a masculine perception of the

<sup>40</sup>Stranger: see note 2 of this chapter.

<sup>41</sup>On infant mortality, see the introduction to Chapter II.

ideal marriage. We may reason-  
willingness to compromise or b-  
occasions.

60

Our friend Macrinus has suffered a  
would have been remarkable even  
without a single quarrel or bitter w  
course, she herself earned the gre  
character many admirable qualities  
one great consolation: he was able

Roman marriages were rarely  
considerably younger than th  
married a young girl named C  
letter to Calpurnia's aunt, w  
scribes his happiness with h  
devoted herself completely

61

My wife is very sensible and very  
has even, because of her affection  
she reads them over and over aga  
going to plead a case in court,  
report to her on the approval and  
whenever I give a recitation.<sup>42</sup> s  
to the praise I win. She even sets  
No musician has taught her, bu

The following passage is ta  
the country recovering from

<sup>42</sup>On "the good old days," see n

<sup>43</sup>On the age of marriage partn

<sup>44</sup>On orphans, see selection 51.

<sup>45</sup>We have already read another

<sup>46</sup>thrifty: i.e., she managed the ho

and his wife did not, therefore, i

<sup>47</sup>recitation: a type of entertainm

would invite his friends to his ho

literary works; see selection 365

Clodia (the "Lesbia" of Catullus's poems) did not confine her attentions to Catullus. Another of her lovers was Marcus Caelius Rufus, a young political friend of Cicero.<sup>75</sup> When their affair ended, Clodia was instrumental in bringing Caelius to court on a charge of attempted murder. The prosecution attempted to show that Caelius had in the past often acted immorally and unscrupulously and that the attempted murder was quite in keeping with his character. Cicero, however, who undertook Caelius's defense (this passage is taken from his speech for the defense), tried to persuade the jury that Caelius was an honest, naive young man who had fallen under the influence of an evil woman—Clodia herself—who Cicero implies acted not like a proper upper-class Roman matron but like a common prostitute.

76

Cicero, *Speech in Defense of Caelius* 20.48–49

If anyone here thinks that young men should be forbidden association even with prostitutes, he is certainly very stern; but he is also in disagreement not only with the permissiveness of this century, but even with the custom and indulgences of our ancestors. When was such a thing not done, when was it censured, when not allowed, when finally was that which is now permitted not permitted? I will now clarify my point, without, of course, mentioning any woman by name; I will leave this open.

If a woman without a husband<sup>76</sup> opens her home to every man's lust and publicly establishes herself in the lifestyle of a prostitute and makes it a practice to attend dinner parties with strange men, if she does this in the city, on her estate, and among the crowds of people at Baiae;<sup>77</sup> if in fact she behaves in such a way that not only her manner,<sup>78</sup> but her clothes and her associates, not only the lust in her eyes and the lewdness of her speech, but also her hugging and kissing on the beach, during boat cruises and at dinner parties proclaim her to be not only a prostitute, but even a shameless and brazen prostitute—then if some young man might by chance find himself in her company, would you consider him her corruptor or her customer, would you think that he wanted to defile her chastity or satisfy her lust?

## Laws to Control Adultery

Men and women were held to different standards of moral conduct. A woman was considered to behave improperly if she had a sexual relationship with any man other than her husband. In the previous selection, for example, Clodia's behavior was criticized although she was unmarried (a widow) at the time of her involvement with Caelius. A man, on the other hand, whether single or married, was reproached only if his sexual relationship was with the wife of another man. The intent of these moral standards was to ensure that a married woman would become pregnant only by her husband. Thus male sexual infidelity was a moral issue only if it compromised the integrity of another man's family. Wives were expected to tolerate their husbands' "affairs" with slaves, prostitutes, and other "disreputable" women (as did Au-

<sup>75</sup> *Marcus Caelius Rufus*: for more about this man, see selection 397.

<sup>76</sup> Caelius's trial took place in 56 B.C. Clodia's husband, Quintus Metellus Celer, had died in 59 B.C.

<sup>77</sup> *Baiae*: a fashionable seaside resort near Naples.

<sup>78</sup> Compare Claudia (selection 59) who was "proper in manner."

77

"Henceforth no one shall commit adultery or rape known to the law. . . . The words of this law apply both to him who abets and to him who is caught."

The Julian Law to control adultery punishes not only the adulterer but also the adulteress. Under the same law, the crime of debauchery is punished without force, either a virgin or a respectable widow.

By the second section of the law, a father is permitted to kill his son-in-law's home, . . . to kill his own home or in his son-in-law's home, . . . to kill immediately kill his daughter.

A husband is permitted to kill his wife's seducer, gladiator, criminal, freedman, or slave who is caught at home, but not in the home of his father-in-law.

A husband who does not divorce his wife when she is caught committing adultery, is himself punished as the adulterer to go unpunished.

A husband who makes any profit from the adultery is punished.

Women convicted of adultery are punished by confiscation of their property, and by exile to an island. The male adulterer is sent to different islands.

## Augustus's O

Although Augustus, when emperor, expressed his disapproval of divorce, celibacy, and childlessness, he relaxed moral standards, as we learn from this passage.

<sup>79</sup> For other passages from these laws, see selections 38 and 39.

<sup>80</sup> Exile and confiscation of property were penalties assigned to adultery.



gustine's patient mother: selection 67), but husbands could divorce wives involved in similar behavior and kill the "other" man. The definition of adultery was limited to any sexual infidelity by a married woman or with a married woman.

The emperor Augustus expressed great concern over various social problems in Rome. Many upper-class men chose not to marry; married couples often remained childless. Augustus was disturbed by the decreasing population of native Italians, particularly among the upper class; he also claimed that he was dismayed by the relaxed moral standards of his time and that he wanted to return Rome to the standards of the "good old days." He therefore passed laws (18 B.C., the Julian Laws regulating adultery and marriage; A.D. 9, the Papia-Poppaeon Laws regulating marriage) meant to encourage marriage and to discourage adultery. Here are some passages from these laws.<sup>79</sup>

77

ADA pp. 113-116, 123, 126

"Henceforth no one shall commit adultery or rape knowingly or with malice aforethought." The words of this law apply both to him who abets and to him who commits the crime.

The Julian Law to control adultery punishes not only those who violate the marriages of others. Under the same law, the crime of debauchery is punished, when anyone seduces and violates, even without force, either a virgin or a respectable widow.

By the second section of the law, a father is permitted, if he catches his daughter's seducer, in his own home or in his son-in-law's home, . . . to kill the adulterer with impunity, even as he may immediately kill his daughter.

A husband is permitted to kill his wife's seducer. . . . He is permitted to kill a pimp, actor, gladiator, criminal, freedman, or slave who is caught in the act of adultery with his wife in his own home, but not in the home of his father-in-law. . . . And he must divorce his wife without delay.

A husband who does not divorce his wife when she has been caught in adultery, and who allows the adulterer to go unpunished, is himself punished as a pimp.

A husband who makes any profit from the adultery of his wife is flogged.

Women convicted of adultery are punished by confiscation of half of their dowry, and a third of their property, and by exile to an island. The male adulterers are punished by a similar exile to an island (provided they are sent to different islands) and by confiscation of half their property.<sup>80</sup>

## Augustus's Own Behavior

Although Augustus, when emperor, expressed dismay over the widespread adultery, divorce, celibacy, and childlessness, he had not always been so concerned with moral standards, as we learn from this passage of Suetonius's biography of Augustus.

<sup>79</sup> For other passages from these laws, see selections 38, 39, and 40.

<sup>80</sup> Exile and confiscation of property were penalties assigned to the upper class; see selections 5 and 6.

sons to Catullus. . . .  
end of Cicero.<sup>75</sup>

Caelius had in  
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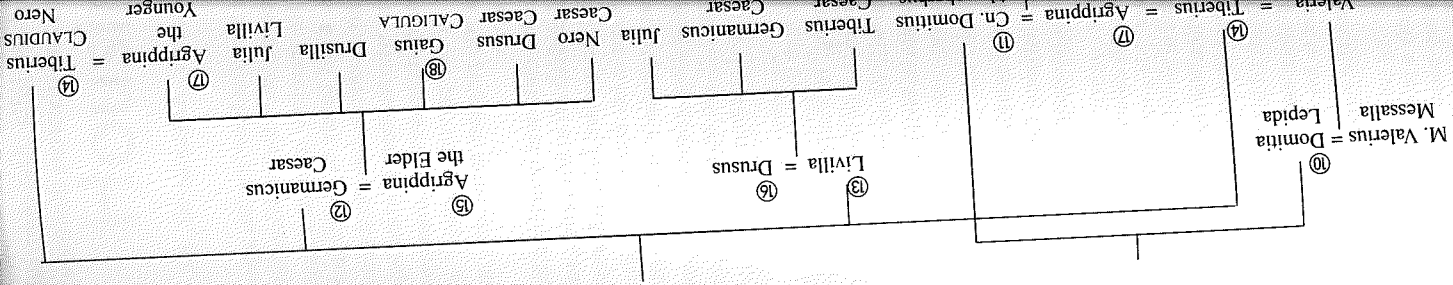
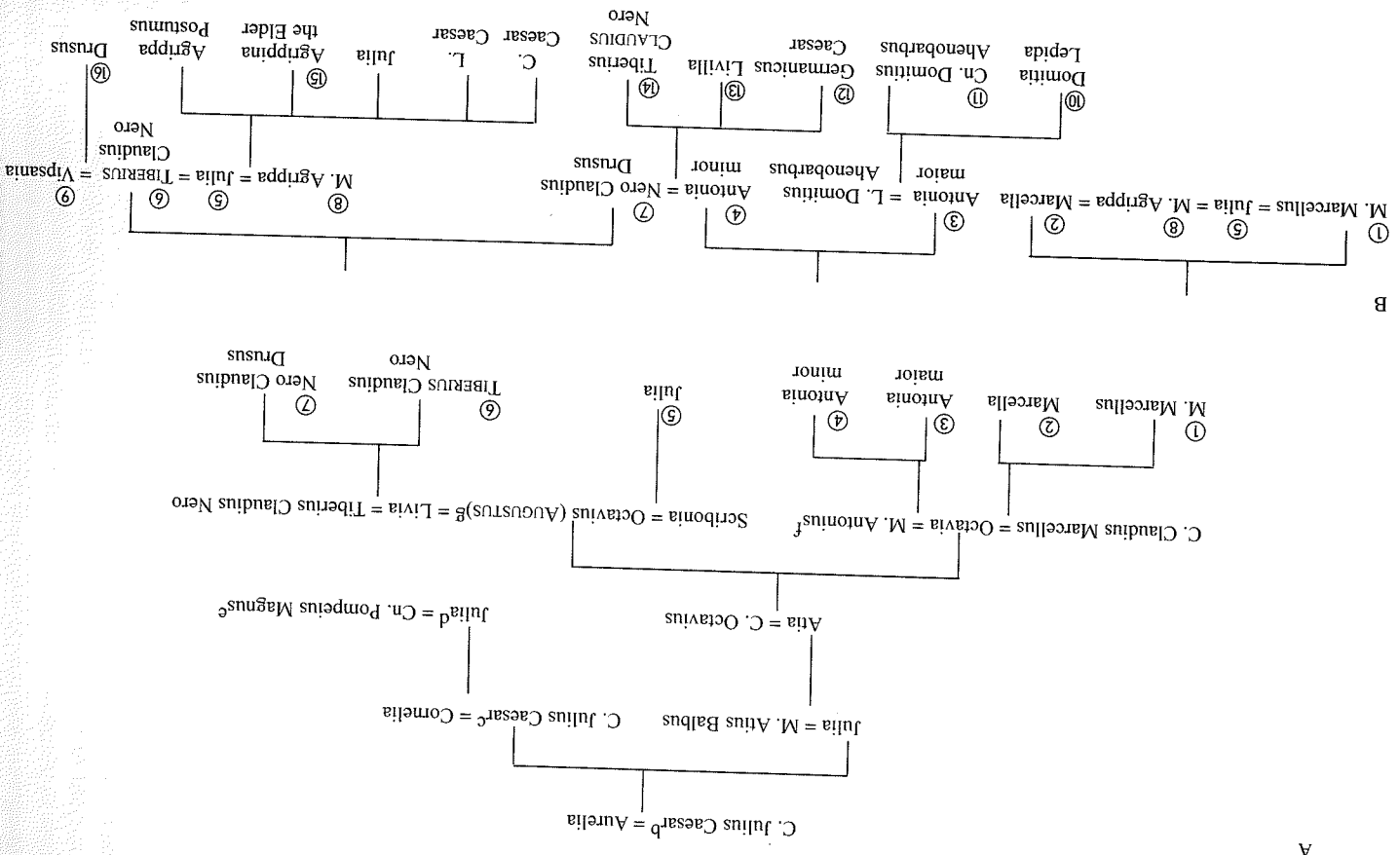
ilius 20.48-49

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A  
The Julio-Claudians<sup>a</sup>  
Genealogy Chart 1.



<sup>a</sup>The *Julio-Claudians*: the family of emperors who were members of the Julian family (gens *Julia*; cf. the name "Julius Caesar") and of the Claudian family (gens *Claudia*; cf. the name "Claudius Nero"). *Note*: not every family member has been recorded in these charts.

<sup>b</sup>C. = an abbreviation for the Roman *praenomen* Gaius. Cf. M. = Marcus. Cn. = Gnaeus, L. = Lucius

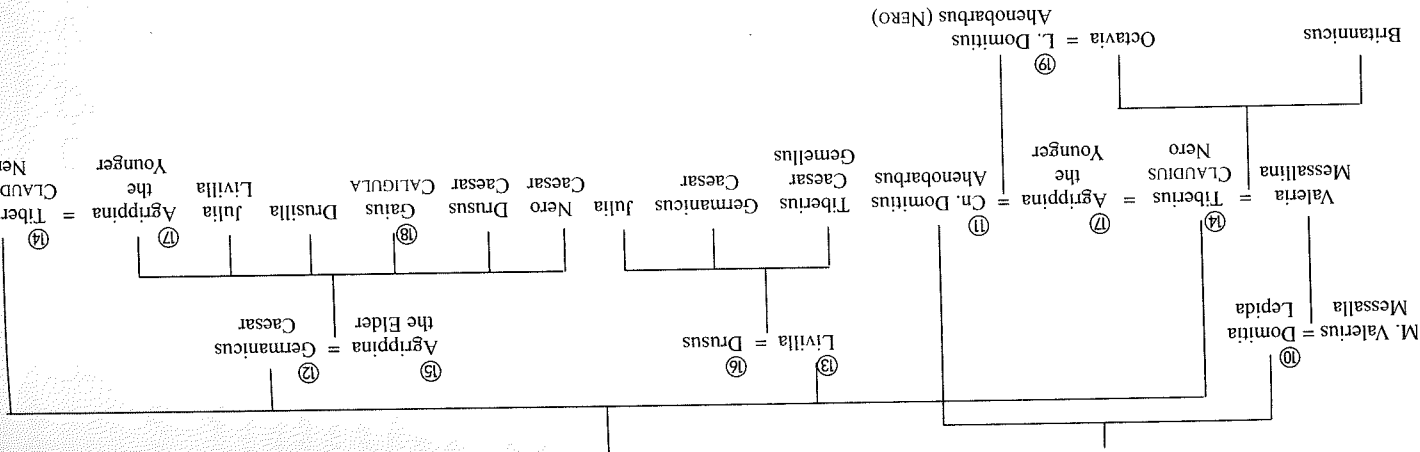
<sup>c</sup>Member of the First Triumvirate (see note 104 of Ch. VII); dictator; assassinated on the Ides of March, 44 B.C.

<sup>d</sup>Died in childbirth in 54 B.C. (see note 87 of Ch. X). *Note* that her name, Julia, is the feminine form of her father's *nomen*. Julius. Cf. Octavius, Octavia; Antonius, Antonia; Marcellus, Marcella.

<sup>e</sup>Member of the First Triumvirate.

<sup>f</sup>Member of the Second Triumvirate (see note 82 of Ch. III).

<sup>g</sup>*Octavius*: after his adoption by his great-uncle, C. Julius Caesar, his name became C. Julius Caesar Octavianus (Octavian); see note 81 of Ch. III. The title "Augustus" was bestowed on him by the Senate in 27 B.C.



1, 2, etc.: these numbers identify people in the charts and allow for cross-referencing.

5 *Julia*: banished from Rome in 2 B.C. by her father, Augustus (see note 85 of Ch. III). Married first to 1 Marcellus, then to 8 Agrippa, then to 6 Tiberius.

8 *M. (Vipsanius) Agrippa*: 63–12 B.C.; a successful military commander and a good friend of the emperor Augustus. Married first to Pomponia Attica, then to 2 Marcella, and then to 5 Julia.

6 *Tiberius*: emperor A.D. 14–37. Married first to 9 Vipsania, then to 5 Julia.

9 *Vipsania*: daughter of 8 M. (Vipsanius) Agrippa by his first wife.

14 *Claudius*: emperor A.D. 41–54. Married to Valeria Messallina, the daughter of his cousin then to 7 Agrippina the Younger, his niece.

18 *Caligula*: emperor A.D. 37–41.

19 *Nero*: emperor A.D. 54–68.



emperor, he did not hesitate to force his kin into marriages and divorces that they did not want.

Octavian had, in his youth, been betrothed to the daughter of Publius Servilius Isauricus, but after he and Mark Antony had settled their initial disagreement and become reconciled,<sup>82</sup> their soldiers asked them to become further allied by forming some tie of kinship. He therefore married Claudia, Antony's stepdaughter and Fulvia's<sup>83</sup> daughter by Publius Clodius, a girl barely of marriageable age. However, when hostility arose between him and Fulvia, now his mother-in-law, he divorced Claudia, still chaste and a virgin. Soon afterward he married Scribonia, who had been married twice before, both times to men of consular rank; she had children from one of these previous marriages. He divorced her also because, as he himself wrote, "I was sick of her perverse nature." He immediately stole Livia Drusilla away from her husband, although she was pregnant at the time, and married her and loved her and was from then on satisfied with her alone.

By Livia he had no children, although he deeply desired them. One child was conceived but born prematurely. By Scribonia he had a daughter, Julia. He first married Julia off to Marcellus, son of his sister Octavia, when he was still a boy. Then, after Marcellus died, he married Julia to Marcus Agrippa, but he had to obtain permission from his sister to cause a divorce in her family; for at that time Agrippa was married to Marcella (daughter of Octavia who was Augustus's sister) and the couple had children. When Agrippa also died, Augustus spent a long time considering many possibilities for marriage alliances. Finally he chose Tiberius, his stepson,<sup>84</sup> and he forced him to divorce his wife, who was pregnant at the time and by whom he already had children, and to marry Julia.<sup>85</sup>

Not even his friends deny that Augustus committed adulteries, although they excuse them, it is true, as committed not because of lust, but because of shrewd planning: he could more easily discover his opponents' schemes through their women. Mark Antony protested not only that he had married Livia so hastily but also that he had, at a dinner party, taken the wife of an ex-consul from her husband's dining room, right before his eyes, and led her into a bedroom; he brought her back to the dinner party with her ears glowing and her hair disheveled.

<sup>81</sup> "Augustus" was a title bestowed by the Senate in 27 B.C. on a man whose name was first Gaius Octavius and then, after his adoption by his granduncle (Julius Caesar), Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus. On the use of the name Caesar as a title, see footnote 39 of this chapter. The name Octavianus is translated into English as Octavian.

<sup>82</sup> Immediately after the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 B.C., Octavian, who was only eighteen years old, had led his troops into battle against Mark Antony's troops ("their initial disagreement") in a struggle for power. Within a few months, however, they both realized it was more politically expedient to be "friends" and allies rather than enemies. They, and another man named Lepidus, formed an alliance which was, however, always shaky. After numerous quarrels and reconciliations, Octavian crushed Mark Antony and Cleopatra at the battle of Actium in 31 B.C.

<sup>83</sup> *Fulvia*: the wife of Mark Antony in 43 B.C. She had been married twice before. Antony later married Octavia (sister of Octavian), then divorced her (she had been married once before) and went to live with Cleopatra.  
<sup>84</sup> *Tiberius*: the son of Livia by her first husband, Tiberius Claudius Nero. Tiberius became Augustus's heir and succeeded him as emperor.

<sup>85</sup> The marriage of Tiberius and Julia was bitterly unhappy. Julia, who was obviously a pawn in her father's political games, was later accused by him of immorality and in 2 B.C. banished to a tiny island where she died. Julia's mother, Scribonia, whom Augustus had divorced because he "was sick of her perverse nature," chose to live with her daughter in exile; they had probably been separated since the divorce.

# Housing a

## SINGLE-FAMILY I

### Designs for

A family's housing depended very much on the true today. In a large city such as Rome, of most people, and houses were there several). In smaller cities and towns, Rome.<sup>2</sup> Excavations at Pompeii and H and have given us an excellent idea of certain rooms, such as the atrium, a kitchen, bedrooms, and so on.

Large houses provided living ad their children, but also for other relatives of the Latin term *familia* is "household their slaves.) In addition, space in the small apartments (see Figure 2). Thus usually does today, that each resident space.

Archaeological excavations provide housing. Another source is an ancient following passage is taken. The authors vary according to the owner's profession large reception area, a lawyer needed

<sup>1</sup> *house*: Latin *domus* (cf. "domicile," "domestic").

<sup>2</sup> See selection 83.

<sup>3</sup> *Pompeii and Herculaneum*: two towns buried in map 2.