# From “Doors” by Claire Mulligan

My occupant left me yawing wide today, banging in the autumn winds, my acanthus doorknocker pocked with rain. She has been doing this often of late. It was not enough, apparently, leaving me unlocked and then ajar. Now I must yaw. At first I reasoned she was distracted by familial woes, by clients wanting an impossible renovation: farm to hotel, condo to castle. But no. She is spearheading a movement that calls for our annihilation. *Destroy the doors!* Such is her battle cry in those magazines of Hearth and Home. *Change not the locks. Change these archaic concepts that enforce enclosure and compartmentalization*.

What nonsense. What wordy rot. This is exactly doorness: Enclosure. Compartmentalization. She writes as if we have a secret nefarious agenda, as if we are a cabal of doors. What about walls? They do all that and then some. And they are scarcely as noble and useful as we doors. Worthy and stalwart, yes, but have you ever conversed with a wall? And what did it say? Very little? There you go. Sometimes they weep faint trails of moisture. “Hard to bear. Hard to bear,” they sigh, their lamentations muffled by plaster and lathe. They have little taste in culture or art; they never open up to anything. This is not their fault. The back of artwork and mirrors is all they ever see. Though once, a month past, my occupant rushed in and turned that one framed image of the mother occupant towards the wall. “At last. At last,” the walls sobbed out. “How beautiful she is. How terrifically great.” She is neither. She is built like side hutch. She has the smile of a radiator. But the walls have no comparison. She is the only mother they have ever seen.

My occupant arrives, all smugly proud that she need not set down those rolls of renovation plans the size of dryer pipes and fumble for the iron key, that she can stride straight on into the vestibule. Such freedom, such “thoroughness” – this being a term she has coined and hopes will be taken up (it has not).