

CORIOLOANUS

By

William Shakespeare

a screen adaptation by Colin Hussey

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[ceh@colinhussey.com](mailto:ceh@colinhussey.com)

EXT. CROWDED STREET IN ROME - DAY

A company of mutinous CITIZENS with staves, clubs, hoes and other improvised weapons marches down the street toward the forum in the center of the city.

FIRST CITIZEN

Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

ALL

Speak. Speak.

FIRST CITIZEN

You are all resolved rather to die than to famish?

ALL

Resolved, resolved.

FIRST CITIZEN

First, you know Caius Martius is chief enemy to the people.

ALL

We know't, we know't.

INT. 2-STORY VILLA/BEDROOM - DAY

A nice Roman bedroom with frescoes opens to a balcony. VALERIA, a well-to-do matron in her 50s, sleeps next to MENENIUS AGRIPPA, a bearded patrician, in his 60s. Her eyes blink awake at the COMMOTION in the street outside.

FIRST CITIZEN (O.S.)

Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?

With a gasp, she abruptly jumps up and rousts Menenius awake. She then grabs a shawl and runs toward the window.

ALL (O.S.)

No more talking on't! Let it be done!

Menenius scrambles to pull himself together.

EXT. CROWDED STREET IN ROME - DAY

The Citizens work themselves up to march en masse toward the forum.

ALL  
Away, away!

Valeria waves frantically and calls to them from the balcony.

VALERIA  
One word, good citizens!

The crowd hesitates. The First Citizen strides toward the balcony and glares up at Valeria.

FIRST CITIZEN  
We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good. The leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them.

VALERIA  
Would you proceed especially against Caius Martius?

FIRST CITIZEN  
Against him first!

ANOTHER CITIZEN  
He's a very dog to the commonality!

VALERIA  
Consider you what services he has done for his country?

FIRST CITIZEN  
Very well, and could be content to give him good report for't, but that he pays himself with being proud.

VALERIA  
Nay, but speak not maliciously.

As the First Citizen replies, Valeria looks behind her to the bedroom, beseeching Menenius, under her breath, to hurry.

(CONTINUED)

FIRST CITIZEN

I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end. Though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother and to be partly proud, which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

VALERIA

What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous.

FIRST CITIZEN

If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations. He hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition.

We HEAR shouts a few blocks away in another part of the city.

FIRST CITIZEN

(cont.)

What shouts are these? The other side o' th' city is risen. Why stay we prating here? To th' Capitol!

His fellow citizens shout in approval. Valeria nervously looks behind her again into the bedroom. Menenius is not there.

We HEAR a clap of running sandal steps. The First Citizen turns to look.

FIRST CITIZEN

(cont.)

Soft, who comes here?

Menenius is now outside and standing before the gathered crowd. Valeria heaves a big sigh of relief.

VALERIA

Worthy Menenius Agrippa, one that hath always loved the people.

FIRST CITIZEN

He's one honest enough! Would all the rest were so!

(CONTINUED)

## MENENIUS

What work's, my countrymen, in hand? Where go you with bats and clubs? The matter? Speak, I pray you.

## FIRST CITIZEN

Our business is not unknown to th' Senate. They have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths; they shall know we have strong arms too.

## MENENIUS

Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbors, / Will you undo yourselves?

## FIRST CITIZEN

We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

## MENENIUS

I tell you friends, most charitable care / Have the patricians of you. For your wants, / Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well / Strike at heaven with your staves as lift them / Against the Roman state, whose course will on / The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs / Of more strong link asunder than can ever / Appear in your impediment. For the dearth, / The gods, not the patricians, make it, and / Your knees to them, not arms must help. Alack, / You are transported by calamity / Thither where more attends you, and you slander / The helms o' th' state, who care for you like fathers, When you curse them as enemies.

## FIRST CITIZEN

Care for us? True, indeed! They ne'er cared for us yet: suffer us to famish, and their storehouses crammed with grain; make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal daily any wholesome act established

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

FIRST CITIZEN (cont'd)  
 against the rich, and provide more  
 piercing statutes daily to chain up  
 and restrain the poor. If the wars  
 eat us not up, they will; and  
 there's all the love they bear us.

MENENIUS

Either you must / Confess  
 yourselves wondrous malicious, / Or  
 be accused of folly. I shall tell  
 you / A pretty tale. It may be you  
 have heard it, / But since its  
 serves my purpose, I will venture /  
 To stale't a little more.

FIRST CITIZEN

Well, I'll hear it, sir; yet you  
 must not think to fob off our  
 disgrace with a tale. But, an't  
 please you, deliver.

MENENIUS

There was a time when all the  
 body's members / Rebelled against  
 the belly, thus accused it: / That  
 only like a gulf it did remain / I'  
 th' midst o' th' body, idle and  
 unactive, / Still cupboarding the  
 viand, never bearing / Like labor  
 with the rest, where th' other  
 instruments / Did see and hear,  
 devise, instruct, walk, feel, / And  
 mutually participate, did minister  
 / Unto the appetite and affection  
 common / Of the whole body. The  
 belly answered -

FIRST CITIZEN

Well, sir, what answer made the  
 belly?

MENENIUS

Sir, I shall tell you. With a kind  
 of smile, / Which ne'er came from  
 the lungs, but even thus - / For,  
 look you, I may make the belly  
 smile / As well as speak - it  
 tauntingly replied / To th'  
 discontented members, the mutinous  
 parts / That envied his receipt;  
 even so most fitly / As you malign  
 our senators, for that / They are  
 not such as you.

(CONTINUED)

FIRST CITIZEN

Your belly's answer? What? / The  
kingly crowned head, the vigilant  
eye, / The counselor heart, the arm  
our soldier, / Our steed the leg,  
the tongue our trumpeter, / With  
other muniments and petty helps /  
In this our fabric, if that they -

MENENIUS

What then? / 'Fore me, this fellow  
speaks! What then? what then?

FIRST CITIZEN

Should the cormorant belly be  
restrained, / Who is the sink o'  
the body -

MENENIUS

Well, what then?

FIRST CITIZEN

The former agents, if they did  
complain, / What could the belly  
answer?

MENENIUS

I will tell you, / If you'll bestow  
a small - of what you have little -  
/ Patience awhile, you'st hear the  
belly's answer.

FIRST CITIZEN

You're long about it.

MENENIUS

Note me this, good friend; / Your  
most grave belly was deliberate, /  
Not rash like his accuser, and thus  
answered: / "True is it, my  
incorporate friends," quoth he, /  
"That I receive the general food at  
first, / Which you dolive upon;and  
fit it is, / Because I am the  
storehouse and the shop / Of the  
whole body. But, if you do  
remember, / I send it through the  
rivers of your blood / Even to the  
court, the heart, to th' seat o'  
th' brain; / And, through the  
cranks and offices of man, / The  
strongest nerves and small inferior  
veins / From me receive that

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS (cont'd)

natural competency / Whereby they  
live. And though that all at once"  
- / You, my good friends! This says  
the belly. Mark me.

FIRST CITIZEN

Ay, sir, well, well.

MENENIUS

"Though all at once cannot / See  
what I do deliver out to each, /  
Yet I can make my audit up that all  
/ From me do back receive the flour  
of all, / And leave me but the  
bran." What say you to't?

FIRST CITIZEN

It was an answer. How apply you  
this?

MENENIUS

The senators of Rome are this good  
belly, / And you the mutinous  
members. For examine / Their  
counsels and their cares, disgest  
things rightly / Touching the weal  
o' th' common, you shall find / No  
public benefit which you receive /  
But it proceeds or comes from them  
to you, / And no way from  
yourselves. What do you think, /  
You, the great toe of this  
assembly?

FIRST CITIZEN

I the great toe! Why the great  
toe?

MENENIUS

For that, being one o' th' lowest,  
basest, poorest / Of this most wise  
rebellion, thou goest foremost, /  
Thou rascal, that art worst in  
blood to run, / Lead'st first to  
win some vantage. / But make you  
ready your stiff bats and clubs: /  
Rome and her rats are at the point  
of battle; / The one side must have  
bale.

(CONTINUED)



Enter CAIUS MARTIUS, a large and well-muscled Roman warrior. Catching sight of him, Menenius stands between him and the crowd and bows to him slightly. Upon seeing Martius, the crowd loses their resolve to fight him, and their resentment gives way to fear.

MENENIUS

Hail, noble Martius!

MARTIUS

Thanks.

(to crowd)

What's the matter, you dissentious rogues, / That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion, / Make yourselves scabs?

FIRST CITIZEN

We have ever your good word.

MARTIUS

He that will give good words to thee will flatter / Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs, / That like nor peace nor war? The one affrights you, / The other makes you proud. He that trust you, / Where he should find you lions, finds you hares; / Where foxes, geese. You are no surer, no, / Than is the coal of fire upon the ice, / Or hailstone in the sun. / Your virtue is / To make him worthy whose offense subdues him / And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness / Deserves your hate; and your affections are / A sick man's appetite, who desires most that / Which would increase his evil. He that depends / Upon your favors swims with fins of lead / And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye? / With every minute you do change a mind, / And call him noble that was now your hate, / Him vile that was your garlands. What's the matter, / That in these several places of the city / You cry against the noble Senate, who, / Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else / Would feed on one another?

(to Menenius)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MARTIUS (cont'd)

What's their seeking?

MENENIUS

For corn at their own rates,  
whereof they say / The city is well  
stored.

MARTIUS

Hang 'em! They say? / They'll sit  
by th' fire and presume to know /  
What's done i' th' Capitol, who's  
like to rise, / Who thrives and who  
declines; side factions and give  
out / Conjectural marriages, making  
parties strong / And feebling such  
as stand not in their liking /  
Below their cobbled shoes. They  
say there's grain enough? / Would  
the nobility lay aside their ruth,  
/ And let me use my sword, I'd make  
a quarry / With thousands of these  
quartered slaves as high / As I  
could pick my lance.

MENENIUS

Nay, these are almost thoroughly  
persuaded; / For though abundantly  
they lack discretion, / Yet are  
they passing cowardly. But, I  
beseech you, / What says the other  
troop?

MARTIUS

They are dissolved. Hang 'em!/  
They said they were anhungry,  
sighed forth proverbs - / That  
hunger broke stone walls, that dogs  
must eat, / That meat was made for  
mouths, that the gods sent not/  
Corn for rich men only. With these  
shreds / They vented their  
complaining, which being answered  
/ And a petition granted them, a  
strange one, / To break the heart  
of generosity, / And make bold  
power look pale, they threw their  
caps, / As they would hang them on  
the horns o' th' moon, / Shouting  
their emulation.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

What is granted them?

MARTIUS

Five tribunes to defend their  
vulgar wisdoms, / Of their own  
choice. One's Junius Brutus, /  
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not -  
S'death! / The rabble should have  
first unroofed the city / Ere so  
prevailed with me; it will in time  
/ Win upon power, and throw forth  
greater themes / For insurrections  
arguing.

MENENIUS

This is strange.

Marius takes notice of the crowd that is still around and barks at them.

MARTIUS

Go, get you home, you fragments!

Enter a MESSENGER hastily.

MESSENGER

Where's Caius Martius?

MARTIUS

Here. What's the matter?

MESSENGER

The news is, sir, the Volsces are  
in arms.

MARTIUS

I am glad on't. Then we shall ha'  
means to vent / Our musty  
superfluity.

Enter SICINIUS VELUTUS, 70s thin & bald, JUNIUS BRUTUS, 60s and big-bellied, COMINIUS a hoary general with silver hair, TITUS LARTIUS, a clean-shaven army officer in his 20s, with some other SENATORS.

FIRST SENATOR

Martius, 'tis true that you have  
lately told us: / The Volsces are  
in arms.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIUS

(nods)

They have a leader, / Tullus  
Aufidius, that will put you to't. /  
I sin in envying his nobility, /  
And were I any thing but what I  
am, / I would wish me only he.

COMINIUS

(smiles wryly)

You have fought together?

MARTIUS

Were half to half the world by th'  
ears and he / Upon my party, I'd  
revolt, to make / Only my wars with  
him. He is a lion / That I am proud  
to hunt.

FIRST SENATOR

Then, worthy Martius, / Attend upon  
Cominius to these wars.

COMINIUS

It is your former promise.

MARTIUS

Sir, it is, / And I am  
constant. Titus Lartius, thou /  
Shalt see me once more strike at  
Tullus' face. /

Martius playfully raps Titus' chest.

MARTIUS

(cont.)

What, art thou stiff? Stand'st out?

TITUS

No, Caius Martius, / I'll lean upon  
one crutch and fight with t'other,  
/ Ere stay behind this business.

MENENIUS

O, true-bred!

FIRST SENATOR

Your company to th' Capitol, where  
I know / Our greatest friends  
attend us.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS

(to Cominius)

Lead you on.

(to Marius)

Follow Cominius. We must follow  
you. / Right worthy you priority.

COMINIUS

Noble Martius!

FIRST SENATOR

(to the Citizens)

Hence to your homes, be gone!

MARTIUS

Nay, let them follow. / The Volsces  
have much corn. Take these rats  
thither / To gnaw their garner. /

(to citizens)

Worshipful mutineers, / Your valor  
puts well forth. Pray follow.

Exeunt. Citizens steal away. Sicinius and Brutus stay  
behind and watch the crowd head off down the street.  
Sicinius spits on the ground and shakes his head.

SICINIUS

Was ever man so proud as is this  
Martius?

BRUTUS

He has no equal.

SICINIUS

When we were chosen tribunes for  
the people -

BRUTUS

Marked you his lip and eyes?

SICINIUS

Nay, but his taunts.

BRUTUS

Being moved, he will not spare to  
gird the gods.

SICINIUS

Bemock the modest moon.

BRUTUS

The present wars devour him! He is  
grown / Too proud to be so valiant.

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS

Such a nature, / Tickled with good  
success, disdains the shadow /  
Which he treads on at noon. But I  
do wonder / His insolence can brook  
to be commanded / Under Cominius.

BRUTUS

Fame, at the which he aims, / In  
whom already he's well graced,  
cannot / Better be held nor more  
attained than by / A place below  
the first; for what miscarries /  
Shall be the general's fault,  
though he perform / To th' utmost  
of a man, and giddy censure / Will  
then cry out of Martius, "O, if he  
/ Had borne the business!"

SICINIUS

Besides, if things go well, /  
Opinion, that so sticks on Martius,  
shall / Of his demerits rob  
Cominius.

BRUTUS

Come. / Half of all Cominius'  
honors are to Martius, / Though  
Martius earned them not; and all  
his faults / To Martius shall be  
honors, though indeed / In aught he  
merit not.

SICINIUS

Let's hence and hear / How the  
dispatch is made, and in what  
fashion, / More than his  
singularity, he goes / Upon this  
present action.

BRUTUS

Let's along.

They hurry to follow the rest of the throng.

EXT. DUSTY PLAIN OUTSIDE CORIOLES, VOLSCIA - DAY

TULLUS AUFIDIUS rides towards the city in a chariot. He is  
older and and somewhat smaller than Martius.

EXT. VOLSIAN SENATE BUILDING

Aufidius strides purposefully towards the entrance. Sentries snap to attention as he passes.

INT. VOLSCIAN SENATE CHAMBERS

Aufidius stands before two Volscian Senators (VSEN.1 and VSEN.2). Aufidius salutes them as they rise and approach him.

VSEN.1

So, your opinion is, Aufidius, /  
That they of Rome are entered in  
our counsels / And know how we  
proceed. /

AUFIDIUS

Is it not yours? / What ever have  
been thought on this state, / That  
could be brought to bodily act ere  
Rome / Had circumvention? 'Tis not  
four days gone / Since I heard  
thence. These are words. I think /  
I have the letter here.

Aufidius searches himself and finds a tightly folded piece of paper in one of his shin guards.

AUFIDIUS

(cont.)

Yes, here it is:

Aufidius unfolds the note and hands it to VSEN.1 He and the other Senator look it over.

VSEN.1

"They have pressed a power, but it  
is not known / Whether for east or  
west. The dearth is great,...

VSEN.2

"The people mutinous; and it is  
rumored, / Cominius, Martius your  
old enemy, / Who is of Rome worse  
hated than of you, / And Titus  
Lartius, a most valiant Roman, /

AUFIDIUS

"These three lead on this  
preparation / Whither 'tis bent.  
Most likely 'tis for you. /  
Consider of it."

(CONTINUED)

VSEN.1 looks up from the note at Aufidius.

VSEN.1

Our army's in the field. / We  
never yet made doubt but Rome was  
ready / To answer us.

AUFIDIUS

Nor did you think it folly / To  
keep your great pretenses veiled  
till when / They needs must show  
themselves, which in the hatching,  
/ It seemed, appeared to Rome. By  
the discovery / We shall be  
shortened in our aim, which was /  
To take in many towns ere almost  
Rome / Should know we were afoot.

VSEN.2

Noble Aufidius, / Take your  
commission; hie you to your bands;  
/ Let us alone to guard Corioles. /  
If they set down before's, for the  
remove / Bring up your army; but, I  
think, you'll find / Th' have not  
prepared for us.

AUFIDIUS

O, doubt not that, / I speak from  
certainties. Nay more, / Some  
parcels of their power are forth  
already, / And only hitherward. I  
leave your honors. / If we and  
Caius Martius chance to meet, /  
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever  
strike / Till one can do no more.

VSEN.1

(salutes Aufidius)

The gods assist you!

AUFIDIUS

(salutes back)

And keep your honors safe!

VSEN.2

(salutes)

Farewell!

Aufidius exits.



EXT. MARTIUS' HOUSE IN ROME - DAY

YOUNG MARTIUS, a kindergarten-aged boy and Caius Martius' son, with a stick in hand, gleefully chases after a butterfly in a courtyard. A middle-aged GENTLEWOMAN watches him from a bench.

At another end of the courtyard, up a story YM's mother VIRGILIA gazes at her son, below. She is in her mid 30s, modestly clothed, a natural beauty with sad eyes.

INT. MARTIUS' HOUSE - PARLOR

Virgilia sits with Martius' mother, VOLUMNIA, where they do needlework on an art project tapestry. Volumnia is a well-preserved 70-year old matriarch with harder eyes than her daughter-in-law. Her stylish attire contrasts sharply with Virgilia's more modest dress.

Volumnia halts her sowing and glares at Virgilia.

VOLUMNIA

I pray you, daughter, sing, or  
express yourself in a more  
comfortable sort.

Virgilia turns her attention from the window and focuses more intently on her needlework.

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

If my son were my husband, I should  
freelier rejoice in that absence  
wherein he won honor than in the  
embracements of his bed where he  
would show most love. When yet he  
was but a tender-bodied and the  
only son of my womb...

Volumnia's speech fades from Virgilia's mind as her sowing flashes her back...

SERIES OF SHOTS

Virgilia uses needle and thread to re-close a gash in Martius' side.

She cleans and redresses various wounds.

Martius lays on a table and winces as Virgilia works to get his beat-up body realigned.

(CONTINUED)

In the bedroom, late at night, Virgilia nurses Martius through an intense nightmare. Volumnia's voice finally breaks through the reverie.

BACK TO SCENE

Volumnia's still talking. Virgilia's attention turns from her sewing to Volumnia's words.

VOLUMNIA

To a cruel war I sent him, from  
whence he returned, his brows bound  
with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I  
sprang not more in joy at first  
hearing he was a man-child than now  
in first seeing he had proved  
himself a man.

VIRGILIA

But had he died in the business,  
madam, how then?

VOLUMNIA

Then his good report should have  
been my son; I therein would have  
found issue. Hear me profess  
sincerely: had I a dozen sons, each  
in my love alike, and none less  
dear than thine and my good  
Martius, I had rather had eleven  
die nobly for their country than  
one voluptuously surfeit out of  
action.

The Gentlewoman enters.

GENTLEWOMAN

(to Volumnia)

Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to  
visit you.

VIRGILIA

(to Volumnia)

Beseech you, give me leave to  
retire myself.

VOLUMNIA

Indeed, you shall not. / Methinks I  
hear hither your husband's drum; /  
See him pluck Aufidius down by th'  
hair; / As children from a bear,  
the Volsces shunning him. /  
Methinks I see him stamp thus, and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOLUMNIA (cont'd)

call thus: / "Come on, you cowards!  
You are got in fear, / Though you  
were born in Rome." His bloody brow  
/ With his mailed hand then wiping,  
forth, he goes, / Like to a  
harvestman that's tasked to mow /  
Or all or lose his hire.

VIRGILIA

His bloody brow? O Jupiter, no  
blood!

VOLUMNIA

Away, you fool! It more becomes a  
man / Than gilt his trophy. The  
breasts of Hecuba, / When she did  
suckle Hector, looked not lovelier  
/ Than Hector's forehead when it  
spit forth blood / At Grecian  
sword, contemning. Tell Valeria, /  
We are fit to bid her welcome.

Virgilia cuts threads. She gives Volumnia a look of  
reproach.

VIRGILIA

(almost a whisper)

Heavens bless my lord from fell  
Aufidius!

VOLUMNIA

He'll beat Aufidius' head below his  
knee / And tread upon his neck.

The Gentlewoman sees in Valeria, who's as nicely turned out  
as Volumnia. Virgilia stands.

VALERIA

My ladies both, good day to you.

VOLUMNIA

Sweet madam.

They kiss each other on the cheeks. Valeria then gives a hug  
to Virgilia.

VIRGILIA

I am glad to see your ladyship.

VALERIA

How are you both? You are manifest  
housekeepers. What are you sewing

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VALERIA (cont'd)  
 here? A fine spot, in good  
 faith. How does your little son?

VIRGILIA  
 I thank your ladyship; well, good  
 madam.

VOLUMNIA  
 He had rather see the swords and  
 hear a drum than look upon his  
 schoolmaster.

VALERIA  
 O' my word, the father's son! I'll  
 swear 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my  
 troth, I looked upon him o'  
 Wednesday half an hour together.  
 'Has such a confirmed countenance!  
 I saw him run after a gilded  
 butterfly, and when he caught it,  
 he let it go again, and after it  
 again, and over and over he comes,  
 and up again, caught it again. Or  
 whether his fall enraged him, or  
 how 'twas, he did so set his teeth  
 and tear it! Oh, I warrant, how he  
 mamocked it!

VOLUMNIA  
 One on's father's moods.

VALERIA  
 Indeed, la 'tis a noble child.

VIRGILIA  
 A crack, madam.

Virgilia returns to her sewing to start on a new patch of  
 the work.

VALERIA  
 Come, lay aside your stitchery. I  
 must have you play the idle  
 housewife with me this afternoon.

VIRGILIA  
 No, good madam, I will not out of  
 doors.

VALERIA  
 Not out of doors?

VOLUMNIA

She shall, she shall.

VIRGILIA

Indeed, no, by your patience. I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

VALERIA

Fie, you confine yourself most unreasonably. Come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

VIRGILIA

I will wish her speedy strength and visit her with my prayers, but I cannot go thither.

VOLUMNIA

Why, I pray you?

VIRGILIA

'Tis not to save labor, nor that I want love.

VALERIA

You would be another Penelope; yet they say all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come, I would your cambric were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

VIRGILIA

No, good madam, pardon me; indeed I will not forth.

VALERIA

In truth, la, go with me, and I'll tell you excellent news of your husband.

VIRGILIA

O, good madam, there can be none yet.

VALERIA

Verily, I do not jest with you. There came news from him last night.

(CONTINUED)

VIRGILIA

Indeed, madam?

VALERIA

In earnest, it's true. I heard a Senator speak it. Thus it is: the Volsces have an army forth, against whom Cominius the general is gone with one part of our Roman power. You lord and Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioles. They nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honor; and so, I pray, go with us.

VIRGILIA

Give me excuse, good madam. I will obey you in everything hereafter.

VOLUMNIA

Let her alone, lady. As she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

VALERIA

In troth, I think she would. Fare you well, then. Come, good sweet lady.

Valeria and Volumnia head to the door. Valeria turns back to Virgilia who has resumed her sewing.

VALERIA

(cont.)

Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door and go along with us.

VIRGILIA

No, at a word, madam. Indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

VALERIA

Well, then, farewell.

Valeria and Volumnia exit. Once alone, Virgilia buries her head in her hands.

EXT. BEFORE THE CITY OF CORIOLES - DAY

Martius, Titus Lartius with elements of Cominius' forces stand before the city walls, also with trumpeters and drummers. A MESSENGER jogs over to them.

MARTIUS

Yonder comes news. A wagger they have met.

TITUS

My horse to yours, no.

MARTIUS

'Tis done.

TITUS

Agreed.

MARTIUS

(to Messenger)

Say, has our general met the enemy?

MESSENGER

They lie in view, but have not spoke as yet.

TITUS

So, the horse is mine.

MARTIUS

I'll buy him of you.

TITUS

No, I'll nor sell nor give him. Lend you him I will / For half a hundred years.

(To trumpeter.)

Summon the town.

MARTIUS

How far off lie these armies?

MESSENGER

Within this mile and half.

MARTIUS

Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours. / Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work, / That we with smoking swords may march from hence, / To help our fielded friends! Come, blow thy blast.

(CONTINUED)

The trumpeters sound a parley. On the battlements, VSen.1 and VSen.2 appear. Martius takes a few steps forward and shouts up at them.

MARTIUS

(cont.)

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

The Volscian Senators look at each other in amusement. VSen.1 addresses Martius.

VSEN.1

No, nor a man that fears you less than he: / That's lesser than a little.

Drums sound off in the distant plane and reverberate in the hills surrounding Corioles.

VSEN.1

(cont.)

Hark! our drums / Are bringing forth our youth. We'll break our walls / Rather than they shall pound us up. Our gates, / Which yet seem shut, we have but pinned with rushes; / They'll open of themselves.

Sounds of blaring horns join the drums in the distance.

VSEN.1

(cont.)

Hark you, far off! / There is Aufidius. List what work he makes / Amongst your cloven army.

Martius and Titus look off in the direction of the noise and witness Aufidius' forces engaging elements of the Roman army under Commidius.

MARTIUS

O, they are at it!

TITUS

Their noise be our instruction.  
(to his men behind him)  
Ladders, ho!

Roman soldiers with ladders run forward.

Suddenly, Volscian soldiers burst from the gates of Corioles.

(CONTINUED)



MARTIUS

They fear us not, but issue forth  
their city.

He turns to his troops and draws his sword.

MARTIUS

(cont.)

Now put your shields before your  
hearts, and fight / With hearts  
more proof than shields. Advance,  
brave Titus. / They do disdain us  
much beyond our thoughts, / Which  
makes me sweat with wrath. Come  
on, my fellows. / He that retires,  
I'll take him for a Volsce, / And  
he shall feel mine edge.

Alarum. The Roman troop charges forward to engage the Volscians, who have the advantage of some archers covering them from the parapets. The Romans are beaten back and return to their original positions, Martius charging after them, hot with rage. He dresses them down as the arrows whiz past him. He doesn't flinch, even if his men do.

MARTIUS

All the contagion of the south  
light on you, / You shames of Rome!  
you herd of -- Boils and plagues /  
Plaster you o'er, that you may be  
abhorred / Farther than seen, and  
on infect another / Against the  
wind a mile! / You souls of geese,  
/ That bear the shapes of men, how  
have you run / From slaves that  
apes would beat! Pluto and hell! /  
All hurt behind! backs red, and  
faces pale; / With flight and agued  
fear! / Mend and charge home, / Or,  
by the fires of heaven, I'll leave  
the foe / And make my wars on  
you! Look to't! Come on! / If  
you'll stand fast, we'll beat them  
to their wives, / As they to our  
trenches. Follow me!

Another alarum. The Roman forces regroup and charge again, with Martius way out in front, leading the way.

Titus directs archery and ballista fire from the rear to keep the Volscian archers on the walls occupied.

The Volscian guards fall back to the gates, which open for them. Martius grins and shouts back at his advancing men.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIUS

(cont.)

So, now the gates are ope. Now  
prove good seconds. / 'Tis for the  
followers fortune widens them, /  
Not for the fliers. Mark me, and  
do the like.

Martius breaks into a full sprint toward the gates. Some SOLDIERS behind Martius slow up when they see the most of the retreating Volscians reenter Corioles, with Martius closing in and the gate swinging back to close.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER

Foolhardiness, not I.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER

Nor I.

Martius just makes it in as the gates shut behind him.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER

See, they have shut him in.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER

To th' pot, I warrant him.

They catch sight of a handful of Volscians not quick enough to follow the majority of their element back inside and chase after them.

EXT. WITHIN THE GATES OF CORIOLES

Martius, after making it inside sees that there are none of his troop behind him and several dozen Volscians in front of him. He shakes off his shock, sets his jaw, narrows his eyes and, with a wild ROAR, he charges the surprised Volscians.

OUTSIDE CORIOLES

Titus rides up to the Soldiers who decided to not follow Martius into Corioles.

TITUS

What is become of Martius?

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER

Slain sir, doubtless.

(CONTINUED)

## FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER

Following the fliers at the very  
 heels, / With them he enters,  
 who upon the sudden / Clapped to  
 their gates; he is himself alone, /  
 To answer all the city.

## TITUS

O noble fellow! / Who sensibly  
 outdares his senseless sword, /  
 And, when it bows, stand'st  
 up. Thou art lost, Martius.

## WITHIN THE GATES OF CORIOLES

Martius, in full berzerker fury, rapidly hacks his way  
 through the panicked Volscian ranks, and the route is on.

Chasing the human stampede through the streets Martius gets  
 to one of the staircases leading to the ramparts and the  
 frightened archers, whose shaking terror at seeing this huge  
 but agile warrior make mincemeat of their mates throws off  
 their aim. Now they have to contend with Martius on their  
 walls, and it's no contest.

Martius charges through a bunch of the archers, tossing  
 those out of the way who don't themselves jump away from  
 him, making his way back to the hinges of one of the gates,  
 where he jumps down, using his weight to snap the reeds that  
 give the gate its spring, also to help break his fall.

He pulls open the gate. Some Volscians work up the nerve to  
 try and stop him, so he gets to work on them.

## OUTSIDE CORIOLES

Titus shakes his head and continues with his soliloquy.

## TITUS

Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as  
 if the world / Were feverous and  
 did tremble.

First Roman Soldier spots one of the gates swinging open.

## FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER

Look, sir.

Martius, covered in blood emerges from the gate, as it  
 continues to open wider.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS  
 (squints)  
 O, 'tis, Martius!  
 (to men)  
 Let's fetch him off, or make remain  
 alike.

He urges the Soldiers forward and they charge through what's left of Corioles' protectors to link up with Martius and enter the city.

Similarly motivated, the rest of the Roman troop charge on in--and behind them, civilian camp followers.

INSIDE CORIOLES - A SHORT WHILE LATER

From a civic center balcony, the Volscian Senators watch in horror and dismay as their town gets sacked.

A few paces off, within the Senators' view, we see the three Roman Soldiers among those who followed Titus into Corioles. Their arms are laden with spoils.

FIRST ROMAN SOLDIER  
 This will I carry to Rome.

SECOND ROMAN SOLDIER  
 And I this.

The Third Soldier drops a coin on a flat surface, cocking an ear to gauge its sound. Dissatisfied with the dull clank, he smacks the coin away from his sight.

THIRD ROMAN SOLDIER  
 A murrain on't! I took this for  
 silver.

ALARUM continues still afar off. It is ANSWERED by one directly above these three Soldiers.

CORIOLES - BATTLEMENTS

Titus blasts a specific pattern of notes on a large, curled horn in the direction of the battle on the plain, further from the town. Next to him, Martius, still caked with blood and grime, sits on a barrel and takes a deep drink of water from a clay pitcher. He catches sight of anarchy below him and snorts.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIUS

(shakes head)

See here these movers that do prize  
their hours / At a cracked drachma!  
Cushions, leaden spoons, / Irons of  
a doit, doublets that hangmen would  
/ Bury with those that wore them,  
these base slaves, / Ere yet the  
fight be done, pack up. Down with  
them!

He flings the pitcher near a throng. It shatters on the  
cobblestones, making the crowd jump. Martius chuckles and  
turns his attention to the goings on outside the walls.

MARTIUS

(cont. gazes at the distant  
battle)

And hark, what noise the general  
makes! To him!

He jumps up. Titus instinctively puts a hand on Martius'  
shoulder, which Martius shakes off. He glares at Titus.

MARTIUS

(cont.)

There is the man of my soul's hate,  
Aufidius, / Piercing our Romans.  
(places hand on Titus  
shoulder, eyes bore in)  
Then, valiant Titus, take /  
Convenient numbers to make good the  
city; / Whilst I, with those that  
have the spirit, will haste / To  
help Cominius.

TITUS

Worthy sir, thou bleed'st. / Thy  
exercise hath been too violent /  
For a second course of fight.

Martius removes his hand.

MARTIUS

Sir, praise me not. / My work hath  
yet not warmed me. Fare you well.  
/ The blood I drop is rather  
physical / Than dangerous to me.  
(smiles)

To Aufidius thus / I will appear  
and fight.

He turns and heads down the steps. Titus shouts after him.

(CONTINUED)

TITUS

Now the fair goddess Fortune / Fall  
 deep in love with thee, and her  
 great charms / Misguide thy  
 opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,  
 / Prosperity be thy page!

Titus gives Martius a salute. Stepping back onto the ground,  
 Martius salutes his young lieutenant back.

MARTIUS

Thy friend no less / Than those she  
 placeth highest. So, farewell.

TITUS

Thou worthiest Martius!

Martius makes his way out the gate. Titus hurries to a  
 nearby Centurion eating a pear on his break. There's  
 straight, tin trumpet next to him. Seeing Titus, the  
 Centurion tosses the pear in a bag and stands.

TITUS

(cont.)

Go sound thy trumpet in the  
 marketplace. / Call thither all the  
 officers o' the' town, / Where they  
 shall know our mind. Away!

The Centurion does as ordered, grabbing his trumpet and  
 blasting high-pitched notes as he runs to gather the wrangle  
 the officers.

EXT. BATTLEFIELD OUTSIDE CORIOLES - SAME TIME

Cominius and his forces fall back to the woods, where  
 archers and ballistae cover their positions. Cominius on  
 his stallion rides past his resting legions. He betrays no  
 anxiety to his men.

COMINIUS

Breathe you, my friends. Well  
 fought! We are come off / Like  
 Romans, neither foolish in our  
 stands / Nor cowardly in  
 retire. Believe me, sirs, / We  
 shall be charged again. / Whiles we  
 have struck, / By interims and  
 conveying gusts we have heard / The  
 charges of our friends. The Roman  
 gods / Lead their successes as we  
 wish our own, / That both our

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS (cont'd)  
 powers, with smiling fronts  
 encount'ring, / May give you  
 thankful sacrifice.

Enter a MESSENGER.

COMINIUS  
 (cont.)  
 Thy news?

MESSENGER  
 The citizens of Corioles have  
 issued, / And given Lartius and  
 Martius battle. / I saw our party  
 to their trenches driven, / And  
 then I came away.

COMINIUS  
 Though thou speakest truth, /  
 Methinks thou speak'st not  
 well. How long is't since?

MESSENGER  
 Above an hour, my lord.

COMINIUS  
 'Tis not a mile; briefly we heard  
 their drums. / How couldst thou in  
 a mile confound an hour, And bring  
 thy news so late?

MESSENGER  
 Spies of the Volsces / Held me in  
 chase, that I was forced to wheel /  
 Three or four miles about; else had  
 I, sir, / Half an hour since  
 brought my report.

Cominius frowns and gazes in the direction of Corioles. He catches sight of a lone figure striding toward their position.

COMINIUS  
 Who's yonder, / That does appear as  
 he were flayed? O gods! / He has  
 the stamp of Martius, and I have /  
 Beforetime seen him thus.

Martius approaches and salutes Cominius, who dismounts to greet him.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIUS

Come I too late?

COMINIUS

The shepherd knows not thunder from  
a tabor / More than I know the  
sound of Martius' tongue / from  
every meaner man.

He embraces Martius who does not return the gesture.

MARTIUS

Come I too late?

COMINIUS

Ay, if you come not in the blood of  
others, But mantled in your own.

Martius breaks into a grin and now embraces Cominius.

MARTIUS

O, let me clip ye / In arms as  
sound as when I wooed, in heart /  
As merry as when our nuptial day  
was done, / And tapers burned  
bedward!

COMINIUS

(laughs)

Flower of warriors!

They break their embrace.

COMINIUS

How is't with Titus Lartius?

MARTIUS

As with a man busied about decrees:  
/ Condemning some to death, and  
some to exile; / Ransoming him or  
pitying, threatening th' other; /  
Holding Corioles in the name of  
Rome, / Even like a fawning  
greyhound in the leash, / To let  
him slip at will.

COMINIUS

(looks around)

Where is that slave/ Which told me  
they had beat you to your trenches?  
/ Where is he? Call him hither.

(CONTINUED)



MARTIUS

Let him alone. / He did inform the  
truth. But for our gentlemen, /  
The common file--a plague! tribunes  
for them!-- / The mouse ne'er  
shunned the cat as they did budge /  
From rascals worse than they.

COMINIUS

But how prevailed you?

MARTIUS

Will the time serve to tell? I do  
not think.

(looks around)

Where is the enemy? Are you lords  
o' th' field? / If not, why cease  
you till you are so?

COMINIUS

Martius, / We have at disadvantage  
fought and did / Retire to win our  
purpose.

MARTIUS

How lies their battle? Know you on  
which side / They have placed their  
men of trust?

COMINIUS

As I guess, Martius, / Their bands  
i' th' vaward are the Antiates, /  
Of their best trust; o'er them  
Aufidius, / Their very heart of  
hope.

MARTIUS

I do beseech you / By all the  
battles wherein we have fought, /  
By th' blood we have shed together,  
/ By the vows we have made / to  
endure friends, that you directly  
set me / Against Aufidius and his  
Antiates, / And that you not delay  
the preset, but, / Filling the air  
with swords advanced and darts, /  
We prove this very hour.

COMINIUS

Though I could wish / You were  
conducted to a gentle bath / And  
balms applied to you, yet dare I  
never / Deny your asking. Take

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS (cont'd)  
 your choice of those / That can  
 best aid your action.

MARTIUS  
 Those are they / That most are  
 willing.

Martius addresses the assembled troop.

MARTIUS  
 If any such be here--/ As it were  
 sin to doubt--that love this  
 painting / Wherein you see me  
 smeared; if any fear / Lesser his  
 person than an ill report; / If any  
 think brave death outweighs bad  
 life, / And that his country's  
 dearer than himself; / Let him  
 alone, or so many so minded, / Wave  
 thus, to express his disposition, /  
 And follow Martius.

The troops waves their swords and cheer. A couple of fellows make to lift Martius, like a victorious athletic coach. He shakes them off.

MARTIUS  
 (cont.)  
 O, me alone! Make you a sword of  
 me? / If these shows be not  
 outward, which of you / But is four  
 Volsces? / None of you but is /  
 Able to bear against the great  
 Aufidius / A shield as hard as  
 his. A certain number, / Though  
 thanks to all, must I select. The  
 rest / Shall bear the business in  
 some other fight, / As cause will  
 be obeyed. Please you to march; /  
 And four shall quickly draw out my  
 command, / Which men are best  
 inclined.

Martius selects four of the toughest looking soldiers.

COMINIUS  
 March on, my fellows. / Make good  
 this ostentation, and you shall /  
 Divide in all with us.

Martius and his team head off to look for Aufidius.

## WITHIN THE GATES OF CORIOLES

Order is being restored in the town. Titus rides his horse towards the gate, accompanied by a LIEUTENANT and some others. Titus instructs the men around him.

TITUS

So, let the ports be guarded. Keep  
your duties, / As I have set them  
down. If I do send, dispatch /  
Those centuries to our aid; the  
rest will serve / For a short  
holding. If we lose the field, /  
We cannot keep the town.

LIEUTENANT

Fear not our cares, sir.

TITUS

Hence, and shut your gates upon's.  
(to a Scout)  
Our guider, come; to th' Roman camp  
conduct us.

Titus departs the city with a group of men, leaving his Lieutenant to run the occupation.

## BATTLEFIELD OUTSIDE CORIOLES

Amid the swirling dust of battle Martius and Aufidius meet up, Martius with is sword and Aufidius with his spear. They both smile warmly as they face off.

MARTIUS

I'll fight with none but thee, for  
I do hate thee / Worse than a  
promise breaker.

AUFIDIUS

We hate alike. / Not Afric owns a  
serpent I abhor / More than thy  
fame and envy. Fix thy foot.

MARTIUS

Let the first budger die the  
other's slave, / And the gods doom  
him after!

AUFIDIUS

If I fly, Martius, / Hollo me like  
a hare.

(CONTINUED)

## MARTIUS

Within these three hours, Tullus, /  
 Alone I fought in your Corioles  
 walls, / And made what work I  
 pleased. 'Tis not my blood /  
 Wherein thou seest me masked. For  
 thy revenge / Wrench up thy power  
 to th' highest.

## AUFIDIUS

Wert thou the Hector / That was the  
 whip of your bragged progeny, /  
 Thou shouldst not scape me here.

The two warriors engage, sword versus spear. Aufidius scores a hit, jabbing his spear into Martius' sword arm. A couple of VOLSCIAN SOLDIERS (VSOL1 AND VSOL2) witness the action and work up the nerve to jump Martius, just as Aufidius readies for another strike.

Vsol1 leaps on Martius back, and Martius flings his assailant with his free arm into the charging Aufidius, so Vsol1 one gets impaled on Aufidius' spear.

Martius then turns and kicks the wind out of Vsol2 before retreating to the Roman positions.

Aufidius struggles to pull his spear from the dead Vsol1 and turns to find Martius gone and Vsol2 sucking air.

## AUFIDIUS

Officious and not valiant, you have  
 shamed me / In your condemnèd  
 seconds.

Aufidius furiously rips off his helmet and slams it to the ground in disgust.

## ANOTHER PART OF THE BATTLEFIELD

Alarums sound. The Romans have won the day, and the Volscians are in full retreat. Cominius on his horse catches sight of Martius returning from his engagement with Aufidius, his arm in an improvised sling.

## COMINIUS

If I should tell thee o'er this thy  
 day's work, / Thou't ot believe  
 they deeds. But I'll report it /  
 Where senators shall mingle tears  
 with smiles; / Where great  
 patricians shall attend and shrug,

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS (cont'd)

/ I' th' end admire; where ladies  
shall be frightened, / And, gladly  
quaked, hear more; where the dull  
tribunes, / That with the fusty  
plebeians hate thine honors, /  
Shall say against their hearts, "We  
thank the gods / Our Rome hath such  
a soldier." / Yet camest thou to a  
morsel of this feast, / Having  
fully dined before.

Titus and his element join forces with Comidius and  
Martius. He grins and salutes his fellow officers.

TITUS

O general, / Here is the steed, we  
the caparison. / Hadst thou  
beheld--

Martius waves his hand and plops himself down on a log.

MARTIUS

Pray now, no more. My mother, /  
Who has a charter to extol her  
blood, / when she does praise me  
grieves me. / I have done as you  
have done--that's what I can; /  
Induced as you have been--that's  
for my country. / He that has but  
effected his good will / Hath  
overta'en mine act.

COMINIUS

You shall not be / The grave of  
your deserving. Rome must know /  
The value of her own. 'Twere a  
concealment / Worse than a theft,  
no less than a traducement, / To  
hide your doings and to silence  
that / Wich, to the spire and top  
of praises vouched, / Would seem  
but modest. Therefore, I beseech  
you--/ In sign of what you are, not  
to reward / What you have  
done--before our army hear me.

MARTIUS

I have some wounds upon me, and  
they smart / To hear themselves  
remembered.

(CONTINUED)

## COMINIUS

Should they not, / Well might they  
 fester 'gainst ingratitude / And  
 tent themselves with death. Of all  
 the horses, / Whereof we have ta'en  
 good and good store, of all / The  
 treasure in this field achieved and  
 city, / Before the common  
 distribution at / Your only choice.

## MARTIUS

I thank you, general, / But cannot  
 make my heart consent to take / A  
 bribe to pay my sword. I do refuse  
 it, / And stand upon my common part  
 with those / That have beheld my  
 doing.

Buoyed by Martius' gesture of humility, the trumpeters sound  
 a flourish and the soldiers cheer.

## ALL

Martius! Martius!...

Cominius and Titus doff their helmets in tribute. Martius  
 stands and motions the crowd to quiet down.

## MARTIUS

May these same instrumetns which  
 you profane / Never sound more!  
 When drums and trumpets shall / I'  
 th' field prove flatterers, let  
 courts and cities be / Made all of  
 false-faced soothing! / When steel  
 grows soft as the parasite's silk,  
 / Let him be made a coverture for  
 th' wars. / No more, I say! For  
 that I have not washed / My nose  
 that bled, or foiled some debile  
 wretch, / Which without note here's  
 many else have done, / As if I  
 loved my little should be dieted /  
 In praises sauced with lies.

## COMINIUS

Too modest are you, / More cruel to  
 your good report than grateful / To  
 us that give you truly. By your  
 patience, / If 'gainst yourself you  
 be incensed, we'll put you, / Like  
 one that means his proper harm, in  
 manacles, / Then reason safely with  
 you. Therefore be it known, / As

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS (cont'd)  
 to us, to all the world, that Caius  
 Martius / Wears this war's garland;  
 in token of the which, / My noble  
 steed, known to the camp, I give  
 him, / With all his trim belonging;  
 and from this time, / For what he  
 did before Corioles, call him, /  
 With all th' applause and clamor of  
 the host, / Caius Martius  
 Coriolanus. Bear / Th' addition  
 nobly ever!

Big flourish of trumpets and drums.

ALL  
 (salute)  
 Caius Martius Coriolanus!

Martius, now CORIOLANUS, smiles wanly and bows.

CORIOLANUS  
 I will go wash; / And when my face  
 is fair, you shall perceive /  
 Whether I blush or no. Howbeit, I  
 thank you.

He approaches Cominius' horse and pets it.

CORIOLANUS  
 (cont.)  
 I mean to stride your steed, and at  
 all times / To undercrest your good  
 addition / To th' fairness of my  
 power.

COMINIUS  
 So, to our tent, / Where ere we do  
 repose us, we will write / To Rome  
 of our success. You, Titus  
 Lartius, / Must to Corioles  
 back. Send us to Rome / The best,  
 with whom we may articulate, / For  
 their own good and ours.

TITUS  
 I shall, my lord.

CORIOLANUS  
 The gods being to mock me. I, that  
 now / Refused most princely gifts,  
 am bound to beg / Of my lord  
 general.

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS

Take't, 'tis yours. What is't?

CORIOLANUS

I sometime lay here in Corioles /  
At a poor man's house; he used me  
kindly. / He cried to me; I saw him  
prisoner; / But then Aufidius was  
within my view, / And wrath  
o'erwhelmed my pity. I request you  
/ To give my poor host freedom.

COMINIUS

O, well begged! / Were he the  
butcher of my son, he should / Be  
free as is the wind. Deliver him,  
Titus.

TITUS

Martius, his name?

CORIOLANUS

By Jupiter, forgot! / I am weary;  
yea, my memory is tired. / Have we  
no wine here?

COMINIUS

Go we to our tent. / The blood upon  
your visage dries; 'tis time / It  
should be looked to. Come.

They go to Cominius' tent.

EXT. AUFIDIUS' CAMP - LATER

Aufidius is at his camp, sponging grime from his face and conferring with Volscian Officer (V-OFC1).

AUFIDIUS

The town is ta'en.

V-OFC1

'Twill be delivered back on good  
condition.

AUFIDIUS

Condition? / I would I were a  
Roman; for I cannot, / Being a  
Volsce, be that I am. Condition? /  
What good condition can a treaty  
find / I' th' part that is at  
mercy? Five times, Martius, / I  
have fought with thee; so often

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



AUFIDIUS (cont'd)

hast thou beat me, / And wouldst do  
so, I think, should we encounter /  
As often as we eat. By th'  
elements, / If e'er again I meet  
him beard to beard, / He's mine or  
I am his. Mine emulation / Hath  
not that honor in't it had; for  
where / I thought to crush him in an  
equal force, / True sword to sword,  
I'll potch at him some way; / Or  
wrath or craft may get him.

V-OFC1

He's the devil.

AUFIDIUS

Bolder, though not so subtle. My  
valor's poisoned / With only  
suffering stain by him; for him /  
Shall fly out of itself. Nor sleep  
nor sanctuary, / Being naked, sick,  
nor fane nor capitol, / The prayers  
of priests nor times of sacrifice,  
/ Embargements all of fury, shall  
lift up / Their rotten privilege  
and custom 'gainst / My hate to  
Martius. Where I find him, were it  
/ At home, upon my brother's guard,  
even there, / Against the  
hospitable canon, would I / Wash my  
fierce hand in's heart. Go you to  
th' city. / Learn how 'tis held,  
and what they are that must / Be  
hostages for Rome.

V-OFC1

Will not you go?

AUFIDIUS

I am attended at the cypress grove:  
I pray you-- / 'Tis south the city  
mills--bring me word thither / How  
the world goes, that to the pace of  
it / I may spur on my journey.

V-OFC1

I shall, sir.

Aufidius mounts his chariot.

## INT. TAVERN IN ROME - EVENING

A Serving Girl pours hot wine from a jug into cups belonging to Menenius, Sicinius and Brutus. They sit together at a table which looks out into the street. There's a picked-at duck carcass on a plate on the table, and the men are in the relaxed state which comes from two rounds of drinks previous. Menenius pays the Girl, and the three pols start on this present round.

MENENIUS

The augurer tells me we shall have news tonight.

BRUTUS

Good or bad?

MENENIUS

Not according to the prayer of the people, for they love not Martius.

SICINIUS

Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

MENENIUS

Pray you, who does the wolf love?

SICINIUS

The lamb.

MENENIUS

Ay, to devour him, as the hungry plebians would the noble Martius.

BRUTUS

He's a lamb indeed, that baas like a bear.

MENENIUS

He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb. You two are old men: tell me one thing that I shall ask you.

SICINIUS

Well, sir.

MENENIUS

In what enormity is Martius poor in, that you two have not in abundance?

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

He's poor in no one fault, but  
stored with all.

SICINIUS

Especially in pride.

BRUTUS

And topping all others in boasting.

MENENIUS

This is strange now. Do you two  
know how your are censured here in  
the city, I mean of us o' th'  
right-hand file? Do you?

SICINIUS

Why, how are we censured?

MENENIUS

Because you talk of pride now--will  
you not be angry?

BOTH

Well, well, sir, well.

MENENIUS

Why, 'tis no great matter, for a  
very little thief of occasion will  
rob you of a great deal of  
patience. Give your dispositions  
the reins and be angry at your  
pleasures--at the least, if you  
take it as a pleasure to you in  
being so. You blame Martius for  
being proud?

BRUTUS

We do it not alone, sir.

MENENIUS

I know you can do very little  
alone, for your helps are many, or  
else your actions would grow  
wondrous single. Your abilities  
are too infantlike for doing much  
alone. You talk of pride: O that  
you could turn your eyes toward the  
napes of your necks, and make but  
an interior survey of your good  
selves! O that you could!

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

What then, sir?

MENENIUS

Why, then you should discover a  
brace of unmeriting, proud,  
violent, testy magistrates, alias  
fools, as any in Rome.

SICINIUS

Menenius, you are known well  
enough, too.

MENENIUS

I am known to be a humorous  
patrician, and one that loves a cup  
of hot wine with not a drop of  
allaying Tiber in't; said to be  
something imperfect in favoring the  
first complaint; hasty and  
tinderlike upon too trivial motion;  
one that converses more with the  
buttock of the night than with the  
forehead of the morning. What I  
think, I utter, and spend my malice  
in my breath. Meeting two such  
wealsmen as you are, I cannot call  
you Lycurguses. If the drink you  
give me touch my palate adversely,  
I make a crooked face at it. I  
cannot say your worships have  
delivered the matter well, when I  
find the ass in compound with the  
major part of your syllables. And  
though I must be content to bear  
with those that say you are  
reverend grave men, yet they lie  
deadly that tell you you have good  
faces. If you see this in the map  
of my microcosm, follows it that I  
am known well enough too? What  
harm can your bisson conspectuities  
glean out of this character, if I  
be known well enough too?

BRUTUS

Come, sir, come, we know you well  
enough.

MENENIUS

You know neither me, yourselves,  
nor anything. You are ambitious for  
poor knaves' caps and legs. You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS (cont'd)

wear out a good wholesome forenoon  
in hearing a cause between an  
orange wife and a forset seller,  
and then rejourne the controversy of  
threepence to a second day of  
audience. When you are hearing a  
matter between party and party, if  
you chance to be pinched with the  
colic, you make faces like mummers;  
set up the bloody flag against all  
patience, and, in roaring for a  
chamber pot, dismiss the  
controversy bleeding, the more  
entangled by your hearing. All the  
peace you make in their cause is  
calling both the parties knaves.  
You are a pair of strange ones.

The Tribunes laugh heartily at Menenius' jibes.

BRUTUS

Come, come, you are well understood  
to be a perfecter giber for the  
table than a necessary bencher in  
the Capitol.

Menenius downs the rest of his wine.

MENENIUS

Our very priests must become  
mockers, if they shall encounter  
such ridiculous subjects as you  
are. When you speak best unto the  
purpose, it is not worth the  
wagging of your beards, and your  
beards deserve not so honorable a  
grave as to stuff a botcher's  
cushion or to be entombed in an  
ass's packsaddle. Yet you must be  
saying Martius is proud; who, in a  
cheap estimation, is worth all your  
predecessors since Deucalion,  
though peradventure some of the  
best of 'em were hereditary  
hangmen.

Menenius gets up and shakes himself. The Tribunes continue  
to laugh.

MENENIUS

(cont.)

Good-e'en to your worships. More of  
your conversation would infect my

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS (cont'd)  
 brain, being the herdsmen of the  
 beastly plebeians. I will be bold  
 to take my leave of you.

Sicinius and Brutus raise their glasses in salute to the patrician and continue laughing after him as he departs.

EXT. STREET IN ROME - EVENING

Menenius walks sullenly away from the tavern. He rounds a corner and spots Volumnia, Virgilia and Valeria riding in a two-horse wagon at brisk clip.

He waves to them and the wagon halts.

MENENIUS  
 How now, my as fair as noble  
 ladies--and the moon, were she  
 earthly, no nobler--whither do you  
 follow your eyes so fast?

VOLUMNIA  
 Honorable Menenius, my boy Martius  
 approaches. For the love of Juno,  
 let's go.

The Driver is about to start up the horses, but Menenius stands in the way and puts a hand on the wagon.

MENENIUS  
 Ha? Martius coming home?

VOLUMNIA  
 Ay, worthy Menenius, and with most  
 prosperous approbation.

MENENIUS  
 Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank  
 thee. Hoo, Martius coming home?

VALERIA  
 Nay, 'tis true.

Volumnia produces a small scroll to show to Menenius.

VOLUMNIA  
 Look, here's a letter from  
 him. The state hath another, his  
 wife another; and, I think, there's  
 one at home for you.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

I will make my very house reel  
tonight. A letter for me?

VIRGILIA

Yes, certain, there's a letter for  
you; I saw't.

MENENIUS

A letter for me! It gives me an  
estate of seven years' health, in  
which time I will make a lip at the  
physician. The most sovereign  
prescription in Galen is but  
empiricotic and, to this  
preservative, of no better report  
than a horse drench. Is he not  
wounded? He was wont to come home  
wounded.

VIRGILIA

O, no, no, no.

VOLUMNIA

O, he is wounded; I thank the gods  
for't.

MENENIUS

So do I too, if it be not  
too much. Brings a victory in his  
pocket? The wounds become him.

VOLUMNIA

On's brows. Menenius, hecomes the  
third time home with the oaken  
garland.

MENENIUS

Has he disciplined Aufidius  
soundly?

VOLUMNIA

Titus Lartius writes they fought  
together, but Aufidius got off.

MENENIUS

And 'twas time for him too, I'll  
warrant him that. An he had stayed  
by him, I would not have been so  
fidiused for all the chests in  
Corioles and the gold that's in  
them. Is the Senate possessed of  
this?

(CONTINUED)

VOLUMNIA

Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes! The Senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my son the whole name of the war. He hath in this action outdone his former deeds doubly.

VALERIA

In troth, there's wondrous things spoke of him.

MENENIUS

Wondrous? Ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

VIRGILIA

The gods grant them true!

VOLUMNIA

True? pow waw!

MENENIUS

True? I'll be sworn they are true. Where is he wounded?

Menenius catches sight of the Tribunes, Sicinius and Brutus, stepping out of the tavern.

MENENIUS

God save your good worships! Martius is coming home. He has more cause to be proud.

He sees the women's wagon moving and jumps on.

MENENIUS

(cont.)

Where is he wounded?

VOLUMNIA

I' th' shoulder and i' th' left arm. There will be large cicatrices to show the people, when he shall stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin seven hurts i' th' body.

MENENIUS

One i' th' neck and two i' th' thigh--there's nine that I know.

(CONTINUED)



VOLUMNIA

He had, before this last  
expedition, twenty-five wounds upon  
him.

MENENIUS

Now it's twenty-seven. Every gash  
was an enemy's grave.

We HEAR trumpets BLARING a fanfare in the direction of where  
the wagon is heading.

MENENIUS

(cont.)

Hark! the trumpets.

VOLUMNIA

These are the ushers of  
Martius. Before him / He carries  
noise, and behind him he leaves  
tears. / Death, that dark spirit,  
in's nervy arm doth lie; / Which  
being advanced, declines, and then  
men die.

EXT. CENTRAL FORUM IN ROME - NIGHT

Many Citizens, Patricians, Legions have gathered lighting  
the Forum with many torches.

At one end of the Forum is a Rostra, a platform upon which  
public speeches are made. We HEAR trumpets BLAST a fanfare.  
Entering onto the Rostra are Cominius and Titus Lartius;  
between them, Coriolanus, crowned with an oaken garland;  
with Captains, Soldiers and a HERALD.

HERALD

Know, Rome, that all alone Martius  
did fight / Within Corioles gates,  
where he hath won, / With fame, a  
name to Caius Martius. These / In  
honor follows Coriolanus. /  
(turns to Coriolanus)  
Welcome to Rome, renowned  
Coriolanus!

Trumpets FLOURISH.

ALL

Welcome to Rome, renowned  
Coriolanus!

(CONTINUED)

CORIO LANUS

(to Cominius)

No more of this; it does offend my heart.

(to those around him)

Pray now, no more.

Volumnia, with her companions in tow, wends her way through the crowd toward her son. Cominius catches sight of her approach.

COMINIUS

Look, sir, you mother.

Coriolanus descends the Rostra to greet his mother.

CORIO LANUS

O, / You have, I know, petitioned  
all the gods / For my prosperity!

He kneels.

VOLUMNIA

Nay, my good soldier, up.

She cups her son's face in her hands as he rises.

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

My gentle Martius, worthy Caius,  
and / By deed-achieving honor newly  
named--/ What is it?--Coriolanus  
must I call thee? /

Virgilia stands close enough to Volumnia, where she can't not notice her.

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

--But, O, thy wife!

Virgilia and her husband embrace, then gaze at one another. Virgilia's eyes well up with tears to see her husband so gashed with the latest battle scrapes.

CORIO LANUS

(just to her)

My gracious silence, hail! /  
Wouldst thou have laughed had I  
come confined home, / That weep'st  
to see me triumph?

(CONTINUED)

Virgilia rests her head on husband's chest, continuing to hold him, as if to protect him from the rest of the throng come to greet the heroes.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Ah, my dear, / Such eyes the widows  
in Corioles wear, / And mothers  
that lack sons.

Menenius makes his way to Coriolanus to get his attention.

MENENIUS

Now, the gods crown thee!

CORIOLANUS

(laughs)

And live you yet?

He jostles Valeria while extending a hand to Menenius.

CORIOLANUS

(to Valeria)

O my sweet lady, pardon.

VOLUMNIA

(stuck in the shuffle)

I know not where to turn. O,  
welcome home!

(to Cominius and Soldiers)

And welcome, general! And you're  
welcome all!

MENENIUS

(takes Coriolanus' hand)

A hundred thousand welcomes! / I  
could weep / And I could laugh; I  
am light and heavy. Welcome! / A  
curse begin at very root on's heart  
/ That is not glad to see thee!

(indicates Cominius and Titus,  
too)

You are three / That Rome should  
dote on; yet, by the faith of men,  
/ We have some old crab trees here  
at home that will not / Be grafted  
to your relish. Yet welcome,  
warriors! / We call a nettle but a  
nettle and / The faults of fools  
but folly.

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS

Ever right.

CORIOLANUS

Menenius, ever, ever.

The Herald makes to disperse the crowd.

HERALD

Give way there, and go one!

Coriolanus takes a hand from his mother and one from his wife.

CORIOLANUS

Your hand and yours. / Ere in our  
own house I do shade my head, / The  
good patricians must be visited; /  
From whom I have received not only  
greetings, / But with them change  
of honors.

VOLUMNIA

I have lived / To see inherited my  
very wishes / And the building of  
my fancy. Only / There's one thing  
wanting, which I doubt not but /  
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

CORIOLANUS

Know, good mother, / I had rather  
be their servant in my way, / than  
sway with them in theirs.

COMINIUS

On, to the Capitol!

The Trumpets FLOURISH and the group heads off to the capitol building.

Brutus and Sicinius witness the parade from the shadows.

BRUTUS

All tongues speak of him, and the  
bleared sights / Are spectacled to  
see him. Your prattling nurse/  
Into a rapture lets her baby cry, /  
While she chats him; the kitchen  
malkin pins / Her richest lockram  
'bout her reechy neck, / Clamb'ring  
the wall to eye him. Stalls, bulks,  
windows /Are smothered up, leads  
filled, and ridges horsed / With

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS (cont'd)  
 variable complexions, all agreeing  
 / In earnestness to see him.  
 Seld-shown flamens / Do press among  
 the popular throngs, and puff / To  
 win a vulgar station. Our veiled  
 dames / Commit the war of white and  
 damask in / Their nicely guarded  
 cheeks to th' wanton spoil / Of  
 Phoebus' burning kisses -- such a  
 pother / As if that whatsoever god  
 who leads him / Were slyly crept  
 into his human powers / And gave  
 him graceful posture.

SICINIUS  
 On the sudden, / I warrant him  
 consul.

BRUTUS  
 Then our office may, / During his  
 power, go sleep.

SICINIUS  
 He cannot temp'rately transport his  
 honors / From where he should begin  
 ad end, but will / Lose those he  
 hath won.

BRUTUS  
 In that there's comfort.

SICINIUS  
 Doubt not / The commoners, for whom  
 we stand, but they / Upon their  
 ancient malice will forget / With  
 the least cause these his new  
 honors, which / That he will give  
 them make I as little question / As  
 he is proud to do't.

BRUTUS  
 I heard him swear, / Were he to  
 stand for consul, never would he /  
 Appear i' th' marketplace nor on  
 him put / The napless vesture of  
 humility; / Nor, showing, as the  
 manner is, his wounds / To th'  
 people, beg their stinking breaths.

SICINIUS  
 'Tis right.

BRUTUS

It was his word. O, he would miss  
it rather / Than carry it but by  
the suit of the gentry to him / And  
the desire of the nobles.

SICINIUS

I wish no better / Than have him  
hold that purpose and to put it /  
In execution.

BRUTUS

'Tis most like he will.

SICINIUS

It shall be to him then as our good  
wills, / A sure destruction.

BRUTUS

So it must fall out / To him or our  
authorities for an end. / We must  
suggest the people in what hatred /  
He still hath held them; that to's  
power he would / Have made them  
mules, silenced their pleaders, /  
And dispropertied their freedoms,  
holding them, / In human action and  
capacity, / Of no more soul nor  
fitness for the world / Than camels  
in their war, who have their  
porvand / For sinking under them.

SICINIUS

This, as you say, suggested / At  
sometime when his soaring insolence  
/ Shall touch the people--which  
time shall not want, / If he be put  
upon't, and that's as easy / As to  
set dogs on sheep--will be his fire  
/ To kindle their dray stubble; and  
their blaze / Shall darken him  
forever.

Enter a Messenger who waves at them as he approaches.

BRUTUS

What's the matter?

MESSENGER

You are sent for to th' Capitol. /  
'Tis thought that Martius shall be  
consul. / I have seen the dumb men  
throng to see him, / And the blind

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MESSENGER (cont'd)

to hear him speak. Matrons flung  
gloves, / Ladies and maids their  
scarfs and handkerchers, / Upon him  
as he passed. The nobles bended, /  
As to Jove's statue, and the  
commons made / A shower and thunder  
with their caps and shouts. / I  
never saw the like.

BRUTUS

Let's to the Capitol, / And carry  
with us ear and eyes for th' time,  
/ But hearts for the event.

SICINIUS

Have with you.

They speed off to the Capitol.

CAPITOL - ROTUNDA

Two WORKERS quickly set up seats for Senators, Tribunes,  
Patricians, etc. in the Capitol.

WORKER1

Come, come, they are almost  
here. How many stand for  
consulships?

WORKER2

Three, they say; but 'tis thought  
of everyone Coriolanus will carry  
it.

WORKER1

That's a brave fellow; but he's  
vengeance proud and loves not the  
people.

WORKER2

Faith, there hath been many great  
men that have flattered the people  
who ne'er loved them; and there be  
many that they have loved they know  
not wherefore; so that, if they  
love they know not why, they hate  
upon no better a  
ground. Therefore, for Coriolanus  
neither to care whether they love  
or hate him manifests the true  
knowledge he has in their

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

WORKER2 (cont'd)  
 disposition, and out of his noble  
 carelessness lets them plainly  
 see't.

WORKER1  
 If he did not care whether he had  
 their love or no, he waved  
 indifferently 'twixt doing them  
 neither good nor harm; but he seeks  
 their hate with greater devotion  
 than they can render it him, and  
 leaves nothing undone that may  
 fully discover him their  
 opposite. Now to seem to affect  
 the malice and displeasure of the  
 people is as bad as that which he  
 dislikes--to flatter them for their  
 love.

WORKER2  
 He hath deserved worthily of his  
 country; and his ascent is not by  
 such easy degrees as those who,  
 having been supple and courteous to  
 the people, bonneted, without any  
 further deed to have them at all  
 into their estimation and  
 report. But he hath so planted his  
 honors in their eyes and his  
 actions in their hearts that for  
 their tongues to be silent and not  
 confess so much were a kind of  
 ingrateful injury. To report  
 otherwise were a malice that,  
 giving itself the lie, would pluck  
 reproof and rebuke from every ear  
 that heard it.

WORKER1  
 No more of him; he's a worthy man.  
 (spots entrance)  
 Make way, they are coming.

They finish up their work and move on.

A fanfare SOUNDS, heralding the entrance of the Patricians  
 and the Tribunes of the People, Lictors before them:  
 Coriolanus, Menenius, Cominius and the Consul. Sicinius and  
 Brutus take their places by themselves. Coriolanus stands.

(CONTINUED)



## MENENIUS

Having determined of the Volsces  
 and / To send for Titus Lartius, it  
 remains, / As the main point of  
 this our after-meeting, / To  
 gratify his noble service that /  
 Hath thus stood for his  
 country. Therefore, please you, /  
 Most reverend and grave elders, to  
 desire / The present consul, and  
 last general / In our well-found  
 successes, to report / A little of  
 that worthy work performed / By  
 Caius Martius Coriolanus, whom / We  
 met here both to thank and to  
 remember / With honors like  
 himself.

## FIRST SENATOR

Speak, good Cominius, / Leave  
 nothing out for length, and make us  
 think / Rather our state's  
 defective for requital / Than we to  
 stretch it out.

(to Tribunes)

Masters o' th' people, / We do  
 request your kindest ears, and  
 after, / Your loving motion toward  
 the common body / To yield what  
 passes here.

## SICINIUS

We are convented / Upon a pleasing  
 treaty, and have hearts /  
 Inclunable to honor and advance /  
 The theme of our assembly.

## BRUTUS

Which the rather / We shall be  
 blest to do if he remember / A  
 kinder value of the people than /  
 He hath hereto prized them at.

## MENENIUS

That's off, that's off! / I would  
 you rather had been silent. Please  
 you / To hear Cominius speak?

## BRUTUS

Most willingly; / But yet my  
 caution was more pertinent / Than  
 the rebuke you give it.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

He loves your people; / But tie him  
not to be their bedfellow. / Worthy  
Cominius speak.

Coriolanus rises, and offers to go away.

MENENIUS

(cont.)

Nay, keep your place.

FIRST SENATOR

Sit, Coriolanus. Never shame to  
hear / What you have nobly done.

CORIOLANUS

Your honors' pardon. / I had rather  
have my wounds to heal again / Than  
hear say how I got them.

BRUTUS

Sir, I hope / My words disbenched  
you not.

CORIOLANUS

No, sir. Yet oft, When blows have  
made me stay, I fled from words. /  
You soothed not, therefore hurt  
not. But your people, / I love them  
as they weigh - /

MENENIUS

Pray now, sit down.

CORIOLANUS

I had rather have one scratch my  
head i' th' sun / When the alarum  
were struck than idly sit / To hear  
my nothings monstered.

With a quick bow, Coriolanus exits to an adjoining  
courtyard, where Virgilia sits and sews.

MENENIUS

Masters of the people, / Your  
multiplying spawn how he can  
flatter - / That's thousand to one  
good one - when you now see / He'd  
rather venture all his limbs for  
honor / Than one on's ears to hear  
it? Proceed, Cominius.

(CONTINUED)

## COMINIUS

I shall lack voice. The deeds of  
 Coriolanus / Should not be uttered  
 feebly. It is held / That valor is  
 the chiefest virtue, and / Most  
 dignifies the haver. If it be, /  
 The man I speak of cannot in the  
 world / Be singly counterpoised.

As Cominius speaks we MOVE to a corner of the hall past  
 where stands Lartius' Lieutenant (from that scene inside  
 Corioles) closest to the courtyard. He glances outside.

## EXT. COURTYARD

Cominius continues from inside. Coriolanus' brisk step slows  
 to a pained trudge. Virgilia goes to him and helps him sit  
 on a bench.

## COMINIUS(O.S.)

At sixteen years, / When Tarquin  
 made a head for Rome, he fought /  
 Beyond the mark of others. Our  
 then dictator, / Whom with all  
 praise I point at, saw him fight, /  
 When with his Amazonian chin he  
 drove / The bristled lips before  
 him. He bestrid / An o'erexpressed  
 Roman and i' th' consul's view /  
 Slew three opposers.

Coriolanus stretches out on the bench with his head in  
 Virgilia's lap.

## COMINIUS(O.S.)

(cont.)

Tarquin's self he met, / And struck  
 him on his knee. In that day's  
 feats, Weh he might act the woman  
 in the scene, / He proved best man  
 i' th' field, and for his meed /  
 Was brow-bound with the oak. His  
 pupil age / Man-entered thus, he  
 waxed like a sea, / And in the  
 brunt of seventeen battle since /  
 He lurched all swords of the  
 garland. For this last, / Before  
 and in Corioles, let me say / I  
 cannot speak him home. He stoppoed  
 the fliers, / And by his rare  
 example made the coward / Turn  
 terror into sport. As weeds before

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS(O.S.) (cont'd)  
 / A vessel under sail, so men  
 obeyed / And fell below his stem.

Coriolanus lets loose an exhausted sigh, as Virgilia strokes his hair.

ROTUNDA

Back inside, Cominius continues with his speech.

COMINIUS  
 His sword, death's stamp, / Where  
 it did mark, it took. From face to  
 foot / He was a thing of blood,  
 whose every motion / Was timed with  
 dying cries. Alone he entered /  
 The mortal gated of th' city, which  
 he painted / With shunless destiny;  
 aidless came off, / And with a  
 sudden reinforcement struck /  
 Corioles like a planet. Now all's  
 his. / When by and by the din of  
 war gan pierce / His ready sense,  
 then straight his doubled spirit /  
 Requicken'd what in flesh was  
 fatigate, / And to the battle came  
 he, where he did / Run reeking o'er  
 the lives of men, as if / 'Twere a  
 perpetual spoil, and till we called  
 / Both field and city ours, he  
 never stood / To ease his breast  
 with panting.

MENENIUS  
 Worthy man!

FIRST SENATOR  
 He cannot but with measure fit the  
 honors / Which we devise him.

COMINIUS  
 Our spoils he kicked at, / And  
 looked upon things precious as they  
 were / The common muck of the  
 world. He covets less / Than  
 misery itself would give; rewards /  
 His deeds with doing them; and is  
 content / To spend the time to end  
 it.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

He's right noble. / Let him be  
called for.

FIRST SENATOR

Call Coriolanus.

From his vantage, the Lieutenant nods and signals to  
Virgilia outside to rouse her husband.

LIEUTENANT

(to assembled)

He doth appear.

As Coriolanus emerges back into view, he sucks it up and  
stands before those assembled.

MENENIUS

The Senate, Coriolanus, are well  
pleased / To make thee consul.

CORIOLANUS

I do owe them still/ My life and  
services.

MENENIUS

It then remains / That you do speak  
to the people.

After a dumbstruck pause, Coriolanus slumps a little. He  
looks around to Menenius, Senators and Tribunes.

CORIOLANUS

I do beseech you, / Let me o'erleap  
that custom; for I cannot / Put on  
the gown, stand naked, and entreat  
them / For my wounds' sake to give  
their suffrage. / Please you that I  
may pass this doing.

SICINIUS

Sir, the people / Must have their  
voices; neither will they bate /  
One jot of ceremony.

MENENIUS

Put them not to't. / Pray you, go  
fit you to the custom and / Take to  
you, as your predecessors have, /  
Your honor with your form.

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS

It is a part / That I shall blush  
in acting, and might well / Be  
taken from the people.

BRUTUS

(to Sicinius)

Mark you that?

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

To brag unto them "Thus I did, and  
thus!" / Show them th' unaching  
scars which I should hide, / As if  
I had received them for the hire /  
Of their breath only!

MENENIUS

Do not stand upon't. / We recommend  
to you, tribunes of the people, /  
Our purpose to them; and to our  
noble consul / Wish we all joy and  
honor.

He stands and the Senators follow in suit.

SENATORS

To Coriolanus come all joy and  
honor!

Taking it as their cue, CORNETISTS sound a FANFARE. The  
meeting breaks, with everyone exiting the Rotunda but  
Sicinius and Brutus.

BRUTUS

You see how he intends to use the  
people.

SICINIUS

May they perceive's intent! He  
will require them / As if he did  
contemn what he requested / Should  
be in them to give.

BRUTUS

Come, we'll inform them / Of our  
proceedings here. On th'  
marketplace / I know they do attend  
us.

They head off to join the citizenry.

EXT. MARKETPLACE - MORNING

Various Citizens are gathered near a wine stall.

FIRST CITIZEN

Once if he do require our voices we ought not to deny him.

SECOND CITIZEN

We may, sir, if we will.

THIRD CITIZEN

We have power in ourselves to do it, but it is a power that we have no power to do. For if he show us his wounds and tell us his deeds, we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them. So, if he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous; and for the multitude to be ingrateful were to make a monster of the multitude; of the which we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

FIRST CITIZEN

And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

THIRD CITIZEN

We have been called so of many, not that our heads are some brown, some black, some abram, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely colored; and truly I think if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south, and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' th' compass.

SECOND CITIZEN

Think you so? Which way do you judge my wit would fly?

(CONTINUED)

THIRD CITIZEN

Nay, your wit will not so soon out  
as another man's will; 'tis  
strongly wedged up in a  
blockhead. But if it were at  
liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

SECOND CITIZEN

Why that way?

THIRD CITIZEN

To lose itself in a fog, where  
being three parts melted away with  
rotten dews, the fourth would  
return for conscience sake to help  
get thee a wife.

SECOND CITIZEN

You are never without your  
tricks. You may, you may!

THIRD CITIZEN

Are you all resolved to give your  
voices? But that's no matter, the  
greater part carries it. I say, if  
he would incline to the people,  
there was never a worthier man.

Coriolanus enters the Marketplace, wearing a "gown of  
humility". Menenius accompanies him.

THIRD CITIZEN

(cont.)

Here he comes, and in the gown of  
humility. Mark his behavior. We  
are not to stay all together, but  
to come by him where he stands, by  
ones, by twos, and by threes. He's  
to make his requests by  
particulars; wherein every one of  
us has a single honor, in giving  
him our own voices with our own  
tongues. Therefore follow me, and  
I'll direct you how you shall go by  
him.

ALL

Content, content.

They move off towards the general direction of Coriolanus,  
who nervously scans the throng of the Marketplace and  
scratches under his itchy gown.

(CONTINUED)



Menenius folds up one of Coriolanus' sleeves to better expose the scars on that arm. Coriolanus fidgets and covers it again.

MENENIUS

O sir, you are not right. Have you not known / The worthiest men have done't?

CORIOLANUS

What must I say? / "I pray, sir" - Plague upon't! I cannot bring / My tongue to such a pace. "Look, sir, my wounds. / I got them in my country's service, when / Some certain of your brethren roared and ran / From th' noise of our own drums."

MENENIUS

O me, the gods! / You must not speak of that. You must desire them / To think upon you.

CORIOLANUS

Think upon me? Hang 'em! / I would they would forget me, like the virtues / Which our divines lose by 'em.

MENENIUS

You'll mar all. / I'll leave you. Pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you, / In wholesome manner.

Menenius leaves Coriolanus to his own devices.

CORIOLANUS

(calls after Menenius)  
Bid them wash their faces / And keep their teeth clean.

Enter three of the Citizens.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)  
So, here comes a brace. / You know the cause, sir, of my standing here.

THIRD CITIZEN

We do, sir. Tell us what hath brought you to't.

(CONTINUED)

CORIO LANUS

Mine own desert.

SECOND CITIZEN

You own desert?

CORIO LANUS

Ay, not mine own desire.

THIRD CITIZEN

How not your own desire?

CORIO LANUS

No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet  
to trouble the poor with begging.

THIRD CITIZEN

You must think, if we give you  
anything, we hope to gain by you.

CORIO LANUS

Well than, I pray, you price o' th'  
consulship?

FIRST CITIZEN

The price is to ask it kindly.

CORIO LANUS

Kindly, sir, I pray, let me  
ha't. I have wounds to show you,  
which shall be your in  
private. Your good voice,  
sir. What say you?

SECOND CITIZEN

You shall ha't, worthy sir.

CORIO LANUS

A match, sir. There's in all two  
worthy voices begged. I have your  
alms. Adieu.

THIRD CITIZEN

But this is something odd.

SECOND CITIZEN

An 'twere to give again - but 'tis  
no matter.

Those three Citizens move on, while two others move into  
view. Coriolanus clears his throat.

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS

Pray you now, if it may stand with the tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the customary gown.

FOURTH CITIZEN

You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

CORIOLANUS

Your enigma?

FOURTH CITIZEN

You have been a scourge to her enemies; you have been a rod to her friends. You have not indeed loved the common people.

CORIOLANUS

You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them. 'Tis a condition they account gentle; and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practice the insinuating nod and be off to them most counterfeitly. That is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man and give it bountiful to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul.

He offers his hand. The Fifth Citizen shakes it.

FIFTH CITIZEN

We hope to find you our friend, and therefore give you our voices heartily.

FOURTH CITIZEN

You have received many wounds for your country.

CORIOLANUS

I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIO LANUS (cont'd)  
 your voices, and so trouble you no  
 farther.

FOURTH CITIZEN  
 The gods give you joy, sir.

FIFTH CITIZEN  
 Heartily!

The Fourth and Fifth Citizens move off. Coriolanus looks  
 around.

CORIO LANUS  
 Most sweet voices!  
 (to himself)  
 Better it is to die, better to  
 starve, / Than crave the hire which  
 first we do deserve. / Why in this  
 wolvish toge should I stand here, /  
 To beg of Hob and Dick that does  
 appear / Their needless  
 vouces? Custom calls me to't. /  
 What custom wills, in all things  
 should we do't, / The dust on  
 antique time would lie unswept /  
 And mountainous error be too highly  
 heaped / For truth t'  
 o'erpeer. Rather than fool it so,  
 / Let the high office and the honor  
 go / To one that would do thus. I  
 am half through; / The one part  
 suffered, the other will I do.

There is a passage of time, wherein we SEE Coriolanus  
 beseeching and pressing flesh with passers by. He even gets  
 around to showing a wound, now & then.

Three more Citizens pass by.

CORIO LANUS  
 Here come moe voices.  
 (to Citizens)  
 Your voices! For your voices I  
 have fought; / Watched for your  
 voices; for your voices bear / Of  
 wound two dozen odd; battles thrice  
 six / I have seen and heard of; for  
 your voices / Have done many  
 things, some less, some more. /  
 Your voices! indeed, I would be  
 consul.

(CONTINUED)

SIXTH CITIZEN

He has done nobly, and cannot go  
without any honest man's voice.

SEVENTH CITIZEN

There fore let him be consul. The  
gods give him joy, and make him  
good friend to the people!

SIXTH CITIZEN

Amen, amen.

SEVENTH CITIZEN

God save thee, noble consul!

They move on.

CORIO LANUS

Worthy voices!

Enter Menenius, with Brutus and Sicinius.

MENENIUS

You have stood your limitation, and  
the tribunes / Endue you with the  
people's voice. Remains / That, in  
th' official marks invested, you /  
Anon do meet the Senate.

CORIO LANUS

Is this done?

SICINIUS

The custom of request you have  
discharged. / The people do admit  
you, and are summoned / To meet  
anon upon your approbation.

CORIO LANUS

Where? at the Senate House?

SICINIUS

There, Coriolanus.

CORIO LANUS

May I change these garments?

SICINIUS

You may, sir.

CORIO LANUS

That I'll straight do; and, knowing  
myself again, / Repair to th'  
Senate House.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

I'll keep you company.  
 (to Tribunes)  
 Will you along?

BRUTUS

We stay here for the people.

SICINIUS

Fare you well.

Coriolanus and Menenius head off.

SICINIUS

(cont.)

He has it now, and by his looks,  
 methinks, / 'Tis warm at's heart.

BRUTUS

With a proud heart he wore his  
 humble weeds. / Will you dismiss  
 the people?

Enter Citizens.

SICINIUS

How now, my masters! Have you  
 chose this man?

FIRST CITIZEN

He has our voices, sir.

BRUTUS

We pray the gods he may deserve  
 your loves.

SECOND CITIZEN

Amen, sir. To my poor unworthy  
 notice, / He mocked us when he  
 begged our voices.

THIRD CITIZEN

(lightbulb goes off)

Certainly / He flouted us  
 downright.

FIRST CITIZEN

No, 'tis his kind of speech; he did  
 not mock us.

SECOND CITIZEN

Not one amongst us, save yourself,  
 but says / He used us

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SECOND CITIZEN (cont'd)  
scornfully. He should have showed  
us / His marks of merit, wounds  
received for's country.

SICINIUS  
Why, so he did, I am sure.

SECOND CITIZEN  
No, no! No man saw 'em.

THIRD CITIZEN  
He said he had wounds, which he  
could show in private; / And with  
his hat, thus waving it in scorn, /  
"I would be your consul," say he.  
"Aged custom, / But by your voices,  
will not so permit me. / Your  
voices therefore." When we granted  
that, / Here was "I thank you for  
your voices, thank you! / Your most  
sweet voices! Now you have left  
your voices, / I have no further  
with you." Was not this mockery?

SICINIUS  
Why either were you ignorant to see  
it, / Or, seeing it, of such  
childish friendliness / To yield  
your voices?

BRUTUS  
Could you not have told him / As  
you were lessoned? When he had no  
power, / But was a petty servant to  
the state, / He was your enemy,  
ever spake against / Your liberties  
and the charters that you bear / I'  
th' body of the weal; and now,  
arriving / A place of potency and  
sway o' th' state, / If he should  
still malignantly remain / Fast foe  
to th' plebeii, your voices might /  
Be curses to yourselves. You  
should have said / That as his  
worthy deeds did claim no less /  
That what he stood for, so his  
gracious nature / Would think upon  
you for your voices and/ Translate  
his malice towards you into love, /  
Standing your friendly lord.

(CONTINUED)

## SICINIUS

Thus to have said, / As you were  
 fore-advised, had touched his  
 spirit / And tried his inclination;  
 from him plucked / Either his  
 gracious promise, which you might /  
 As cause had called you up, have  
 held him to; / Or else it would  
 have galled his surly nature, /  
 Which easily endures not article /  
 Tying him to aught. So putting him  
 to rage, / You should have ta'en  
 the advantage of his choler / And  
 passed him unelected.

## BRUTUS

Did you perceive / He did solicit  
 you in free contempt / When he did  
 need your loves, and do you think /  
 That his contempt shall not be  
 bruising to you / When he hath  
 power to crush? Why, had your  
 bodies / No heart among you? Or  
 had you tongues to cry / Against  
 the rectorship of judgment?

## SICINIUS

Have you, / Ere now, denied the  
 asker? And now again, / Of him  
 that did not ask but mock, bestow /  
 You sued-for tongues!

## THIRD CITIZEN

He's not confirmed; we may deny him  
 yet.

## SECOND CITIZEN

And will deny him. / I'll have five  
 hundred voices of that sound.

## FIRST CITIZEN

I twice five hundred, and their  
 friends to piece 'em.

## BRUTUS

Get you hence instantly, and tell  
 those friends / They have chose a  
 consul that will from them take /  
 Their liberties; make them of no  
 more voice / Than dogs, that are as  
 often beat for barking / As  
 therefore kept to do so.

(CONTINUED)



SICINIUS

Let them assemble, / And on a safer  
 judgment all revoke / Your ignorant  
 election. Enforce his pride, / And  
 his old hate unto you. Besides,  
 forget not / With what contempt he  
 wore the humble weed, / How in his  
 suit he scorned you ; but your  
 loves, / Thinking upon his  
 services, took from you / Th'  
 apprehension of his present  
 portance, / Which most gibingly,  
 ungravely, he did fashion / After  
 th' inveterate hate he bears you.

BRUTUS

Lay / A fault on us, your tribunes:  
 that we labored, / No impediment  
 between, but that you must / Cast  
 your election on him.

SICINIUS

Say you chose him / More after our  
 commandment than as guided / By  
 your own true affections, and that  
 your minds, / Preoccupied with what  
 you rather must do / Than what you  
 should, made you against the grain  
 / To voice him consul. Lay the  
 fault on us.

BRUTUS

Ay, spare us not. Say we read  
 lectures to you, / How youngly he  
 began to serve his country, / How  
 long continued, and what stock he  
 springs of, / The noble house o'  
 th' Martians, from whence came /  
 That Ancus Martius, Numa's  
 daughter's son, / Who after great  
 Hostilius here was king; / Of the  
 same house Publius and Quintus  
 were, / That our best water brought  
 by conduits hither; / And  
 [Censorinus,] nobly namèd so, /  
 Twice being [by the people chosen]  
 censor, / Was his great ancestor.

SICINIUS

One thus descended, / That hath  
 beside well in his person wrought /  
 To be set high in place, we did  
 commend / To your remembrances; but

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS (cont'd)  
 you have found, / Scaling his  
 present bearing with his past, /  
 That he's your fixèd enemy, and  
 revoke / Your sudden approbation.

BRUTUS  
 Say, you ne'er had done't - / Harp  
 on that still - but by our putting  
 on; / And presently, when you have  
 drawn your number, / Repair to th'  
 Capitol.

ALL  
 We will so: almost all / Repent in  
 their election.

Exeunt Citizens.

BRUTUS  
 Let them go on. / This mutiny were  
 better put in hazard / Than stay  
 past doubt, for greater. / If, as  
 his nature is, he fall in rage /  
 With their refusal, both observe  
 and answer / The vantage of his  
 anger.

SICINIUS  
 To th' Capitol, come. We will be  
 there before the stream o' th'  
 people, / And this shall seem, as  
 partly 'tis, their own, / Which we  
 have goaded onward.

The Tribunes head off.

EXT. SENATE HOUSE - DAY - ESTABLISHING

The Senate House is a more square and bureaucratic edifice than the nearby Rotunda. Patricians file out, followed by a somewhat less organized rush of Plebians to the amphitheater which connects the Senate House to the marketplace.

INT. SENATE HOUSE - HALLWAY

To the FANFARE of cornets enter Coriolanus, Menenius, all the Gentry, Cominius, Titus Lartius and Senators from outside.

Coriolanus confers with Titus as they continue down the hall leading to an amphitheater in the marketplace.

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS

Tullus Aufidius then had made new  
head?

TITUS

He had, my lord, and that it was  
which caused / Our swifter  
composition.

CORIOLANUS

So then the Volsces stand but as at  
first, / Ready, when time shall  
prompt them, to make road / Upon's  
again.

COMINIUS

They are worn, lord consul, so, /  
That we shall hardly in our ages  
see / Their banners wave again.

CORIOLANUS

Saw you Aufidius?

Titus smiles.

TITUS

On safeguard he came to me; and did  
curse / Against the Volsces, for  
they had so vilely / Yielded the  
town. He is retired to Antium.

CORIOLANUS

Spoke he of me?

TITUS

He did, my lord.

CORIOLANUS

How? what?

LARTIUS

How often he had met you, sword to  
sword; / That of all things upon  
the earth he hated / Your person  
most; that he would pawn his  
fortunes / To hopeless restitution,  
so he might / Be called your  
vanquisher.

CORIOLANUS

At Antium lives he?

(CONTINUED)

TITUS

At Antium.

Coriolanus laughs.

CORIOLANUS

I wish I had a cause to seek him  
there, / To oppose his hatred  
fully.

He embraces Titus.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Welcome home.

The Tribunes, Sicinius and Brutus hastily enter and rush  
ahead of Coriolanus and Titus.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Behold, these are the tribunes of  
the people, / The tongues o' th'  
common mouth. I do despise them, /  
For they do prank them in authority  
/ Against all noble sufferance.

Sicinius and Brutus block the way to Senate Chambers.

SICINIUS

Pass no further.

CORIOLANUS

Ha! What is that?

BRUTUS

It will be dangerous to go on. No  
further.

CORIOLANUS

What makes this change?

MENENIUS

The matter?

COMINIUS

Hath he not passed the noble and  
the common?

BRUTUS

Cominius, no.

(CONTINUED)

CORIO LANUS

Have I had children's voices?

FIRST SENATOR

Tribunes, give way. He shall to  
th' marketplace.

BRUTUS

The people are incensed against  
him.

SICINIUS

Stop, / Or all will fall in broil.

CORIO LANUS

Are these your herd? / Must these  
have voices, that can yield them  
now / And straight disclaim their  
tongues? What are your offices? /  
You being their mouths, why rule  
you not their teeth? / Have you not  
set them on?

MENENIUS

Be calm, be calm.

CORIO LANUS

It is a purposed thing, and grows  
by plot, / To curb the will of the  
nobility. / Suffer't, and live with  
such as cannot rule / Nor ever will  
be ruled.

BRUTUS

Call't not a plot. / The people cry  
you mocked them, and of late, /  
When corn was given them gratis,  
you repined, / Scandaled the  
suppliants for the people, called  
them / Time-pleasers, flatterers,  
foes to nobleness.

CORIO LANUS

Why, this was known before.

BRUTUS

Not to them all.

CORIO LANUS

Have you informed them sithence?

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

How! I inform them!

CORIOLANUS

You are like to do such business.

BRUTUS

Not unlike, / Each way, to better  
yours.

CORIOLANUS

Why then should I be consul? By  
yond clouds, / Let me deserve so  
ill as you, and make me / Your  
fellow tribune.

SICINIUS

You show too much of that / For  
which the people stir. If you will  
pass / To where you are bound, you  
must inquire your way, / Which you  
are out of, with a gentler spirit,  
/ Or never be so noble as a consul,  
/ Nor yoke with him for tribune.

MENENIUS

Let's be calm.

COMINIUS

The people are abused, set  
on. This paltering / Becomes not  
Rome, nor has Coriolanus / Deserved  
this so dishonored rub, laid  
falsely / I' th' plain way of his  
merit.

CORIOLANUS

Tell me of corn! / This was my  
speech, and I will speak't again -

MENENIUS

Not now, not now.

FIRST SENATOR

Not in this heat, sir, now.

CORIOLANUS

Now, as I live, I will. / My nobler  
friends, I crave their pardons. /  
For the mutable, rank-scented  
meiny, / Let them regard me as I do  
not flatter, / And therein behold  
themselves. I say again, / In

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS (cont'd)  
 soothing them we nourish 'gainst  
 our Senate / The cockle of  
 rebellion, insolence, sedition, /  
 Which we ourselves have plowed for,  
 sowed, and scattered / By mingling  
 them with us, the honored number, /  
 Who lack not virtue, no, nor power,  
 but that / Which they have given to  
 beggars.

MENENIUS  
 Well, no more.

FIRST SENATOR  
 No more words, we beseech you.

CORIOLANUS  
 How? no more? / As for my country I  
 have shed my blood, / Not fearing  
 outward force, so shall my lungs /  
 Coin words till their decay against  
 those measles / Which we disdain  
 should tetter us, yet sought / The  
 very way to catch them.

BRUTUS  
 You speak o' th' people / As if you  
 were a god to punish, not / A man  
 of their infirmity.

SICINIUS  
 'Twere well we let the people  
 know't.

MENENIUS  
 What, what? His choler?

CORIOLANUS  
 Choler! Were I as patient as the  
 midnight sleep, / By Jove, 'twould  
 be my mind.

SICINIUS  
 It is a mind / That shall remain a  
 poison where it is, / Not poison  
 any further.

CORIOLANUS  
 Shall remain! / Hear you this  
 Triton of the minnows? Mark you /  
 His absolute "shall"?

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS

'Twas from the canon.

CORIOLANUS

"Shall"? / O good but most unwise  
 patricians! Why, / You grave but  
 reckless senators, have you thus /  
 Given Hydra here to choose an  
 officer, / That with his peremptory  
 "shall," being but / The horn and  
 noise o' th' monster's, wants not  
 spirit / To say he'll turn your  
 current in a ditch, / And make your  
 channel his? If he have power, /  
 Then veil your ignorance; if none,  
 awake / Your dangerous lenity. If  
 you are learned, / Be not as common  
 fools; if you are not, / Let them  
 have cushions by you. You are  
 plebeians / If they be senators;  
 and they are no less / When, both  
 your voices blended, the great'st  
 taste / Most palates theirs. They  
 choose their magistrate, / And such  
 a one as he, who puts his "shall,"  
 / His popular "shall," against a  
 graver bench / Than ever frowned in  
 Greece. By Jove himself, / It  
 makes the consuls base, and my soul  
 aches / To know, when two  
 authorities are up, / Neither  
 supreme, how soon confusion / May  
 enter 'twixt the gap of both and  
 take / The one by th' other.

Cominius tugs Coriolanus' arm.

COMINIUS

Well, on to th' marketplace.

Coriolanus keeps his eyes locked on the Tribunes.

CORIOLANUS

Whoever gave that counsel, to give  
 forth / The corn o' th' storehouse  
 gratis, as 'twas used / Sometime in  
 Greece -

MENENIUS

Well, well no more of that.

(CONTINUED)



CORIOLANUS

Though there the people had more  
absolute power - / I say they  
nourished disobedience, fed / The  
ruin of the state.

BRUTUS

Why, shall the people give / One  
that speaks thus their voice?

CORIOLANUS

I'll give my reasons, / More  
worthier than their voices. They  
know the corn / Was not our  
recompense, resting well assured /  
They ne'er did service  
for't. Being pressed to th' war, /  
Even when the navel of the state  
was touched, / They would not  
thread the gates. This kind of  
service / Did not deserve corn  
gratis. Being i' th' war, / Their  
mutinies and revolts, wherein they  
showed / Most valor, spoke not for  
them. Th' accusation / Which they  
have often made against the Senate,  
/ All cause unborn, could never be  
the native / Of our so frank  
donation. Well, what then? / How  
shall the bosom multiplied digest /  
The Senate's courtesy? Let deeds  
express / What's like to be their  
words: "We did request it; / We  
are the greater poll, and in true  
fear / They gave us our  
demands." Thus we debase / The  
nature of our seats, and make the  
rabble / Call our cares fears;  
which will in time / Break oope the  
locks o' th' Senate, and bring in /  
The crows to peck the eagles.

MENENIUS

Come, enough.

BRUTUS

Enough, with overmeasure.

CORIOLANUS

No, take more! / What may be sworn  
by, both divine and human, / Seal  
what I end withal! This double  
worship, / Where one part does

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS (cont'd)

disdain with cause, the other /  
 Insult without all reason; where  
 gentry, title, wisdom, / Cannot  
 conclude but by the yea and no / Of  
 general ignorance - it must omit /  
 Real necessities, and give way the  
 while / To unstable  
 slightness. Purpose so barred, it  
 follows / Nothing is done to  
 purpose. Therefore, beseech you -  
 / You that will be less fearful  
 than discreet; / That love the  
 fundamental part of state / More  
 than you doubt the change on't;  
 that prefer / A noble life before a  
 long, and wish / To jump a body  
 with a dangerous physic / That's  
 sure of death without it - at once  
 pluck out / The multitudinous  
 tongue; let them not lick / The  
 sweet which is their poison. Your  
 dishonor / Mangles true judgment,  
 and bereaves the state / Of that  
 integrity which should become't, /  
 Not having the power to do the good  
 it would / For th' ill which doth  
 control't.

BRUTUS

'Has said enough.

SICINIUS

'Has spoken like a traitor, and  
 shall answer / As traitors do.

CORIOLANUS

Thou wretch, despite o'erwhelm  
 thee! / What should the people do  
 with these bald tribunes / On whom  
 depending, their obedience fails /  
 To th' greater bench? In a  
 rebellion, / When what's not meet,  
 but what must be, was law, / Then  
 were they chosen. In a better  
 hour, / Let what is meet be said it  
 must be meet, / And throw their  
 power i' th' dust.

BRUTUS

Manifest treason!

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS

This is a consul? No.

Brutus spots an AEDILE (a constable) patrolling the area and flags him.

BRUTUS

The aediles, ho!

The Aedile approaches the group.

BRUTUS

(points to Coriolanus)

Let him be apprehended.

The Aedile heads off.

SICINIUS

(calls after him)

Go, call the people.

(glares at Coriolanus)

in whose name myself / Attach thee  
as a traitorous innovator, / A foe  
to th' public weal. Obey, I charge  
thee, / And follow to thine answer.

Sicinius makes a grab at Coriolanus' sleeve. Coriolanus raises his hand, making Sicinius flinch a little.

CORIOLANUS

Hence, old goat!

The Patricians stand close to Coriolanus and glare at the Tribunes.

PATRICIAN

We'll surety him.

COMINIUS

(to Sicinius)

Ag'd sir, hands off.

CORIOLANUS

Hence, rotten thing! or I shall  
shake thy bones out of thy  
garments.

SICINIUS

(waves hands)

Help ye, citizens!

Enter a rabble of Plebeians, followed by the Aedile, who's brought some back-up of his own.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

(raises arms)

On both sides more respect.

SICINIUS

Here's he that would take from you  
all your power.

BRUTUS

Seize him, aediles!

CITIZENS

Down with him! down with him!

The rabble closes in on Coriolanus and his party.

SECOND SENATOR

Weapons, weapons, weapons!

Titus and others draw their swords. Citizens grab whatever they can find. The sides clash, while the Aediles and Menenius try to separate them.

ALL

Tribunes! - Patricians! - Citizens!  
- What, ho! - Sicinius! - Brutus! -  
Coriolanus! - Citizens! Peace,  
peace, peace! - Stay, hold, peace!

Menenius is pushed aside and gasps for air.

MENENIUS

What is about to be? I am out of  
breath; / Confusion's near; I  
cannot speak.

He gathers himself and heads back into the fray to get somebody's attention. He singles out Sicinius, first.

MENENIUS

(cont.)

You, tribunes / To th' people! -  
(grabs Coriolanus)  
Coriolanus, patience! -  
(to Sicinius)  
Speak, good Sicinius.

Sicinius mounts some steps to get some height.

SICINIUS

(throws up hands)

Hear me, people. Peace!

The brawl dies down.

(CONTINUED)

CITIZENS

Let's hear our  
tribune. Peace! Speak, speak,  
speak!

SICINIUS

You are at point to lose your  
liberties. / Martius would have  
all from you, Martius, / Whom late  
you have named for consul.

MENENIUS

Fie, fie, fie! / This is the way to  
kindle, not to quench.

FIRST SENATOR

To unbuild the city and to lay all  
flat.

SICINIUS

(spreads his arms)

What is the city but the people?

FIRST CITIZEN

True,

CITIZENS

(chant)

The people are the city.

BRUTUS

(over the crowd)

By the consent of all we were  
established / The people's  
magistrates.

SECOND CITIZEN

(calls out)

So you remain.

MENENIUS

And so are like to do.

COMINIUS

That is the way to lay the city  
flat, / To bring the roof to the  
foundation, / And bury all, which  
yet distinctly ranges, / In heaps  
and piles of ruin.

SICINIUS

This deserves death.

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

Or let us stand to our authority, /  
 Or let us lose it. We do here  
 pronounce, / Upon the part o' th'  
 people, in whose power / We were  
 elected theirs, / Martius is worthy  
 / Of present death.

SICINIUS

Therefore lay hold of him; / Bear  
 him to th' rock Tarpeian, and from  
 thence / Into destruction cast him.

BRUTUS

Aediles, seize him!

CITIZENS

Yield, Martius, yield!

MENENIUS

Hear me one word. / Beseech you,  
 tribunes, hear me but a word.

AEDILES

Peace, peace!

MENENIUS

(to Brutus)

Be that you seem, truly your  
 country's friend, / And temp'rately  
 proceed to what you would / Thus  
 violently redress.

BRUTUS

Sir, those cold ways, / That seem  
 like prudent helps, are very  
 poisonous / Where the disease is  
 violent. Lay hands upon him, / And  
 bear him to the rock.

Coriolanus draws his sword.

CORIOLANUS

No, I'll die here. / There's some  
 among you have beheld me fighting:  
 / Come, try upon yourselves what  
 you have seen me.

MENENIUS

Down with that sword! Tribunes,  
 withdraw awhile.

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

Lay hands upon him.

Menenius glares at Brutus then turns to Coriolanus' supporters.

MENENIUS

Help Martius, help! / You that be noble, help him, young and old!

CITIZENS

Down with him! down with him!

The big brawl continues. The Citizens, Tribunes and Aediles are beat back by the opposite party, with Coriolanus at the head. When the people have retreated, Menenius puts himself in front of Coriolanus to keep him from continuing the chase.

MENENIUS

Go, get you to your house! be gone, away! / All will be naught else.

SECOND SENATOR

Get you gone.

CORIOLANUS

Stand fast! / We have has many friends as enemies.

MENENIUS

Shall it be put to that?

FIRST SENATOR

The gods forbid! / I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house; / Leave us to cure this cause.

MENENIUS

For 'tis sore upon us / You cannot tent yourself. Be gone, beseech you.

COMINIUS

Come, sir, along with us.

CORIOLANUS

I would they were barbarians, as they are, / Though in Rome littered; not Romans, as they are not, / Though calvèd i' th' porch o' th' Capitol -

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

Be gone. / Put not your worthy rage  
into your tongue. / One time will  
owe another.

CORIOLANUS

On fair ground / I could beat forty  
of them.

MENENIUS

I could myself / Take up a brace o'  
th' best of them; yea, the two  
tribunes.

COMINIUS

But now 'tis odds beyond  
arithmetic, / And manhood is called  
foolery when it stands / Against a  
falling fabric. Will you hence /  
Before the tag return, whose rage  
doth rend / Like interrupted  
waters, and o'erbear / What they  
are used to bear?

MENENIUS

Pray you, be gone. / I'll try  
whether my old wit be in request /  
With those that have but  
little. This must be patched /  
with cloth of any color.

COMINIUS

Nay, come away.

Coriolanus finally moves and joins Cominius & soldiers in  
exiting.

PATRICIAN

(shakes head)

This man has marred his fortune.

MENENIUS

His nature is too noble for the  
world. / He would not flatter  
Neptune for his trident, / Or jove  
for's power to thunder. His  
heart's his mouth. / What his  
breast forges, that his tongue must  
vent; / And, being angry, does  
forget that ever / He heard the  
name of death.

We HEAR the gathering noise of a throng approaching.

(CONTINUED)



MENENIUS

(cont.)

Here's goodly work!

PATRICIAN

I would they were abed!

MENENIUS

I would they were in the  
Tiber! What the vengeance! / Could  
he not speak 'em fair?

Sicinius and Brutus enter again, this time with a bigger,  
angrier rabble.

SICINIUS

Where is this viper / That would  
depopulate the city and / Be every  
man himself?

MENENIUS

You worthy tribunes -

SICINIUS

He shall be thrown down the  
Tarpeian rock / With rigorous  
hands. He hath resisted law, / And  
therefore law shall scorn him  
further trial / Than the severity  
of the public power, / Which he so  
sets at nought.

FIRST CITIZEN

He shall well know / The noble  
tribunes are the people's mouths, /  
And we their hands.

SECOND CITIZEN

He shall, sure on't.

MENENIUS

Sir, sir, -

SICINIUS

Peace!

MENENIUS

Do not cry havoc, where you should  
but hunt / With modest warrant.

SICINIUS

Sir, how comes't that you / Have  
help to make this rescue?

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

Hear me speak. / As I do know the  
consul's worthiness, / So can I  
name his faults -

SICINIUS

Consul! what consul?

MENENIUS

The consul Coriolanus.

BRUTUS

(snorts)

He consul!

CITIZENS

No, no, no, no, no!

MENENIUS

If, by the tribunes' leave, and  
yours, good people, / I may be  
heard, I would crave a word or two;  
/ The which shall turn you to no  
further harm / Than so much loss of  
time.

SICINIUS

Speak briefly then, / For we are  
peremptory to dispatch / This  
viperous traitor. To eject him  
hence / Were but our danger, and to  
keep him here / Our certain  
death. Therefore it is decreed /  
He dies tonight.

MENENIUS

Now the good gods forbid / That our  
renownèd Rome, whose gratitude /  
Towards her deservèd children is  
enrolled / In Jove's own book, like  
an unnatural dam / Should now eat  
up her own!

SICINIUS

He's a disease that must be cut  
away.

MENENIUS

O, he's a limb that has but a  
disease: / Mortal, to cut if off;  
to cure it, easy. / What has he  
done to Rome that's worth death? /  
Killing our enemies, the blood he

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS (cont'd)  
 hath lost - / Which, I dare vouch,  
 is more than that he hath, / By  
 many an ounce - he dropped it for  
 his country; / And what is left, to  
 lose it by his country / Were to us  
 all that do't and suffer it / A  
 brand to th' end o' th' world.

SICINIUS  
 This is clean kam.

BRUTUS  
 Merely awry. When he did love his  
 country, / It honored him.

SICINIUS  
 The service of the foot, / Being  
 once gangrened, is not then  
 respected / For what before it was.

BRUTUS  
 We'll hear no more. / Pursue him to  
 his house and pluck him thence, /  
 Lest his infection, being of  
 catching nature, / Spread further.

The tribunes and the people set to marching off to  
 Coriolanus' house. Menenius and the First Senator do their  
 best to keep up and keep talking with the tribunes.

MENENIUS  
 One word more, one word. / This  
 tiger-footed rage, when it shall  
 find / The harm of unscanned  
 swiftness, will too late / Tie  
 leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed  
 by process, / Lest parties, as he  
 is beloved, break out / And sack  
 great Rome with Romans.

Brutus stops and faces Menenius.

BRUTUS  
 If it were so -

Sicinius pulls him along.

SICINIUS  
 What do ye talk? / Have we not had  
 a taste of his obedience? / Our  
 aediles smote? ourselves resisted?  
 Come.

## MENENIUS

Consider this: he has been bred i'  
 th' wars / Since 'a could draw a  
 sword, and is ill schooled / In  
 bolted language; meal and bran  
 together / He throws without  
 distinction. Give me leave, / I'll  
 go to him and undertake to bring  
 him / Where he shall answer by a  
 lawful form, / In peace, to his  
 utmost peril.

## FIRST SENATOR

Noble tribunes, / It is the humane  
 way. The other course / Will prove  
 to bloody, and the end of it /  
 Unknown to the beginning.

## SICINIUS

Noble Menenius, / Be you then as  
 the people's officer.  
 (to Citizens)  
 Masters, lay down your weapons.

## BRUTUS

Go not home.

## SICINIUS

Meet on the marketplace. We'll  
 attend you there; / Where, if you  
 bring not Martius, we'll proceed /  
 In our first way.

## MENENIUS

I'll bring him to you.  
 (to First Senator)  
 Let me desire your company. He  
 must come, / Or what is worst will  
 follow.

## FIRST SENATOR

Pray you, let's to him.

EXT. HOUSE OF CORIOLANUS - ESTABLISHING

Legions stand sentry outside the residence.

INT. MARTIUS' HOUSE - PARLOR

Enter Coriolanus, with Valeria. Officers are also in the room, being served wine.

CORIOLANUS

Let them pull all about mine ears,  
present me / Death on the wheel or  
at wild horses' heels, / Or pile  
ten hills on the Tarpeian rock, /  
That the precipitation might down  
stretch / Below the beam of sight,  
yet will I still / Be thus to them.

VALERIA

You do the nobler.

CORIOLANUS

I muse my mother / Does not approve  
me further, who was wont / To call  
them woolen vassals, things created  
/ To buy and sell with groats, to  
show bare heads / In congregations,  
to yawn, be still and wonder, /  
When one but of my ordinance stood  
up / To speak of peace or war.

Enter Volumnia. She and her son lock eyes.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

I talk of you: / Why did you wish  
me milder? Would you have me /  
False to my nature? Rather say I  
play / The man I am.

VOLUMNIA

(approaches closer)

O, sir, sir, sir, / I would have  
had you put your power well on, /  
Beofre you had worn it out.

CORIOLANUS

(turns away)

Let go.

VOLUMNIA

You might have been enough the man  
you are / With striving less to be  
so. Lesser had been / The taxings  
of your dispositions, if / You had  
not showed them how ye were  
disposed / Ere they lacked power to  
cross you.

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS

Let them hang!

VOLUMNIA

Ay, and burn too!

Enter Menenius, with the Senators.

MENENIUS

Come, come, you have been too  
rough, something too rough. / You  
must return and mend it.

FIRST SENATOR

There's no remedy, / Unless, by not  
so doing, our good city / Cleave in  
the midst, and perish.

VOLUMNIA

Pray, be counseled. / I have a  
heart as little apt as yours, / But  
yet a brain that leads my use of  
anger / To better vantage.

MENENIUS

Well said, noble woman! / Before he  
should thus stoop to th' herd, but  
that / The violent fit o' th' time  
craves it as physic / For the whole  
state, I would put mine armor on, /  
Which I can scarcely bear.

CORIOLANUS

What must I do?

MENENIUS

Return to th' tribunes.

CORIOLANUS

Well, what then? what then?

MENENIUS

Repent what you have spoke.

CORIOLANUS

For them? I cannot do it to the  
gods. / Must I then do't to them?

VOLUMNIA

You are too absolute, / Though  
therein you can never be too noble,  
/ But when extremities speak. I  
have heard you say, / Honor and

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOLUMNIA (cont'd)  
 policy, like unsevered friends, /  
 I' th' war do grow together. Grant  
 that, and tell me / In peace what  
 each of them by th' other lose /  
 That they combine not there.

CORIOLANUS  
 Tush, tush!

MENENIUS  
 A good demand.

VOLUMNIA  
 If it be honor in your wars to seem  
 / The same you are not - which for  
 your best ends / You adopt your  
 policy - how is it less or worse, /  
 That it shall hold companionship in  
 peace / With honor, as in war,  
 since that to both / It stands in  
 like request?

CORIOLANUS  
 Why force you this?

VOLUMNIA  
 Because that now it lies you on to  
 speak. / To th' people, not by your  
 own instruction, / Nor by th'  
 matter which your heart prompts  
 you, / But with such words that are  
 but roted in / Your tongue, though  
 but bastards and syllables / Of no  
 allowance to your bosom's truth. /  
 Now, this no more dishonors you at  
 all / Than to take in a town with  
 gentle words, / Which else would  
 put you to your fortune and / The  
 hazard of much blood. / I would  
 dissemble with my nature where / My  
 fortunes and my friends at stake  
 required / I should do so in  
 honor. I am in this / Your wife,  
 your son, these senators, the  
 nobles; And you will rather show  
 our general louts / How you can  
 frown than spend a fawn upon 'em, /  
 For the inheritance of their loves  
 and safeguard / Of what that want  
 might ruin.

(CONTINUED)

## MENENIUS

Noble lady! / Come, go with  
us. Speak fair. You may salve so,  
/ Not what is dangerous present,  
but the loss / Of what is past.

## VOLUMNIA

I prithee now, my son, / Go to  
them, with this bonnet in thy hand;  
/ And thus far having stretched it  
- here be with them - Thy knee  
bussing the stones - for in such  
business / Action is eloquence, and  
the eyes of th' ignorant / More  
learned than the ears - waving thy  
head, / Which, often thus  
correcting thy stout heart, / Now  
humble as the ripest mulberry /  
That will not hold the handling; or  
say to them / Thou art their  
soldier, and being bred in broils /  
Hast not the soft way which, thou  
dost confess, / Were fit for thee  
to sue as they to claim, / In  
asking their good loves; but thou  
wilt frame / Thyself, forsooth,  
hereafter theirs, so far / As thou  
has power and person.

## MENENIUS

This but one, / Even as she speaks,  
why, their hearts were yours; / For  
they have pardons, being asked, as  
free / As words to little purpose.

## VOLUMNIA

Prithee now, / Go, and be ruled,  
although I know thou hadst rather /  
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf  
/ Than flatter him in a bower.

Enter Cominius.

## VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

Here is Cominius.

## COMINIUS

I have been i' th' marketplace; /  
and, sir, 'tis fit / You make  
strong party, or defend yourself /  
By calmness or by absence. All's  
in anger.

(CONTINUED)



MENENIUS

Only fair speech.

COMINIUS

I think 'twill serve, if he / Can  
thereto frame his spirit.

VOLUMNIA

He must, and will. / Prithee now,  
say you will, and go about it.

CORIOLANUS

Must I go show them my unbarbed  
sconce? Must I / With my base  
tongue give to my noble heart / A  
lie that it must bear? Well, I  
will do't.

A general sense of relief washes over the others in the  
room.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Yet, were there but this single  
plot to lose, / This mold of  
Martius, they to dust should grind  
it / And throw't against the  
wind. To th' marketplace! / You  
have put me now to such a part  
which never / I shall discharge to  
th' life.

COMINIUS

Come, come, we'll prompt you.

VOLUMNIA

I prithee now, sweet son, as thou  
hast said / My praises made thee  
first a soldier, so, / To have my  
praise for this, perform a part /  
Thou hast not done before.

CORIOLANUS

Well, I must do't. / Away, my  
disposition, and possess me / Some  
harlot's spirit! My throat of war  
be tunred, / Which quired with my  
drum, into a pipe / Small as an  
eunuch, or the virgin voice / That  
babies lulls asleep! The smiles of  
knaves / Tent in my cheeks, and  
schoolboys' tears take up / The  
glasses of my sight! A beggar's

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIO LANUS (cont'd)  
 tongue / Make motion through my  
 lips, and my armed knees, / Who  
 bowed but in my stirrup, ben like  
 his / That hath received an  
 alms! I will not do't, / Lest I  
 surcease to honor mine own truth /  
 Adn by my body's action teach my  
 mind / A most inherent baseness.

VOLUMNIA  
 At thy choice, then, / To beg of  
 thee, it is my more dishonor / Than  
 thou of them. Come all to ruin!  
 Let / Thy mother rather feel thy  
 pride than fear / Thy dangerous  
 stoutness, for I mock at death /  
 With as big heart as thou. Do as  
 thou list. / Thy valiantness was  
 mine, thou suck'st it from em, /  
 But owe thy pride thyself.

CORIO LANUS  
 Pry, be content. / Mother, I am  
 going to the marketplace. / Chide  
 me no more. I'll mountebank their  
 loves, / Cog their hearts from  
 them, and come home beloved / Of  
 all the trades in Rome. Look, I am  
 going. / Commend me to my  
 wife. I'll return consul, / Or  
 never trust to what my tongue can  
 do / I' th' way of flattery  
 further.

VOLUMNIA  
 Do your will.

Volumnia exits.

COMINIUS  
 Away! The tribunes do attend  
 you. Arm yourself / To answer  
 mildly, for they are prepared /  
 With accusations, as I hear, more  
 strong / Than are upon you yet.

CORIO LANUS  
 The word is "mildly." Pray you,  
 let us go. / Let them accuse me by  
 invention, I / Will answer in mine  
 honor.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

Ay, but mildly.

CORIOLANUS

Well, mildly be't then. Mildly!

They head out to the Marketplace.

EXT. MARKETPLACE

Enter Sicinius and Brutus.

BRUTUS

In this point charge him home, that  
he affects / Tyrannical power. If  
he evade us there, / Enforce him  
with his envy to the people, / And  
that the spoil got on the Antiates  
/ Was ne'er distributed.

An Aedile enters and joins the Tribunes.

BRUTUS

(to Aedile)

What, will he come?

AEDILE

He's coming.

BRUTUS

How accompanied?

AEDILE

With old Menenius, and those  
senators / That always favored him.

SICINIUS

Have you a catalogue / Of al lthe  
voices that we have procured / Set  
down by th' poll?

AEDILE

(produces scroll)

I have; 'tis ready.

SICINIUS

Have you collected them by tribes?

AEDILE

I have.

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS

Assemble presently the people  
hither; / And when they hear me say  
"It shall be so / I' th' right and  
strength o' th' commons," be it  
either / For death, for fine, or  
banishment, then let them, / If I  
say "Fine," cry "Fine!" - if  
"Death," cry "Death!" - / Insisting  
on the old prerogative / And power  
i' th' truth o' th' cause.

AEDILE

I shall inform them.

BRUTUS

And when such time they have begun  
to cry, / Let them not cease, but  
with a din confused / Enforce the  
present execution / Of what we  
chance to sentence.

AEDILE

Very well.

SICINIUS

Make them be strong, and ready for  
this hint / When we shall hap to  
give't them.

BRUTUS

Go about it.

The Aedile nods and exits.

BRUTUS

Put him to choler straight. He  
hath been used / Ever to conquer,  
and to have his worth / Of  
contradiction. Being once chafed,  
he cannot / Be reined again to  
temperance. Then he speaks /  
What's in his heart, and that is  
there which looks / With us to  
break his neck.

Coriolanus approaches, along with Menenius and Cominius and  
others.

SICINIUS

Well, here he comes.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

(to Coriolanus, sotto voce)  
Calmly, I do beseech you.

CORIOLANUS

Ay, as an ostler, that for th'  
poorest piece / Will bear the knave  
by th' volume.

(to Tribunes)

Th' honored gods / Keep Rome in  
safety, and the chairs of justice /  
Supplied with worthy men! plant  
love among's! / Throng our large  
temples with the shows of peace. /  
And not our streets with war!

FIRST SENATOR

Amen, amen.

MENENIUS

A noble wish.

The Aedile enters with Citizenry.

SICINIUS

Draw near, ye people.

The gathering throng tensely murmurs at the sight of  
Coriolanus.

AEDILE

List to your  
tribunes. Audience! Peace, I say!

CORIOLANUS

First hear me speak.

BRUTUS

Well, say.

SICINIUS

Peace, ho!

CORIOLANUS

Shall I be charged no further than  
this present? / Must all determine  
here?

SICINIUS

I do demand, / If you submit you to  
the people's voices, / Allow their  
officers, and are content / To  
suffer lawful censure for such

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS (cont'd)

faults / As shall be proved upon  
you?

CORIOLANUS

I am content.

MENENIUS

Lo, citizens, he says he is  
content. / The warlike service he  
has done, consider; think / Upon  
the wounds his body bears, which  
show / Like graves i' th' holy  
churchyard.

CORIOLANUS

Scratches with briars, / Scars to  
move laughter only.

MENENIUS

Consider further, / That when he  
speaks not like a citizen, / You  
find him like a soldier. Do not  
take / His rougher accents for  
malicious sounds, / But, as I say,  
such as become a soldier, / Rather  
than envy you.

COMINIUS

Well, well, no more.

CORIOLANUS

What is the matter / That, being  
passed for consul with full voice,  
/ I am so dishonored that the very  
hour / You take it off again?

SICINIUS

Answer to us.

CORIOLANUS

Say, then. 'Tis true, I ought so.

SICINIUS

We charge you that you have  
contrived to take / From Rome all  
seasoned office, and to wind /  
Yourself into a power tyrannical, /  
For which you are a traitor to the  
people.

Coriolanus' eyes widen.

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS

How? traitor?

MENENIUS

Nay, temperately! you promise.

Coriolanus stays locked on the Tribunes and their constituents.

CORIOLANUS

The fires i' th' lowest hell fold  
in the people! / Call me their  
traitor, thou injurious tribune! /  
Within thine eye say twenty  
thousand deaths, / In thy hands  
clutched as many millions, in / Thy  
lying tongue both numbers, I would  
say / "Thou liest" unto thee with a  
voice as free / As I do pray the  
gods.

SICINIUS

Mark you this, people?

ALL

To th' rock, to the rock with him!

SICINIUS

Peace! / We need not put new matter  
to his charge. / What you have seen  
him do and heard him speak, /  
Beating your officers, cursing  
yourselves, / Opposing laws with  
strokes, and here defying / Those  
whose great power must try him -  
even this, / So criminal and in  
such capital kind, / Deserves th'  
extremest death.

BRUTUS

But since he hath / Served well fro  
Rome -

CORIOLANUS

What do you prate of service?

BRUTUS

I talk of that, that know it.

CORIOLANUS

You?

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

Is this the promise that you made  
your mother?

COMINIUS

Know, I pray you -

CORIOLANUS

I'll know no further. / Let them  
pronounce the steep Tarpeian death,  
/ Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to  
linger / But with a grain a day - I  
would not buy / Their mercy at the  
price of one fair word; / Nor check  
my courage for what they can give,  
/ To have't with saying "Good  
morrow."

SICINIUS

For that he has, / As much as in  
him lies, from time to time /  
Envied against the people, seeking  
means / To pluck away their power;  
as now at last / Given hostile  
strokes, and that not in the  
presence / Of dreaded justice, but  
on the ministers / That doth  
distribute it; i' th' name o' th'  
people / And in the power of us the  
tribunes, we, / Even from this  
instant, banish him our city, / In  
peril of precipitation / From off  
the rock Tarpeian, never more / To  
enter our Rome gates. I' th'  
people's name, / I say it shall be  
so.

ALL

It shall be so! it shall be so! Let  
him away! / He's banished, and it  
shall be so!

COMINIUS

Hear me, my masters, and my common  
friends -

SICINIUS

He's sentenced. No more hearing.

COMINIUS

Let me speak. / I have been consul,  
and can show for Rome / Her  
enemies' marks upon me. I do love

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



COMINIUS (cont'd)

/ My country's good with a respect  
more tender, / More holy and  
profound, than mine own life, / My  
dear wife's estimate, her womb's  
increase, / And treasure of my  
loins. Then if I would / Speak  
that -

SICINIUS

We know your drift. Speak what?

BRUTUS

There's no more to be said, but he  
is banished / As enemy to the  
people and his country. / It shall  
be so.

ALL

It shall be so! it shall be so!

CORIOLANUS

You common cry of curs, whose  
breath I hate / As reek o' th'  
rotten fens, whose loves I prize /  
As the dead carcasses of unburied  
men / That do corrupt my air, I  
banish you! / And here remain with  
your uncertainty. / Let every  
feeble rumor shake your hearts! /  
Your enemies, with nodding of their  
plumes, / Fan you into  
despair! Have the power still / To  
banish your defenders, till at  
length / Your ignorance - which  
finds not till it feels, / Making  
but reservation of yourselves; /  
Still your own foes - deliver you /  
As most abated captives to some  
nation / That won you without  
blows! Despising, / For you, the  
city, thus I turn my back. / There  
is a world elsewhere.

Coriolanus storms off. Cominius, Menenius and Senators quickly follow. The Citizens stand stunned for a short while. The Aedile throws up his hands.

AEDILE

The people's enemy is gone, is  
gone!

(CONTINUED)

ALL

Our enemy is banished! he is gone!

They all shout, and throw up their caps.

ALL

(cont.)

Hoo! hoo!

SICINIUS

(to Citizens)

Go, see him out at gates, and  
follow him / As he hath followed  
you, with all despite; / Give him  
deserved vexation. Let a guard /  
Attend us through the city.

ALL

Come, come, let's see him out at  
gates! Come./ The gods preserve  
our noble tribunes! Come.

EXT. THOROUGHFARE NEAR THE GATES OF ROME

Coriolanus, leading his horse which is packed with gear, strides towards the gate, with his family and friends in tow.

Following behind this party are the Tribunes and their constituents, whooping it up and chanting, "Martius must go! It shall be so!"

The gates open. As Coriolanus and his party exit, the Tribunes head up the steps along the wall to get a view of them from the battlements.

The crowd behind Coriolanus' party stop before the gates.

INT. GATES OF ROME - SALLY PORT

Standing between the inner and outer gates, Coriolanus calmly consoles his wife and mother, who are both crying on his chest.

CORIOLANUS

Come, leave your tears. A brief  
farewell. The beast / With many  
heads butts me away. Nay, mother,  
/ Where is your ancient  
courage? You were used / To say  
extremities was the trier of

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS (cont'd)  
 spirits; / That common chances  
 common men could bear; / That when  
 the sea was calm all boats alike /  
 Showed mastership in floating;  
 fortune's blows / When most struck  
 home, being gentle wounded craves /  
 A noble cunning. You were used to  
 load me / With precepts that would  
 make invincible /The heart that  
 conned them.

VIRGILIA  
 (into Coriolanus' chest)  
 O heavens! O heavens!

CORIOLANUS  
 (strokes Virgilia's hair)  
 Nay, I prithee, woman -

Volumnia abruptly pulls away and tearfully glares at the crowd inside the city's gate, who continue with their taunts.

VOLUMNIA  
 Now the red pestilence strike all  
 trades in Rome, / And occupation  
 perish!

CORIOLANUS  
 (takes Volumnia's hand)  
 What, what, what! / I shall be  
 loved when I am lacked. Nay,  
 mother, / Resume that spirit when  
 you were wont so say, / If you had  
 been the wife of Hercules, / Six of  
 his labors you'd have done, and  
 saved / Your husband so much sweat.  
 (looks to Cominius)  
 Cominius, / Droop not; adieu.

He pulls slightly away from Virgilia and Volumnia.

CORIOLANUS  
 (cont.)  
 Farewell, my wife, my mother.  
 (kisses them)  
 I'll do well yet.

Coriolanus turns to Menenius, who has tears streaming down his face and dries them with a bit of his cape.

(CONTINUED)

## CORIOLANUS

Thou old and true Menenius, / Thy  
tears are salter than a younger  
man's, / And venomous to thine  
eyes. My sometime general, / I  
have seen thee stern, and thou has  
oft beheld / Heart-hard'ning  
spectacles. Tell these sad women /  
'Tis fond to wail inevitable  
strokes, / As 'tis to laugh at 'em.

(takes Volumnia's hand)

My mother, you wot well / My  
hazards still have been your  
solace, and - / Believe't not  
lightly - though I go alone, / Like  
to an lonely dragon that his fen /  
Makes feared and talked of more  
than seen, you son / Will or exceed  
the common or be caught / With  
cautelous baits and practice.

## VOLUMNIA

My first son, / Whither wilt thou  
go? Take good Cominius / With thee  
awhile. Determine on some course /  
More than a wild exposture to each  
chance / That starts i' th' way  
before thee.

Virgilia catches sight of the rabble inside the city and  
shakes her head.

## VIRGILIA

O the gods!

Cominius puts a hand on Coriolanus' shoulder.

## COMINIUS

I'll follow thee a month, devise  
with thee / Where thou shalt rest,  
that thou mayst hear of us / And we  
of thee. So, if the time thrust  
forth / A cause for thy repeal, we  
shall not send / O'er the vast  
world to seek a single man, / And  
lose advantage, which doth ever  
cool / I' th' absence of the  
needer.

## CORIOLANUS

(shakes head)

Fare ye well. / Thou hast years  
upon thee, and thou art too full /

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS (cont'd)

Of the wars' surfeits to go rove  
with one / That's yet  
unbruised. Bring me but out at  
gate.

(to all his party)

Come, my sweet wife, my dearest  
mother, and / My friends of noble  
touch. When I am forth, / Bid me  
farewell, and smile. I pray you,  
come. / While I remain above the  
ground, you shall / Hear from me  
still, and never of me aught / But  
what is like me formerly.

MENENIUS

That's worthily / As any ear can  
hear. Come, let's not weep. / If I  
could shake off but one seven-years  
/ From these old arms and legs, by  
the good gods, / I'd with thee  
every foot.

CORIOLANUS

(to Virgilia)

Give me thy hand. / Come.

Coriolanus and his party head to the outer gate. Coriolanus  
kisses his wife and mother one last time and heads out with  
his horse. The gates close behind him, as the crowd behind  
his party wildly CHEERS.

EXT. ROMAN BATTLEMENT NEAR GATES

The Tribunes and the Aedile view Coriolanus' exit from the  
city. The Tribunes turn to the people inside the city walls  
and Coriolanus' family and friends reentering the city and  
waiting for the crowd to disperse.

SICINIUS

(to Aedile)

Bid them all home. He's gone, and  
we'll no further. / The nobility  
are vexed, whom we see have sided /  
In his behalf.

The Aedile remains transfixed at the sight of the great  
Roman war hero mounting his horse and riding off.

BRUTUS

(to Sicinius)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS (cont'd)

Now we have shown our power, / Let  
us seem humbler after it is done /  
Than when it was a-doing.

Sicinius impatiently taps the Aedile's shoulder. The Aedile rouses and turns to Sicinius.

SICINIUS

Bid them home, / Say their great  
enemy is gone, and they / Stand in  
their ancient strength.

BRUTUS

(more gently, with a smile)  
Dismiss them home.

The Aedile nods and heads back down towards the crowd.

THOROUGHFARE IN ROME

The crowd disperses as the Tribunes step down from the wall and head back toward the marketplace.

They catch sight of Volumnia, Virgilia and Menenius, who are a few yards back.

BRUTUS

Here comes his mother.

SICINIUS

Let's not meet her.

BRUTUS

Why?

SICINIUS

They say she's mad.

Volumnia catches sight of the Tribunes and storms toward them, with Virgilia and Menenius close behind.

BRUTUS

They have ta'en note of us. Keep  
on your way.

Too late. Volumnia picks up her pace to catch up to them.

VOLUMNIA

(after them)

O, you're well met. The hoarded  
plague o' th' gods / Requite your  
love!

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

(looking around)

Peace, peace. Be not so loud.

VOLUMNIA

(louder)

If that I could for weeping, you  
should hear - / Nay, and you shall  
hear some.

She grabs Sicinius and spins him to her, accosting his eyes  
with a venomous glare.

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

Will you be gone?

Brutus tries to sneak away, but Virgilia blocks him.

VIRGILIA

You shall stay too. I would I had  
the power / To say so to my  
husband.

Sicinius looks and both of them and snorts.

SICINIUS

Are you mankind?

VOLUMNIA

Ay, fool, is that a shame? Note but  
this fool: / Was not a man my  
father? Hadst thou foxship / To  
banish him that struck more blows  
for Rome / Than thou hast spoken  
words?

SICINIUS

(rolls eyes)

O blessed heavens!

VOLUMNIA

Moe noble blows than ever thou wise  
words, / And for Rome's good. I'll  
tell the what - Yet go. / Nay, but  
thou shalt stay too. I would my  
son / Were in Arabia, and thy tribe  
before him, / His good sword in his  
hand.

SICINIUS

What then?

(CONTINUED)

VIRGILIA

What then? / He'd make an end of  
thy posterity.

The Tribunes, Volumnia and Menenius stare in brief shock at Virgilia's sudden bold words. Volumnia quickly recovers and turns back to the Tribunes.

VOLUMNIA

Bastards and all. / Good man, the  
wounds that he does bear for Rome!

Menenius gently pulls at Volumnia's arm to steer her away from the Tribunes.

MENENIUS

Com, come, peace.

SICINIUS

I would he had continued to his  
country / As he began, and not  
unknit himself / The noble knot he  
made.

BRUTUS

(nods)

I would he had.

VOLUMNIA

"I would he had"? 'Twas you  
incensed the rabble. / Cats, that  
can judge as fitly of his worth /  
As I can of those mysteries which  
heaven / Will not have earth to  
know!

BRUTUS

Pray, let us go.

VOLUMNIA

(pushes Brutus)

No, pray, sir, get you gone. / You  
have done a brave deed. Ere you  
go, hear this: / AS far as doth the  
Capitol exceed / The meanest house  
in Rome, so far my son - / This  
lady's husband here, this, do you  
see? - Whom you have banished, does  
exceed you all.

BRUTUS

Well, well, we'll leave you.

(CONTINUED)



SICINIUS

Why stay we to be baited / With one  
that wants her wits?

The Tribunes head off as Volumnia stays put and glare at their backsides.

VOLUMNIA

Take my prayers with you. / I would  
the gods had nothing else to do /  
But to confirm my curses. Could I  
meet 'em / But once a day, it would  
unclog my heart. / Of what lies  
heavy to't.

MENENIUS

You have told them home; / And, by  
my troth, you have cause. You'll  
sup with me?

Volumnia turns to Menenius and makes with the same hard glare she gave to the Tribunes.

VOLUMNIA

Anger's my meat. I sup upon  
myself, / And so shall starve with  
feeding.

(to Virgilia)

Come, let's go. / Leave this faint  
puling, and lament as I do, / In  
anger, Juno-like.

Virgilia stands between Menenius and Volumnia, not sure what to do. Volumnia takes her arm.

VOLUMNIA

Come, come, come.

Volumnia heads off with Virgilia, who briefly glances back at Menenius with a slight, sad shrug.

Menenius stays put, watching the women head up the street and shaking his head. He calls after them.

MENENIUS

Fie, fie, fie!

Menenius then droopingly turns and heads down a side street toward a tavern.

## EXT. ROADSIDE OUTPOST - DAY - ESTABLISHING

We DESCEND upon a bustling roadside bazaar and earthen coliseum, with dirt, dust and flies everywhere.

There is a sign prominently situated along the highway, with one arrow reading, "ROMA" and another pointing in the opposite direction, labeled, "ANTIVM".

We HEAR a ROAR from the crowd in the dusty coliseum. In line to get in is NICANOR, a Roman traveler in a wide hat to shade him from the sun, who pays his admission and steps inside.

## EXT. COLISEUM

A pair of grimy gladiators go at it against another pair, as the crowd CHEERS when they engage and make with CATCALLS and WHISTLING whenever the combatants pause too long to collect themselves.

Among those in the attendance is ADRIAN, a youthful Volscian, who enjoys an earthenware cup of wine and a hunk of roasted meat on a stick.

Nicanor steps down an aisle, looking around. He likewise has a cup of wine and meat on a stick. He catches sight of Adrian and moves to sit next to him.

NICANOR  
(nudges Adrian)  
I know you well, sir, and you know me.

Adrian turns to Nicanor.

NICANOR  
(cont.)  
Your name, I think, is Adrian.

Adrian quizzically narrows his eyes and scans Nicanor's face.

ADRIAN  
It is so, sir. Truly, I have forgot you.

NICANOR  
(removes hat)  
I am a Roman; and my services are, as you are, against 'em. Know you me yet?

(CONTINUED)

ADRIAN  
(light of recognition)  
Nicanor, no?

NICANOR  
(smiles)  
The same, sir.

They laugh, clink cups and drink.

ADRIAN  
You had more beard when I last saw you, but your favor is well appeared by your tongue. What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volscian state to find you out there. You have well saved me a day's journey.

NICANOR  
There hath been in Rome strange insurrections: the people against the senators, patricians and nobles.

ADRIAN  
Hath been? Is it ended then? Our state thinks not so. They are in a most warlike preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

NICANOR  
The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again, for the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people and to pluck from them their tribunes forever.

Adrian's eyes widen at this news, and his jaw drops.

NICANOR  
(cont.)  
This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

ADRIAN  
Coriolanus banished?

(CONTINUED)

NICANOR  
(smiles)  
Banished, sir.

Slight pause, then Adrian busts out laughing. He throws back the last of his wine.

In the arena, a gladiator makes a kill, to the ROARING approval of the crowd.

OUTSIDE COLISEUM

Adrian and Nicanor exit the venue and head to a one-horse wagon parked nearby.

ADRIAN  
You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor.

NICANOR  
The day serves well for them now. I have heard it said, the fittest time to corrupt a man's wife is when she's fall'n out with her husband. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country.

He steps in the wagon and offers his hand to Adrian to do likewise.

ADRIAN  
He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you. You have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home.

He takes Nicanor's hand and pulls himself in the bench next to his friend.

NICANOR  
I shall, between this and supper, thell you most strange things from Rome, all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you?

ADRIAN

A most royal one: the centurions  
and their charges, distinctly  
billeted, already in th'  
entertainment, and to be on foot at  
an hour's warning.

NICANOR

I am joyful to hear of their  
readiness and am the man, I think,  
that shall set them in present  
action. So, sir, heartily well  
met, and most glad of your company.

ADRIAN

You take my part from me, sir. I  
have the most cause to be glad of  
yours.

NICANOR

Well, let us go together.

Nicanor gets the horse going, and they head off in the  
direction of Antium.

A short while later, Coriolanus, in a threadbare cloak and  
hood, approaches the road sign. He looks at the arrow  
pointing towards Antium and heads in that direction, too.

EXT. ANTIUM - EVENING - ESTABLISHING

Antium is quiet, except in a couple of corners where it  
bustles with nightlife. Coriolanus views the town from a  
nearby hill and proceeds towards it.

EXT. AVENUE IN ANTIUM - EVENING

Coriolanus walks with his horse in tow, viewing damaged and  
fallen structures, some of which have scaffolding to  
facilitate repairs. In other spots there are piles of  
rubble, cleared from battle-ruined sites. Oil lamps mounted  
on poles light the street, which appears more alive and less  
bruised as the avenue progresses toward the city's center.

CORIOLANUS

(looks around)

A goodly city is this Antium. City,  
/ 'Tis I that made thy  
widows. Many an heir / Of these  
fair edifices fore my wars / Have I  
heard groan and drop. Then know me

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIO LANUS (cont'd)  
 not, / Lest that thy wives with  
 spits and boys with stones / In  
 puny battle slay me.

He spots a LAMPLIGHTER on a street corner, on a ladder and tending to one of the cauldrons of flaming oil, which provide some street light.

CORIO LANUS  
 (cont.)  
 Save you, sir.

LAMPLIGHTER  
 (descends ladder)  
 And you.

CORIO LANUS  
 Direct me, if it be will, / Where  
 great Aufidius lies. Is he in  
 Antium?

LAMPLIGHTER  
 He is, and feasts the nobles of the  
 state / At his house this night.

CORIO LANUS  
 Which is his house, beseech you?

LAMPLIGHTER  
 (points down the street)  
 This, here before you.

Down the street is a two-story structure, well lit. Faint sounds of festivity can be HEARD.

CORIO LANUS  
 Thank you, sir. Farewell.

Coriolanus heads toward the house, as the Lamplighter moves his ladder, torch and oil-laden pack mule to another lamppost.

Coriolanus comes upon Aufidius' house, listening to the festive sounds within. It's surrounded by a wall. A nearby DOORMAN at the gate chats up a LOCAL GIRL.

CORIO LANUS  
 (cont.)  
 O world, thy slippery  
 turns! Friends now fast sworn, /  
 Whose double bosoms seems to wear  
 one heart, / Whose hours, whose  
 (MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CORIO LANUS (cont'd)  
 bed, whose meal and exercise / Are  
 still together; who twin, as  
 'twere, in love / Unseparable,  
 shall within this hour, / On a  
 dissension of a doit, break out /  
 To bitterest enmity. So, fellest  
 foes, / Whose passions and whose  
 plots have broke their sleep / To  
 take the one the other, by some  
 chance, / Some trick not worth an  
 egg, shall grow dear friends / And  
 interjoin their issues. So with  
 me. / My birthplace hate I, and my  
 love's upon / This enemy  
 town. I'll enter. If he slay me,  
 / He does fair justice; if he give  
 me way, I'll do his country  
 service.

He leads his horse to an unguarded area of wall. Standing atop his horse, Coriolanus slips over the wall.

EXT. AUFIDIUS' FRONT YARD

Ringed within the outer walls are Aufidius' house, a nearby storehouse on one side and servants' quarters, further back on the property. Coriolanus warily makes his way toward an entrance but freezes when he sees a SERVINGMAN (hereinafter known as FIRST SERVINGMAN) bursting forth from the entrance, waving around an empty jug.

FIRST SERVINGMAN  
 Wine, wine, wine! What service is  
 here? I think our fellows are  
 asleep.

He dashes off towards the storehouse. A SECOND SERVINGMAN bursts forth from the main house's entrance.

SECOND SERVINGMAN  
 Where's Cotus? My master calls for  
 him. Cotus!

The Second Servingman dashes off towards the servants' quarters. Coriolanus continues toward the main house's entrance.

CORIO LANUS  
 A goodly house. The feast smells  
 well, but I / Appear not like a  
 guest.

(CONTINUED)

The First Servingman reemerges from the storehouse with a full jug. He spots Coriolanus as he hastens back to the main house.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

What would you have,  
friend? Whence are you? Here's no  
place for you. Pray, go to the  
door.

He indicates the outer gate with his head then runs back inside the main house with his jug.

CORIOLANUS

I have deserved no better  
entertainment, / In being  
Coriolanus.

The Second Servingman returns from the servants' quarters and confronts Coriolanus.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Whence are you, sir? Has the  
porter his eyes in his head, that  
he gives entrance to such  
companions? Pray, get you out.

CORIOLANUS

(heads to main house door)  
Away!

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Away? get you away!

CORIOLANUS

(stares down Servingman)  
Now th'art troublesome.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Are you so brave? I'll have you  
talked with anon.

A THIRD SERVINGMAN emerges from the servants' quarters and spots Coriolanus. The First Servingman exits the main house and, seeing Coriolanus still rooted before the door, joins the Second Servingman and Third Servingman in confronting this unwelcome guest.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

What fellow's this?

(CONTINUED)



FIRST SERVINGMAN

A strange one as ever I looked  
on. I cannot get him out o' th'  
house. Prithee, call my master to  
him.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

What have you do here,  
fellow? Pray you avoid the house.

CORIOLANUS

Let me but stand; I will not hurt  
your hearth.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

What are you?

CORIOLANUS

A gentleman.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

A marv'lous poor one.

CORIOLANUS

True, so I am.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

Pray you, poor gentleman, take up  
some other station. Her's no place  
for you. Pray you, avoid. Come.

The Third Servingman attempts to take Coriolanus' arm, but  
Coriolanus pushes him away.

CORIOLANUS

Follow your function, go, and  
batten on cold bits.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

What, you will not?  
(to Second Servingman)  
Prithee, tell my master what a  
strange guest he has here.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

And I shall.

The Second Servingman enters the main house.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

Where dwell'st thou?

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS

Under the canopy.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

Under the canopy?

CORIOLANUS

Ay.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

Where's that?

CORIOLANUS

I' th' city of kites and crows.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

I' th' city of kites and crows? What an ass it is! Then thou dwell'st with daws too?

CORIOLANUS

No. I serve not thy master.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

(gets in Coriolanus' face)

How, sir? Do you meddle with my master?

CORIOLANUS

Ay, 'tis an honest service than to meddle with thy mistress. Thou prat'st and prat'st. Serve with thy trencher. Hence!

Coriolanus backhands the Third Servingman, knocking him away. The First Servingman puts up his dukes and moves toward Coriolanus, who stares him down. The First Servingman backs away.

Aufidius appears from the main house, with a some Guards and the Second Servingman.

AUFIDIUS

Where is this fellow?

SECOND SERVINGMAN

(indicates Coriolanus)

Here, sir. I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within.

More Volscians appear at the balcony to view the scene below, including Nobles and Archers.

(CONTINUED)

The PORTER and more Guards appear with spears at ready. Coriolanus looks at them and smirks. Aufidius puts up his hands to indicate that everyone calm down.

He steps toward Coriolanus.

AUFIDIUS

Whence com'st thou? What wouldst  
thou? Thy name? / Why speak'st  
not? Speak, man. What's thy name?

CORIOLANUS

If, Tullus, / Not yet thou know'st  
me, and, seeing me, dost not /  
Think me for the man I am,  
necessity / Commands me name  
myself.

AUFIDIUS

What is thy name?

CORIOLANUS

A name unmusical to the Volscians'  
ears, / And harsh in sound to  
thine.

AUFIDIUS

Say, what's thy name? / Thou hast a  
grim appearance, and thy face /  
Bears a command in't; thou thy  
rackle's torn, / Thou show'st a  
noble vessel. What's thy name?

CORIOLANUS

Prepare thy brow to frown. Know'st  
thou me yet?

AUFIDIUS

I know thee not. Thy name?

CORIOLANUS

My name is Caius Martius,...

Aufidius' eyes narrow. The eyes of the Volscians around him widen.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

...who hath done / To thee  
particularly and to all the Volscies  
/ Great hurt and mischief; thereto  
witness may / My surname,  
Coriolanus.

(CONTINUED)

He pulls back his hood to reveal his face entirely. The Volscians gasp. Aufidius furrows his brow. An Archer on the balcony readies a shot.

## CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

The painful service, / The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood / Shed for my thankless country are requited / But with that surname - a good memory, / And witness of the malice and displeasure / Which thou shouldst bear me. Only that name remains. / The cruelty and envy of the people, / Permitted by our dastard nobles, who / Have all forsook me, hath devoured the rest, / And suffered me by th' voice of slaves to be / Whooped out of Rome. Now this extremity / Hath brought me to thy hearth, not out of hope - / Mistake me not - to save my life; for if / I had feared death, of all the men i' th' world / I would have 'voided thee, but in mere spite, / To be full quit of those my banishers, / Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast / A heart of wreak in thee, that wilt revenge / Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those maims / Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight, / And make my misery serve thy turn. So use it / That my revengeful services may prove / As benefits to thee; for I will fight / Against my cank' red country with the spleen / Of all the under fiends. But if so be / Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes / Th' art tired, then, in a word, I also am / Longer to live most weary, and present / My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice; / Which not to cut would show thee but a fool, / Since I have ever followed thee with hate, / Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast, / And cannot live but to thy shame unless / It be to do thee service.

(CONTINUED)

Coriolanus offers his hand. Dead silence for about a second. Then Aufidius bursts into a big grin and heartily embraces his stunned battlefield arch-nemesis.

## AUFIDIUS

O Martius, Martius! / Each word  
 thou hast spoke hath weeded from my  
 heart / A root of ancient envy. If  
 Jupiter / Should from yond cloud  
 speak divine things, / And say  
 "'Tis true," I'd not believe them  
 more / Than the, all-noble  
 Martius. Let me twine / Mine arms  
 about thy body, whereagainst / My  
 grained ash and hundred times hath  
 broke, / An scarred the moon with  
 splinters. Here I clip / The anvil  
 of my sword, and do contest / As  
 hotly and as nobly with thy love /  
 As ever in ambitious strength I did  
 / Contend against thy valor. Know  
 thou first, / I loved the maid I  
 married; never man / Sighed truer  
 breath. But that I see thee here,  
 / Thou noble thing, more dances my  
 rapt heart / Than when I first my  
 wedded mistress saw / Bestride my  
 threshold. Why, thou Mars, I tell  
 thee, / We have a power on foot,  
 and I had purpose / Once more to  
 hew thy target from thy brawn, / Or  
 lose mine arm for't. Thou hast  
 beat me out / Twelve several times,  
 and I have nightly since / Dreamt  
 of encounters 'twixt thyself and  
 me. / We have been down together in  
 my sleep, / Unbuckling helms,  
 fisting each other's throat, / And  
 waked half dead with  
 nothing. Worthy Martius, / Had we  
 no other quarrel else to Rome, but  
 that / Thou art thence banished, we  
 would muster all / From twelve to  
 seventy, and, pouring war / Into  
 the bowels of ungrateful Rome, /  
 Like a bold flood o'erbear't. O,  
 come, og in, / And take our  
 friendly senators by th' hands, /  
 Who now are here, taking their  
 leaves of me, / Who am prepared  
 against your territories, / Though  
 not for Rome itself.

(CONTINUED)

Aufidius steps back toward the entrance of the main house. Coriolanus grins and looks heavenward.

CORIANUS

You bless me, gods!

AUFIDIUS

Therefore, most absolute sir, if  
 thou wilt have / The leading of  
 thing own revenges, take / Th'one  
 half of my commission, and set down  
 - / As best thou art experienced,  
 since thou know'st Thy country's  
 strength and weakness - thine own  
 ways, / Whether to knock against  
 the gates of Rome, / Or rudely  
 visit them in parts remote, / To  
 fright them ere destroy.

(indicates entrance)

But come in. / Let me commend thee  
 first to those that shall / Say yea  
 to thy desires. A thousand  
 welcomes! / And more a friend than  
 e'er an enemy; / Yet, Martius, that  
 was much. Your hand. Most  
 welcome!

Aufidius offers his hand and Coriolanus shakes it. Together, they go inside.

Disappointed, the Archer lowers his bow. He, and Aufidius' guards also go inside, leaving the three Servingmen staring at the main house, dumbfounded.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

Here's a strange alteration!

The Third Servingman, glances at the other two and then chases after Aufidius' guards into the house.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

By my hand, I had thought to have  
 stricken him with a cudgel; and yet  
 my mind gave me his clothes made a  
 false report of him.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

What an arm he has! He turned me  
 about with his finger and his thumb  
 as one would set up a top.

(CONTINUED)

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in him. He had, sir, a kind of face, methought - I cannot tell how to term it.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

He had so, looking as it were - Would I were hanged, but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

So did I, I'll be sworn. He is simply the rarest man i' th' world.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

I think he is. But a greater soldier than he you wot on.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

(turns to First Serv.)  
Who, my master?

FIRST SERVINGMAN

Nay, it's no matter for that.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Worth six on him.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

Nay, not so neither. But I take him to be the greater soldier.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that. For the defense of a town, our general is excellent.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

Ay, and for an assault, too.

The Third Servingman comes back outside, addressing the other two.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

O slaves, I can tell you news.  
(comes closer to other two)  
News, you rascals!

(CONTINUED)

FIRST SERVINGMAN

What, what what!

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Let's partake.

THIRD SERVINGMAN

(smiles)

I would not be a Roman, of all nations. I had as lief be a condemned man.

BOTH

Wherefore? Wherefore?

THIRD SERVINGMAN

Why, here's he that was ont to thwack our general, Caius Martius.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

Why do you say "thwack our general"?

THIRD SERVINGMAN

I do not say "thwack our general," but he was always good enough for him.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

Com, we are fellows and friends. He was ever too hard for him, I have heard him say so himself.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't. Beofre Corioles he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

SECOND SERVINGMAN

An he had been cannibally given, he might have broiled and eaten him too.

FIRST SERVINGMAN

But more of thy news?

THIRD SERVINGMAN

Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars; set at upper end o' th' table; no question asked him by any of the

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)



THIRD SERVINGMAN (cont'd)  
 senators, but they stand bald  
 before him. Our general himself  
 makes a mistress of him; sanctifies  
 himself with's hand, and turns up  
 the white o' th' eye to his  
 discourse. But the bottom of the  
 news is, our general is cut i' th'  
 middle and but one half of what he  
 was yesterday; for the other has  
 half, by the entreaty and grant of  
 the whole table. He'll go, he  
 says, and sowl the porter of Rome  
 gates by th' ears. He will mow all  
 down before him, and leave his  
 passage polled.

SECOND SERVINGMAN  
 And he's as like to do't as any man  
 I can imagine.

THIRD SERVINGMAN  
 Do't? he will do't! for, look you,  
 sir, he has as many friends as  
 enemies; which friends, sir, as it  
 were, durst not, look you, sir,  
 show themselves, as we term it, his  
 friends whilst he's in directitude.

FIRST SERVINGMAN  
 Directitude? what's that?

THIRD SERVINGMAN  
 But when they shall see, sir, his  
 crest up again, and the man in  
 blood, they will out of their  
 burrows like conies after rain, and  
 revel all with him.

FIRST SERVINGMAN  
 But when goes this forward?

THIRD SERVINGMAN  
 Tomorrow, today, presently. You  
 shall have the drum struck up this  
 afternoon. 'Tis, as it were, a  
 parcel of their feast, and to be  
 executed ere they wipe their lips.

SECOND SERVINGMAN  
 Why, then we shall have a stirring  
 world again. This peace is nothing  
 but to rust iron, increase tailors,  
 and breed ballad-makers.

(CONTINUED)

## FIRST SERVINGMAN

Let me have way, say I. It exceeds  
 peace as far as day does  
 night. It's sprightly, waking,  
 audible, and full of vent. Peace  
 is a very apoplexy, lethargy;  
 mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a  
 getter of more bastard children  
 than war's a destroyer of men.

## SECOND SERVINGMAN

'Tis so, and as war, in some sort,  
 may be said to be a ravisher, so it  
 cannot be denied but peace is a  
 great maker of cuckolds.

## FIRST SERVINGMAN

Ay, and it makes men hate one  
 another.

## THIRD SERVINGMAN

Reason: because they then less need  
 one another. The wars for my  
 money. I hope to see Romans as  
 cheap as Volscians. They are  
 rising, they are rising.

## ALL

In, in, in, in!

They go inside.

## EXT. CITY OF ROME - DAY -ESTABLISHING

Late afternoon, approaching sundown: Citizens go placidly  
 about their business.

## EXT. CAFE IN ROME - SAME TIME

Sicinius and Brutus sit at an outside table, drinking wine  
 and snacking on a grilled fish.

## SICINIUS

We hear not of him, neither need we  
 fear him. / His remedies are time;  
 the present peace / And quietness  
 of the people, which before / Were  
 in wild hurry. Here do we make his  
 friends / Blush that the world goes  
 well, who rather had, / Though they  
 themselves did suffer by't, behold

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS (cont'd)  
 / Dissentious numbers pest'ring  
 streets than see / Our tradesmen  
 singing in their shops and going /  
 About their functions friendly.

BRUTUS  
 We stood to't in good time.

Enter Menenius, looking haggard, who plops himself in a seat  
 at the Tribunes' table.

BRUTUS  
 (cont.)  
 Is this Menenius?

SICINIUS  
 'Tis he, 'tis he! O, he is grown  
 most kind of late -- Hail, sir!

Sicinius slaps Menenius' back, then summons the Serving Girl  
 for wine.

MENENIUS  
 Hail to you both!

SICINIUS  
 Your Coriolanus / Is not much  
 missed, but with his friends. / The  
 commonwealth doth stand, and so  
 would do, / Were he more angry at  
 it.

MENENIUS  
 All's well, and might have been  
 much better if / He could have  
 temporized.

SICINIUS  
 Where is he, hear you?

MENENIUS  
 Nay, I hear nothing. His mother  
 and his wife / Hear nothing from  
 him.

A group of Citizens pass by and acknowledge the Tribunes.

ALL  
 The gods preserve you both!

SICINIUS

Goo-e'en, our neighbors.

BRUTUS

Good-e'en to you all, good-e'en to  
you all.

FIRST CITIZEN

Ourselves, our wives, and children,  
on our knees, / Are bound to pray  
to you both.

SICINIUS

(raises cup)

Live, and thrive!

BRUTUS

Farewell, kind neighbors. / We  
wished Coriolanus had loved you as  
we did.

SECOND CITIZEN

Now the gods keep you!

BOTH TRIBUNES

Farewell, farewell.

The Citizens move along. Sicinius and Brutus both grin at  
Menenius.

SICINIUS

This is a happier and more comely  
time / Than when these fellows ran  
about the streets, / Crying  
confusion.

BRUTUS

Caius Martius was / A worthy  
officer i' th' war, but insolent, /  
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past  
all thinking, / Self-loving--

SICINIUS

And affecting one sole throne /  
Without assistance.

MENENIUS

I think not so.

SICINIUS

We should by this, to all our  
lamentation, / If he had gone forth  
consul, found it so.

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

The gods have well prevented it,  
and Rome / Sits safe and still  
without him.

An Aedile briskly and intently approaches the Tribunes' table and quietly addresses them.

AEDILE

Worthy tribunes, / There is a slave  
whom we put in prison / Reports the  
Volsces with two several powers /  
Are entered in the Roman  
territories, / And with the deepest  
malice of the war / Destroy what  
lies before 'em.

The Tribunes are stunned, as the Aedile rushes off.

MENENIUS

'Tis Aufidius, / Who, hearing of  
our Martius' banishment, / Thrusts  
forth his horns again into the  
world; / Which were inshelled when  
Martius stood for Rome, / And durst  
not once peep out.

SICINIUS

Come, what talk you of Martius?

BRUTUS

Go see this rumorer whipped. It  
cannot be / The Volsces dare break  
with us.

MENENIUS

Cannot be! / We have record that  
very well it can, / And three  
examples of the like hath been /  
Within my age. But reason with the  
fellow, / Before you punish him,  
where he heard this, / Lest you  
shall chance to whip your  
information / And beat the  
messenger who bids beware / Of what  
is to be dreaded.

SICINIUS

(shakes head)

Tell not me. / I know this cannot  
be.

(CONTINUED)

BRUTUS

Not possible.

A Messenger rushes up to the Tribunes' table.

MESSENGER

The nobles in great earnestness are  
going / All to the Senate  
House. Some news is coming / That  
turns their countenances.

SICINIUS

'Tis this slave - / Go whip him  
'fore the people's eyes - his  
raising, / Nothing but his report.

MESSENGER

Yes, worthy sir. / The slave's  
report is seconded, and more, /  
More fearful, is delivered.

SICINIUS

What more fearful?

MESSENGER

It is spoke freely out of many  
mouths - / How probable I do not  
know - that Martius, / Joined with  
Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst  
Rome, / And vows revenge as  
spacious as between / The young'st  
and oldest thing.

The Messenger dashes off.

SICINIUS

(snorts)

This is most likely!

BRUTUS

Raised only, that the weaker sort  
may wish / Good Martius home again.

SICINIUS

The very trick on't.

MENENIUS

This is unlikely. / He and Aufidius  
can no more atone / Than violent'st  
contrariety.

Another Messenger (Mess2) approaches the Tribunes' table.

(CONTINUED)

MESS2

You are sent for in the Senate. / A  
fearful army, led by Caius Martius  
/ Associated with Aufidius, rages /  
Upon our territories, and have  
already / O'erborne their way,  
consumed with fire, and took / What  
lay before them.

Mess2 suddenly freezes at the sight of Cominius passing by,  
on horseback and dressed for battle. Mess2 salutes him.  
Cominius glares at the Tribunes, as Mess2 dashes off. He  
stays mounted.

COMINIUS

O, you have made good work!

MENENIUS

What news? What news?

COMINIUS

You have help to ravish your own  
daughters and / To melt the city  
leads upon your pates, / To see  
your wives dishonored to your noses  
-

MENENIUS

What's the news? What's the news?

COMINIUS

Your temples burned in their  
cement, and / Your franchises,  
whereon you stood, confined / Into  
and auger's bore.

MENENIUS

Pray now, your news? -

(to Tribunes)

You have made fair work, I fear me.

(to Cominius)

- Pray, your news? - / If Martius  
should be joined with Volscian -

COMINIUS

If? / He is their god. He leads  
them like a thing / Made by some  
other deity than nature, / That  
shapes man better; and they follow  
him / Against us brats with no less  
confidence / Than boys pursuing  
summer butterflies / Or butchers  
killing flies.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

(to Tribunes)

You have made good work, / You and  
your apron-men, you that stood so  
much / Upon the voice of occupation  
and / The breath of garlic-eaters!

COMINIUS

He'll shake / Your Rome about your  
ears.

MENENIUS

As Hercules / Did shake down mellow  
fruit. You have made good work!

BRUTUS

But is this true, sir?

COMINIUS

Ay, and you'll look pale / Before  
you find it other. All the regions  
/ Do smilingly revolt, and who  
resists/ Are mocked for valiant  
ignorance, / And perish constant  
fools. Who is't can blame him? /  
Your enemies and his find something  
in him.

MENENIUS

We are all undone, unless / The  
noble man have mercy.

COMINIUS

Who shall ask it? / The tribunes  
cannot do't for shame; the people /  
Deserve such pity of him as the  
wolf / Does of shepherds. For his  
best friends, if they / Should say  
"Be good to Rome," they charged him  
even / As those should do that had  
deserved his hate, / And therein  
showed like enemies.

MENENIUS

'Tis true. / If he were putting to  
my house the brand / That should  
consume it, I have not the face /  
To say, "Beseech you, cease." You  
have made fair hands, / You and  
your crafts! You have crafted  
fair!

(CONTINUED)



COMINIUS

You have brought / A trembling upon  
Rome, such as was never /  
S'incapable of help.

BRUTUS

Say not we brought it.

MENENIUS

How? Was't we? We loved him, /  
But like beasts and cowardly  
nobles, / Gave way unto your  
clusters, who did hoot / Him out o'  
th' city.

COMINIUS

But I fear / They'll roar him in  
again. Tullus aufidius, / The  
second name of men, obeys his  
points / As if he were his  
officer. Desperation / Is all the  
policy, strength, and defense /  
That Rome can make against them.

The Citizens who came by earlier rush back in.

ALL

Faith, we hear fearful news.

FIRST CITIZEN

For mine own part, / When I said  
"Banish him," I said 'twas pity.

SECOND CITIZEN

And so did I.

THIRD CITIZEN

And so did ; and, to say the truth,  
so did very many of us. That we  
did, we did for the best; and  
though we willingly consented to  
his banishment, yet it was against  
our will.

COMINIUS

(to Citizens)

You're goodly things, you voices!

MENENIUS

(stands)

You have made good work, / You and  
your cry! Shall's to the Capitol?

(CONTINUED)

COMINIUS

O, ay, what else?

Cominius rides off. Menenius follows on foot. The bewildered Citizens look imploringly to their Tribunes.

SICINIUS

Go, masters, get you home; be not dismayed. / These are a side that would be glad to have / This true, which they so seem to fear. Go home, / And show no sign of fear.

FIRST CITIZEN

The gods be good to us! Come, masters, let's hom. I ever said we were i' th' wrong when we banished him.

SECOND CITIZEN

So did we all. But come, let's home.

The Citizens go away, leaving Sicinius and Brutus.

BRUTUS

I do not like this news.

SICINIUS

Nor I.

BRUTUS

(rises)

Let's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth / Would buy this for a lie!

SICINIUS

(also rises)

Pray, let us go.

Sicinius plunks some coins on the table, and the two Tribunes head off in the direction of the Capitol.

EXT. VOLSCIAN ARMY CAMP - EVENING

The camp bustles with activity as soldiers prepare for the final campaign against Rome.

Aufidius makes his way through the camp on foot, inspecting the activity and accompanied by a Volscian Lieutenant (VLT.) They observe Coriolanus at a distance, putting a troop through their paces.

(CONTINUED)

AUFIDIUS

Do they still fly to th' Roman?

VLT.

I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but / Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat, / Their talk at table, and their thanks at end; / And you are dark'ned in this action, sir, / Even by your own.

AUFIDIUS

I cannot help it now, / Unless by using means I lame the foot / Of our design. He bears himself more prouder, / Even to my person, than I thought he would / When first I did embrace him. Yet his nature / In that's no changeling, and I must excuse / What cannot be amended.

VLT.

Yet I wish, sir - / I mean for your particular - you had not / Joined in commission with him, but either / Had borne the action of yourself, or else / To him had left it solely.

AUFIDIUS

I understand thee well; and be thou sure, / When he shall come to his account, he knows not / What I can urge against him. Although it seems, / And so he thinks, and is no less apparent / To th' vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly, / And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state, / Fights dragonlike, and does achieve as soon / As draw his sword, yet he hath left undone / That which shall break his neck or hazard mine, / Whene'er we come to our account.

VLT.

Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome?

AUFIDIUS

All places yield to him ere he sits down, / And the nobility of Rome

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

AUFIDIUS (cont'd)

are his; / The senators and  
 patricians love him too. / The  
 tribunes are no soldiers, and their  
 people / Will be as rash in the  
 repeal as hasty / To expel him  
 thence. I think he'll be to Rome /  
 As is the osprey to the fish, who  
 takes it / By sovereignty of  
 nature. First he was / A noble  
 servant to them, but he could not /  
 Carry his honors even. Whether  
 'twas pride, / Which out of daily  
 fortune ever taints / The happy  
 man; whether defect of judgment, /  
 To fail in the dispoing of those  
 chances / Which he was lord of; or  
 whether nature, / Not to be other  
 than one thing, not moving / From  
 th' casque to th' cushion, but  
 commanding peace / Even with the  
 same austerity and garb / As he  
 controlled the war; but one of  
 these, / As he hath spices of them  
 all - not all, / For I dare so far  
 free him - made him feared, / So  
 hated, and so banished. But he has  
 a merit, / To choke it in the  
 utt'rance. So our virtues / Lie in  
 th' interpretation of the time, /  
 And power, unot itself most  
 commendable, / Hath not a tomb so  
 evident as a chair / T'extol what  
 it hath done. / One fire drives out  
 one fire, one nail, one nail; /  
 Rights by rights founder, strengths  
 by strengths do fail. / Come, let's  
 away.

They resume walking. Aufidius glances back in the direction  
 of Coriolanus training his troop.

AUFIDIUS  
 (cont.)

When, Caius, Rome is thine, / Thou  
 art poor'st of all; then shortly  
 art thou mine.

Exeunt.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE NEAR ROMAN OUTSKIRTS - DAY

Late afternoon, approaching sundown. Volscian troops, led jointly by Coriolanus and Aufidius are on the move toward Rome, and commence fanning out to prepare the siege.

EXT. CAPITOL IN ROME - EVE - ESTABLISHING

Roman citizens of various stations hastily file into the Capitol.

INT. CAPITOL

Enter Menenius, Cominius, Sicinius, Brutus and others. Cominius' battle dress is covered with dust from long riding. He carries his helmet.

MENENIUS

No, I'll not go. You hear what he hath said / Which was sometime his general, who loved him / In a most dear particular. He called me father. / But what o' that? Go, you that banished him; / A mile before his tent fall down, and knee / The way into his mercy. Nay, if he coyed / To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

COMINIUS

He would not seem to know me.

MENENIUS

Do you hear?

COMINIUS

Yet one time he did call me by my name. / I urged our old acquaintance, and the drops / That we have bled together. "Coriolanus" / He would not answer to, forbade all names. / He was a kind of nothing, titleless, / Till he had forged himself a name o' th' fire / Of burning Rome.

MENENIUS

(to Tribunes)

Why, so! You have made good work! / A pair of tribunes that have

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS (cont'd)

racked for Rome, / To make coals  
cheap! A noble memory!

COMINIUS

I minded him how royal 'twas to  
pardon / When it was less  
expected. He replied / I was a  
bare petition of state / To one  
whom they had punished.

MENENIUS

Very well. / Could he say less?

COMINIUS

I offered to awaken his regard /  
For's private friends. His answer  
to me was / He could not stay to  
pick them in a pile / Of noisome,  
musty chaff. He said 'twas folly,  
/ For one poor grain or two, to  
leave unburnt / And still to nose  
th' offense.

MENENIUS

For one poor grain or two? / I am  
one of those! His mother, wife,  
his child, / And this brave fellow  
too, we are the grains.

Menenius wheels around to the Tribunes.

MENENIUS

(cont.)

You are the musty chaff, and you  
are smelt / Above the moon. We  
must be burnt for you.

The Tribunes shrink a little.

SICINIUS

Nay, pray, be patient. If you  
refuse your aid / In this  
so-never-needed help, yet do not /  
Upbraid's with our distress. But,  
sure, if you / Would be your  
country's pleader, your good  
tongue, / More than the instant  
army we can make, / Might stop our  
countryman.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

No, I'll not meddle.

SICINIUS

Pray you, go to him.

MENENIUS

What should I do?

BRUTUS

Only make trial what your love can  
do / For Rome toward Martius.

MENENIUS

Well, and say that Martius / Return  
me, as Cominius is returned, /  
Unheard - what then? / But as a  
discontented friend, grief-shot /  
With his unkindness? Say't be so?

SICINIUS

Yet your good will / Must have that  
thanks form Rome, after the measure  
/ As you intended well.

MENENIUS

I'll undertake't: / I think he'll  
hear me. Yet, to bite his lip /  
And hum at good Cominius much  
unhearts me. / He was not taken  
well; he had not dined. / The veins  
unfilled, our blood is cold, and  
then / We pout upon the morning,  
are unapt / To give or to forgive;  
but when we have stuffed / These  
pipes and these conveyances of our  
blood / With wine and feeding, we  
have suppler souls / Than in our  
priestlike fasts. Therefore I'll  
watch him / Till he dieted to my  
request, / And then I'll set upon  
him.

BRUTUS

You know the very road into his  
kindness, / And cannot lose your  
way.

MENENIUS

Good faith, I'll prove him, / Speed  
how it will. I shall ere long have  
knowledge / Of my success.

(CONTINUED)

Menenius heads out. The others look after him as he goes.  
Cominius shakes his head.

COMINIUS  
He'll never hear him.

SICINIUS  
Not?

COMINIUS  
I tell you, he does sit in gold,  
his eye / Red as 'twould burn Rome,  
and his injury / The jailer to his  
pity. I kneeled before him. /  
'Twas very faintly he said, "Rise";  
dismissed me / Thus, with his  
speechless hand. What he would do  
/ He sent in writing after me; what  
he would not, / Bound with an oath  
to yield to his conditions; / So  
that all hope is vain / Unless his  
noble mother and his wife, / Who,  
as I hear, mean to solicit him /  
For mercy to his  
country. Therefore let's hence, /  
And with our fair entreaties haste  
them on.

Exeunt.

EXT. VOLSCIAN ARMY CAMP - EVENING

Two Volscian Sentries, armed with sturdy pikes, stand guard  
before the main road functioning as the entrance to the  
camp. A portable gate has been set up between them.

Menenius, in a threadbare cloak, rides up to them on the  
back of a donkey. As he nears, the 1st Watch strides toward  
him, pike at ready. The 2nd Watch covers the 1st Watch.

1ST SENTRY  
Stay. Whence are you?

2ND SENTRY  
Stand, and go back.

MENENIUS  
You guard like men; 'tis  
well. But, by our leave, / I am an  
officer of state, and come / To  
speak with Coriolanus.

(CONTINUED)



1ST SENTRY

From whence?

MENENIUS

From Rome.

1ST SENTRY

You man not pass; you must  
return. Our general / Will no more  
hear from thence.

2ND SENTRY

You'll see your Rome embraced with  
fire before / You'll speak with  
Coriolanus.

MENENIUS

Good my friends, / If you have  
heard your general talk of Rome /  
And of his friends there, it is  
lots to blanks / My name hath  
touched your ears. It is Menenius.

1ST SENTRY

Be't so; go back. The virtue of  
your name / Is not here passable.

MENENIUS

I tell thee, fellow, / Thy general  
is my lover. I have been / The  
book of his good acts, whence men  
have read / His fame unparalleled,  
haply simplified; / For I have ever  
verified my friends, / Of whom he's  
chief, with all the size that  
verity / Would without lapsing  
suffer. Nay, sometimes, / Like to  
a bowl upon a subtle ground, / I  
have tumbled past the throw; and in  
his praise / Have almost stamped  
the leasing. Therefore, fellow, /  
I must have leave to pass.

1ST SENTRY

Faith, sir, if you had told as many  
lies in his behalf as you have  
uttered words in your own, you  
should not pass here; no, though it  
were as virtuous to lie as to live  
chastely. Therefore go back.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

Prithee, fellow, remember my name is Menenius, always factionary on the party of your general.

2ND SENTRY

Howsoever you have been his liar, as you say you have, I am one that, telling true under him, must say you cannot pass. Therefore go back.

MENENIUS

Has he dined, canst thou tell? For I would not speak with him till after dinner.

1ST SENTRY

You are a Roman, are you?

MENENIUS

I am, as thy general is.

1ST SENTRY

Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very defender of them, and in a violent popular ignorance given your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dotant as you seem to be? Can you think to blow out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in with such weak breath as this? No, you are deceived; therefore back to Rome, and prepare for your execution. You are condemned; your general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

MENENIUS

Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

1ST SENTRY

Come, my captain knows you not.

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS

I mean thy general.

1ST SENTRY

My general cares not for you.

He jabs his pike at Menenius causing his donkey to bray and back up.

1ST SENTRY

(cont.)

Back, I say, go! lest I let forth  
your half pint of blood. Back! -  
That's the utmost of your  
having. Back!

MENENIUS

Nay, but, fellow, fellow -

Coriolanus and Aufidius appear near the gate.

CORIOLANUS

Now what's the matter?

MENENIUS

(to 1st Watch)

Now, you companion, I'll say an  
errand for you. You shall know how  
that I am in estimation; you shall  
perceive that a Jack guardant  
cannot office me from my son  
Coriolanus. Guess but by my  
entertainment with him if thou  
stan'st not i' th' state of  
hanging, or of some death more long  
in spectatorship and crueller in  
suffering. Behold now presently,  
and swound for what's to come upon  
thee.

(to Coriolanus)

The glorious gods sit in hourly  
synod about thy particular  
prosperity, and love thee no worse  
than thy old father Menenius  
does! O my son, my son! Thou art  
preparing fire for us. Look thee,  
here's water to quench it. I was  
hardly moved to come to thee, but  
being assured none but myself could  
move thee, I have been blown out of  
our gates with sighs, and conjure  
tee to pardon Rome and thy  
petitionary countrymen. The good

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

MENENIUS (cont'd)

gods assuage thy wrath, and turn  
the dregs of it upon this varlet  
here - this, who, like a block,  
hath denied my access to thee.

CORIOLANUS

Away!

MENENIUS

How? away?

CORIOLANUS

Wife, mother, child, I know  
not. My affairs / Are servanted to  
others. Though I owe / My revenge  
properly, my remission lies / In  
Volscian breasts. That we have  
been familiar, / Ingrate  
forgetfulness shall poison rather /  
Than pity note how much. Therefore  
be gone. / Mine ears against your  
suits are stronger than / Your  
gates against my force. Yet, for I  
loved thee, / Take this along. I  
writ it for thy sake,  
(presents letter)  
And would have sent it.

Coriolanus hands the letter to the 2nd Sentry, who affixes  
it to the tip of his pike and puts it within reach of  
Menenius, who takes it.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Another word, Menenius, / I will  
not hear thee speak. This man,  
Aufidius, / Was my beloved in Rome;  
yet thou behold'st!

AUFIDIUS

You keep a constant temper.

Coriolanus and Aufidius move on, leaving Menenius and the  
two Sentries. They smirk at him.

1ST SENTRY

Now, sir, is your name Menenius?

2ND SENTRY

'Tis a spell, you see, of much  
power. You know the way home  
again.

(CONTINUED)

## 1ST SENTRY

Do you hear how we are shent for  
keeping your greatness back?

## 2ND SENTRY

What cause do you think I have to  
swound?

While the Watches engage Menenius, another group of people quietly slip by. They are women and a small boy, all bundled in heavy cloaks. Menenius notices them out of the corner of his eye and continues to engage the Watches, letting the small party cross into the camp.

## MENENIUS

I neither care for th' world nor  
your general. for such thiungs as  
you, I can scarce think there's  
any, you're so slight. He that  
hath a will to die by himself fears  
it not from another. Let your  
general do his worst. For you, be  
that your are, long, and your  
misery increase with your age! I  
say to you, as I was said to,  
"Away!"

Menenius turns his donkey back toward Rome and rides away.

## 1ST SENTRY

A noble fellow, I warrant him.

## 2ND SENTRY

The worthy fellow is our  
general. He's the rock, the oak  
not to be wind-shaken.

The Watches return to their posts.

EXT. VOLSCIAN HQ TENT IN CAMP - EVE

Coriolanus and Aufidius, after making their rounds, arrive at the HQ tent and dismount their horses.

## CORIOLANUS

We will beofre the walls of Rome  
tomorrow / Set down our host. My  
partner in this action, / You must  
report to th' Volscian lords how  
plainly / I have borne this  
business.

(CONTINUED)

## AUFIDIUS

Only their ends / You have  
 respected; stopped your ears  
 against / The general suit of Rome;  
 never admitted / A private whipser,  
 no, not with such friends / That  
 thought them sure of you.

## CORIOLANUS

This last old man, / Whom with a  
 cracked heart I have sent to Rome,  
 / Loved me above the measure of a  
 father; / Nay, godded me  
 indeed. Their latest refuge / Was  
 to send him; for whose old love I  
 have - / Though I showed sourly to  
 him - once more offered / The first  
 conditions, which they did refuse /  
 And cannot now accept. To grace  
 him only, / That thought he cold do  
 more, a very little / I have  
 yielded to. Fresh embassies and  
 suits, / Not from the state nor  
 private friends, hereafter / Will I  
 lend ear to.

They hear a commotion nearby, the sounds of women's voices,  
 calling, "Martius!"

## CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Ha! What shout is this? / Shall I  
 be tempted to infringe my vow / In  
 the same time 'tis made? I will  
 not.

Enter the women and child who gave the Watchmen the  
 slip. The pull off the hoods of their cloaks, revealing  
 themselves to be Virgilia, Volumnia, Valeria, Young Martius  
 and a couple of attendants.

## CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

My wife comes foremost, then, the  
 honored mold / Wherein this trunk  
 was framed, and in her hand / The  
 grandchild to her blood. But out,  
 affection! / All bond and privilege  
 of nature, break! / Let it be  
 virtuous to be obstinate. /

Guards attempt to bar their way, but Coriolanus waves them  
 off. Aufidius raises an eyebrow. The women bow deeply  
 before the generals.

(CONTINUED)

## CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

What is that curt'sy worth, or  
 those doves' eyes, / Which can make  
 gods foresworn? I melt, and am not  
 / Of stronger earth than  
 others. My mother bows, / As if  
 Olympus to a molehill should / In  
 supplication nod; and my young boy  
 / Hath an aspect of intercession  
 which / Great nature cries, "Deny  
 not!" Let the Volsces / Plow Rome  
 and harrow Italy! I'll never / Be  
 such a gosling to obey instinct,  
 but stand / As if a man were author  
 of himself / And knew no other kin.

## VIRGILIA

My lord and husband!

## CORIOLANUS

These eye are not the same I wore  
 in Rome.

## VIRGILIA

The sorrow that delivers us thus  
 changed / Makes you think so.

## CORIOLANUS

Like a dull actor now, / I have  
 forgot my part, and I am out, /  
 Even to a full disgrace. Best of  
 my flesh, / Forgive my tyranny, but  
 do not say / For that "Forgive our  
 Romans." O, a kiss / Long as my  
 exile, sweet as my revenge! / Now,  
 by the jealous queen of heaven,  
 that kiss / I carried from thee  
 dear, and my true lip / Hath  
 virgined it e'er since. You  
 gods! I prate, / And the most  
 noble mother of the world / Leave  
 unsaluted. Sink, my knee, i' th'  
 earth;

(kneels)

Of they deep duty more impression  
 show / Than that of common sons.

## VOLUMNIA

(bids her son rise)

O, stand up blest! / Whilst with no  
 softer cushion than the flint / I  
 kneel before thee, and improperly /

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

VOLUMNIA (cont'd)

Show duty as mistaken all this  
while / Between the child and  
parent.

Volumnia kneels to her son.

CORIOLANUS

What is this? / Your knees to  
me? To your corrected son? / Then  
let the pebbles on the hungry beach  
/ Fillip the stars! Then let the  
mutinous winds / Strike the proud  
cedars 'gainst the fiery sun, /  
Murd'ring impossibility to make /  
What cannot be, slight work.

Coriolanus takes his mother's hands and helps her to her feet.

VOLUMNIA

Thou art my warrior; / I help to  
frame thee. Do you know this lady?

Volumnia indicates Valeria.

CORIOLANUS

The noble sister of Publicola, /  
The moon of Rome, chaste as the  
icicle / That's curded by the frost  
from purest snow / And hangs on  
Dian's temple - dear Valeria!

Valeria puts a hand to her mouth and averts her eyes.

VOLUMNIA

This is a poor epitome of yours, /  
Which by th' interpretation of full  
time / May show like all yourself.

CORIOLANUS

The god of soldiers, With the  
consent of supreme Jove, inform /  
Thy thoughts with nobleness, that  
thou mayst prove / To shame  
invulnerable, and stick i' th' wars  
/ Like a great sea mark, standing  
every flaw / And saving those that  
eye thee!

VOLUMNIA

(to Young Martius)

Your knee, sirrah.

(CONTINUED)



Young Martius, without taking his eyes off his father, steps forward and briefly genuflects. Coriolanus tousels his son's hair. The child shakes it off.

CORIO LANUS

That's my brave boy!

VOLUMNIA

Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself, / Are suitors to you.

Coriolanus pulls his hands away.

CORIO LANUS

I beseech you, peace! / Or, if you'd ask, remember this before: / The thing I have forsworn to grant may never / Be held by you denials. Do not bid me / Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate / Again with Rome's mechanics. Tell me not / Wherein I seem unnatural. Desire not / T'allay my rages and revenges with / Your colder reasons.

VOLUMNIA

O, no more, no more! / You have said you will not grant us anything, / For we have nothing else to ask but that / Which you deny already; yet we will ask, / That, if you fail in our request, the blame / May hang upon your hardness. Therefore hear us.

Coriolanus takes a long look and Volumnia, then turns to Aufidius.

CORIO LANUS

Aufidius, and you Volsces, mark; for we'll / Hear naught from Rome in private.

He summons for a stool, which is brought to him, and he sits, looking up at Volumnia.

CORIO LANUS

(cont.)

Your request?

VOLUMNIA

Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment / And state of bodies

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

## VOLUMNIA (cont'd)

would bewray what life / We have  
 led since thy exile. Think with  
 thyself / How more unfortunate than  
 all living women / Are we come  
 hither, since that they sight,  
 which should / Make our eyes flow  
 with joy, hearts dance with  
 comforts, / Constrains them weep  
 and shake with fear and sorrow, /  
 Making the mother, wife, and child  
 o see / The son, the husband, and  
 the father tearing / His country's  
 bowels out. And to poor we / thine  
 enmity's most capital. Thou  
 barr'st us / Our prayers to the  
 gods, which is a comfort / That all  
 but we enjoy. For how can we, /  
 Alas, how can we for our country  
 pray, / Whereto we are bound,  
 together with thy victory, /  
 Whereto we are bound? Alack, or we  
 must lose / The country, our dear  
 nurse, or else thy person, / Our  
 comfort in the country. We must  
 find / An evident calamity, though  
 we had / Our wish which side should  
 win. For either thou / Must as a  
 foreign recreant be led / With  
 manacles through our streets, or  
 else / Triumphantly tread on thy  
 country's ruin, / And bear the palm  
 for having bravely shed / Thy wife  
 and children's blood. For myself,  
 son, / I purpose not to wait on  
 fortune till / These wars  
 determine. If I cannot persuade  
 thee / Rather to show a noble grace  
 to both parts / Than seek the end  
 of one, thou shalt no sooner /  
 March to assault thy country than  
 to tread - / Trust to't, thou shalt  
 not - on thy mother's womb / That  
 brought thee to this world.

Virgilia steps forward.

## VIRGILIA

Ay, and mine, / That brought you  
 forth this boy, to keep your name /  
 Living to time.

Virgilia puts a hand on her son's shoulder. He shakes it  
 off and glares up at his father.

(CONTINUED)

## YOUNG MARTIUS

A shall not tread on me! / I'll run  
away till I am bigger, but then  
I'll fight.

## CORIOLANUS

Not of a woman's tenderness to be /  
Requires nor child nor woman's face  
to see. / I have sat too long.

He stands and bids the stool be taken away and turns toward  
the entrance of the HQ tent. Volumnia takes his hand.

## VOLUMNIA

Nay, go not from us thus. / If it  
were so that our request did tend /  
To save the Romans, thereby to  
destroy/ The Volscies whom you  
serve, you might condemn us / As  
poisonous of your honor. No, our  
suit / Is that you reconcile them  
while the Volscies / May say "This  
mercy we have showed," the Romans,  
"This we received," and each in  
either side / Give the all-hail to  
thee and cry, "Be blest / For  
making up this peace!" Thou  
know'st, great son, / The end of  
war's uncertain, but this certain,  
/ That, if thou conquer Rome, the  
benefit / Which thou shalt thereby  
reap is such a name / Whose  
repetition will be dogged with  
curses, / Whose chronicle thus  
writ: "The man was noble, / But  
with his last attempt he wiped it  
out, / Destroyed his country, and  
his name remains/ To th' ensuing  
age abhorred." Speak to me, son. /  
Thou hast affected the fine strains  
of honor, / To imitate the graces  
of the gods; / To tear with thunder  
the wide cheeks o' th' air, / And  
yet to change thy sulphur with a  
bolt / That should but rive an  
oak.

Coriolanus' hand is limp to his mother's touch and he stares  
at her, dumbfounded.

## VOLUMNIA

Why doest not speak? / Think'st  
thou it honoragble for a noble man  
/ Still to remember wrongs?

(CONTINUED)

Letting go of her son's hand, she turns to Virgilia, who has tears streaming down her face.

VOLUMNIA

Daughter, speak you. / He cares not  
for your weeping.

(to Young Martius)

Speak thou, boy. / Perhaps thy  
childishness will move him more /  
Than can our reasons.

(looks around to Aufidius)

There's no man in the world / More  
bound to's mother, yet here he lets  
me prate / Like one i' th' stocks.

(back to Coriolanus)

Thou hast never in thy life /  
Showed thy dear mother nay  
courtesy, / When she, poor hen,  
fond of no second brood, / Has  
clucked thee to the wars, and  
safely home / Loaden with  
honor. Say my request's unjust, /  
And spurn me back; but if it be not  
so, / Thou art not honest, and the  
gods will plague thee / That thou  
restrain'st from me the duty which  
/ To a mother's part belongs.

Coriolanus sucks up and turns back to the HQ tent.

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

He turns away.

(beckons Virgilia, Valeria and  
Attendants)

Down, ladies! Let us shame him with  
our knees.

They take to their knees.

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

To his surname Coriolanus 'longs  
more pride / Than pity to our  
prayers. Down! An en! This is  
the last. So, we will home to  
Rome, / And die among our  
neighbors.

Young Martius, now, takes to his knees, his eyes welling up.

(CONTINUED)

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

Nay, behold's! / This boy, that  
cannot tell what he would have /  
But kneels and holds up hands for  
fellowship, / Does reason our  
petition with more strength / Than  
thou hast to deny't.

Volumnia rises, along with the other women, and helps up the boy, who holds onto his grandmother's hand.

VOLUMNIA

(cont.)

Come, let us go. / This fellow had  
a Volscian to his mother; / His  
wife is in Corioles, and this child  
/ Like him by chance. Yet give us  
our dispatch. / I am hushed until  
our city be afire, / And then I'll  
speak a little.

Coriolanus wheels around and takes Volumnia's remaining free hand.

CORIOLANUS

O mother, mother! / What have you  
done? Behold, the heavens do ope,  
/ The gods look down, and this  
unnatural scene / They laugh at.

Coriolanus sinks to his knees and embraces his mother.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

O my mother, mother! O! / You have  
won a happy victory to Rome; / But  
for your son - believe it, O  
believe it! - Most dangerously you  
have with him prevailed, / If not  
most mortal to him. But let it  
come.

Coriolanus rises, composes himself, and turns toward Aufidius.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Aufidius, though I cannot make true  
wars, / I'll frame convenient  
peace. Now, good aufidius. / Were  
you in my stead, would you have  
heard / A mother less? Or granted  
less, Aufidius?

(CONTINUED)

Aufidius lets the question sit for a bit, then faintly smiles and nods.

AUFIDIUS

I was moved withal.

CORIOLANUS

I dare be sworn your were! / And,  
sir, it is no little thing to make  
/ Mine eyes to sweat  
compassion. But, good, sir, / What  
peace you'll make, advise me. For  
my part, / I'll not to Rome, I'll  
back with you; and pray you, Stand  
to me in this cause.

He turns back to his family and embraces them passionately.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

O mother! wife!

Aufidius summons his Lieutenant and whispers something in his ear. The Lieutenant nods and runs off.

AUFIDIUS

(aside)

I am glad thou hast set thy mercy  
and thy honor / At difference in  
thee. Out of that I'll work /  
Myself a former fortune.

Aufidius heads inside the HQ tent.

CORIOLANUS

(to Volumnia)

Ay, by and by. / But we will drink  
together; and you shall bear / A  
better witness back than words,  
which we, / On like conditions,  
will have counter-sealed. / Come,  
enter with us. Ladies, you deserve  
/ To have a temple built you. All  
the swords / In Italy, and her  
confederate arms, / Could not have  
made this peace.

Coriolanus bids his family farewell and heads into the HQ tent.

## INT. CAPITOL

The place is empty, except for Menenius and Sicinius, sitting in the evening gloom. Menenius gazes intently at a particular stone of the building, near the floor.

MENENIUS

See you yond coign o' th' Capitol,  
yond cornerstone?

SICINIUS

Why, what of that?

MENENIUS

If it be possible for you to  
displace it with your little  
finger, there is some hope the  
ladies of Rome, especially his  
mother, may prevail with him. But  
I say there is no hope in't; our  
throats are sentenced and stay upon  
execution.

SICINIUS

Is't possible that so short a time  
can alter the condition of a man?

MENENIUS

There is differency between a grub  
and a butterfly; yet your butterfly  
was a grub. This Martius is grown  
from man to dragon. He has wings;  
he's more than a creeping thing.

SICINIUS

He loved his mother dearly.

MENENIUS

So did he me, and he no more  
remembers his mother now than an  
eight-year-old horse. The tartness  
of his face sours ripe  
grapes. When he walks, he moves  
like an engine, and the ground  
shrinks before his treading. He is  
able to pierce a corslet with his  
eyes, talks like a knell and his  
hum is a battery. He sits in his  
state, as a thing made for  
Alexander. What he bids be done is  
finished with his bidding. He  
wants nothing of a god but  
eternity, and a heaven to throne  
in.

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS

Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

MENENIUS

I paint him in the character. Mark what mercy his mother shall bring from him. There is no more mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger. That shall our poor city find; and all this is long of you.

SICINIUS

The gods be good unto us!

MENENIUS

No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them, and, he returning to break our necks, they respect us not.

A Messenger rushes in, spots Sicinius and goes to him.

MESSENGER

Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house. / The plebeians have got our fellow tribune, / And hale him up and down, all swearing, if / The Roman ladies bring not comfort home, / They'll give him death by inches.

The Messenger exits. Sicinius gulps. A second Messenger (MESS2) runs in. He's more excited than the first.

SICINIUS

What's the news?

MESS2

Good news, good news! The ladies have prevailed, / The Volscians are dislodged, and Martius gone. / A merrier day did never yet greet Rome, No, not th' expulsion of the Tarquins.

SICINIUS

(rises)

Friend, / Art thou certain this is true? Is't most certain?

(CONTINUED)



MESS2

As certain as I know the usn is  
 fire. / Where have you lurked that  
 you make doubt of it? / Ne'er  
 though an arch so hurried the blown  
 tide / As the recomforted through  
 th' gates. Why, hark you!

We HEAR the sound of trumpets and drums outside.

MESS2

(cont.)

The trumnppte, sackbuts, psalteries,  
 and fifies, / Tabors and cymbals  
 and the shouting Romans / Make the  
 sun dance. Hark you!

We HEAR the joyous sounds of celebrant (and relieved) crowds  
 outside.

MENENIUS

(rises)

This is good news. / I will go meet  
 the ladies. This Volumnia / Is  
 worth of consul, senators,  
 patricians, / A city full; of  
 tribunes, such as you, / A sea and  
 land full. You have prayed well  
 today. / This morning for ten  
 thousand of your throats / I'd not  
 have given a doit. Hark, how they  
 joy!

The celebratory sounds increase. Menenius exits in the  
 direction of the noise. Sicinius gives some coins to Mess2.

SICINIUS

First, the gods bless you for your  
 tidings; next, / Accept my  
 thankfulness.

Sicinius hugs Mess2 and kisses him on the cheek.

MESS2

Sir, we have all / Great cause to  
 give great thanks.

SICINIUS

They are near the city?

MESS2

Almost at point to enter.

(CONTINUED)

SICINIUS

We will meet them, / And help with  
joy.

Sicinius and Mess2 likewise exit.

EXT. THOROUGHFARE NEAR THE GATES OF ROME

A throng of Romans, plebeians, patricians, Senators, aediles, etc. assemble near the main entrance to the city, awaiting Volumnia and her party.

The women and child arrive in a horse-drawn wagon, to wild cheers from the crowd. Volumnia looks frail and exhausted. Virgilia holds one of Volumnia's hands. Young Martius sits in her lap burying his head in her breast. Volumnia pays no attention to the crowd; Virgilia and Valeria smile sadly at them. Valeria manages a faint wave of her hand.

A Senator opens his arms at the sight of them and turns to the crowd.

SENATOR

Behold our patroness, the life of  
Rome! / Call all your tribes  
together, praise the gods, / And  
make triumphant fires; strew  
flowers before them. / Unshout the  
noise that banished Martius; /  
Repeal him with the welcome of his  
mother. / Cry "Welcome, ladies,  
welcome!"

ALL

Welcome, ladies, / Welcome!

We HEAR a flourish of horns and drums, as the wagon heads up the thoroughfare through the crowd.

EXT. OUTSKIRTS OF CORIOLES

An element of Volscian Sentries are camped at a roadside, playing cards. Aufidius, riding in his chariot with an Archer, and followed by his Lieutenant (VLt.) who's on horseback, pulls into view. Upon the sight of the chariot, the Sentries stand to, but then slacken, when Aufidius pays them no mind.

(CONTINUED)

AUFIDIUS

(to VLt.)

Go tell the lords o' th' city I am  
here.

Summoning the VLt. toward him, Aufidius pulls a flattened scroll out of one of his shin guards and hands it off.

AUFIDIUS

(cont.)

Deliver them this paper. Having  
read it, / Bid them repair to th'  
marketplace, where I, / Even in  
theirs and in the commons' ears, /  
Will vouch the truth of it. Him I  
accuse / The city ports by this  
hath entered and / Intedst t'  
appear before the people, hoping /  
To purge himself with  
words. Dispatch.

The VLt. spurs his steed and gallops ahead, while Aufidius follows at an easier pace. The Sentries go back to their game.

EXT. CORIOLES - STABLES - EVENING

Aufidius pulls his chariot into the entrance of the stables, gets out and bangs the side, bidding the Archer continue inside. People are conspicuously absent from the place.

Soon, there appear a small group of rough-looking men (CONSPIRATORS), modestly garbed and carrying blades (daggers, short swords, etc.) Aufidius smiles in greeting.

AUFIDIUS

Most welcome!

CONSPIRATOR #1

How is it with our general?

AUFIDIUS

Even so / As with a man by his own  
alms empoisoned / And with his  
charity slain.

Aufidius gestures for the Conspirators to walk with him toward the Agora of the town.

CONSPIRATOR #2

Most noble sir, / If you do hold  
the same intent wherein / You

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONSPIRATOR #2 (cont'd)  
 wished us parties, we'll deliver  
 you / Of your great danger.

AUFIDIUS  
 Sir, I cannot tell, / We must  
 proceed as we do find the people.

CONSPIRATOR #3  
 The people will remain uncertain  
 whilst / 'Twixt ou there's  
 difference; but the fall of either  
 / Makes the survivor heir of all.

AUFIDIUS  
 I know it, / And my pretext to  
 strike at him admits / A good  
 construction. I raised him, and I  
 pawned / Mine honor for his truth;  
 who being so heightenend, He  
 watered his new plants with dews of  
 flattery, / Seducing so my friends;  
 and to this end / He bowed his  
 nature, never known before / But to  
 be rough, unswayable, and free.

CONSPIRATOR #3  
 Sir, his stoutness / When he did  
 stand for consul, which he lost /  
 By lack of stooping -

AUFIDIUS  
 That I would have spoke of. / Being  
 banished for't, he came unto my  
 hearth; / Presented to my knife his  
 throat. I took him, / Made him  
 joint servant with me; gave him way  
 / In all his own desires; nay, let  
 him choose / Out of my files, his  
 projects to accomplish, / My best  
 and freshest men; served his  
 designments / In mine own person;  
 help to reap the fame / Which he  
 did end all his; and took some  
 pride / To do myself this wrong;  
 till at the last / I seemed his  
 follower, not partner, and / He  
 waged me with his countenance as if  
 / I had been a mercenary.

CONSPIRATOR #1

So he did, my lord, The army  
marveled at it; and in the last, /  
When he had carried Rome and that  
we looked / For no less spoil than  
glory -

AUFIDIUS

There was it! / For which my sinews  
shall be stretched upon him. / At a  
few drops of women's rheum, which  
are / As cheap as lies, he sold the  
blood and labor / Of our great  
action; therefore shall he die, /  
And I'll renew me in his fall.

We HEAR a great gathering of people in the Agora, as they  
near.

AUFIDIUS

(cont.)

But hark!

Drums and trumpets SOUND, with GREAT SHOUTS of the  
People. Aufidius and Conspirators join the crowd.

CONSPIRATOR #1

Your native town you entered like a  
post, / And had no welcomes home;  
but he returns / Splitting the air  
with noise.

CONSPIRATOR #2

And patient fools, / Whose children  
he hath slain, their base throats  
tear / With giving him glory.

CONSPIRATOR #3

Therefore, at your vantage, / Ere  
he express himself or move the  
people / With what he would say,  
let him feel your sword, / Which we  
will second. When he lies along, /  
After your way his tale pronounced  
shall bury / His reasons with his  
body.

AUFIDIUS

Say no more. / Here come the lords.

The Conspirators fade into the rest of the crowd, as  
Volscian Senators (VSens) and Nobles (VNobs) approach.  
VSen.1 shakes Aufidius hand.

(CONTINUED)

VSEN.1

You are most welcome home.

AUFIDIUS

I have not deserved it. / But,  
worthy lords, have you with heed  
perused / What I have written you?

VSEN.2

We have.

Others nod in agreement.

VSEN.1

And grieve to hear't. / What faults  
he made before the last, I think /  
Might have found easy fines; but  
there to end / Where he was to  
begin, and give away / The benefit  
of our levies, answering us / With  
our own charge, making a treaty  
where / There was a yielding - this  
admits no excuse.

AUFIDIUS

He approaches. You shall hear him.

With much fanfare, Coriolanus enters. He is without armor and unarmed, wearing a crisp, white tunic with gold trim. Behind him, are wagon loads of Roman booty. He smiles broadly to great cheers of the crowd. He shakes hands reaching out to him. He sees Aufidius and the Volscian Senators, heading toward him.

CORIOLANUS

Hail, lords! I am returned your  
soldier; / No more infected with my  
country's love / Than when I parted  
hence, but still subsisting / Under  
your great command. You are to  
know / That prosperously I have  
attempted, and / With bloody  
passage led your wars even to / The  
gates of Rome. Our spoils we have  
brought home / Do more than  
counterpoise a full third part /  
The charges of the action. We have  
made peace / With no less honor to  
the Antiates / Than shame to th'  
Romans; and we here deliver, /  
Subscribed by th' consuls and  
patricians, Together with the seal  
o' th' Senate, what / We have  
compounded on.

(CONTINUED)

The crowd cheers, but Aufidius puts up his hands to pipe them down. The crowd complies. Aufidius smiles grimly at Coriolanus.

AUFIDIUS

Read it not, noble lords, / But  
tell the traitor in the highest  
degree / He hath abused your  
powers.

CORIOLANUS

Traitor? how now?

AUFIDIUS

Ay, traitor, Martius!

CORIOLANUS

Martius?

AUFIDIUS

Ay, Martius, Caius Martius! Dost  
thou think / I'll grace thee with  
that robbery, thy stol'n name /  
"Coriolanus" in Corioles? /  
(to Senators, Nobles)  
You lords and heads o' th' state,  
perfidiously / He has betrayed your  
business and given up, / For  
certain drops of salt, your city  
Rome - / I say "your city" - to his  
wife and mother, / Breaking his  
oath and resolution like / A twist  
of rotten silk; never admitting /  
Counsel o' th' war; but at his  
nurse's tears / He whined and  
roared away your victory, / That  
pages blushed at him and men of  
heart / Looked wond'ring each at  
other.

CORIOLANUS

Hear'st thou, Mars?

AUFIDIUS

Name not the god, thou boy of  
tears!

CORIOLANUS

Ha!

AUFIDIUS

No more.

Coriolanus steps toward Aufidius.

(CONTINUED)

CORIOLANUS

Measureless liar, thou hast made my  
heart / Too great for what contains  
it. Boy? O slave!

Looking around at the stunned crowd, he calms himself as  
much as he can and looks to the Senators.

CORIOLANUS

(cont.)

Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first  
time that ever / I was forced to  
scold. Your judgments, my grave  
lords, / Must give this cur the  
lie; and his own notion - / Who  
wears my stripes impressed upon  
him, that / Must bear my beating to  
his grave - / shall join / To  
thrust the lie unto him.

VSEN.1

Peace, both, and hear me speak.

CORIOLANUS

Cut me to pieces, Volsces. Men and  
lads, / Stain all your edges on  
me. Boy? False hound! / If you  
have writ your annals true, 'tis  
there / That, like an eagle in a  
dovecote, I / Fluttered your  
Volscians in Corioles. / Alone I  
did it. Boy?

AUFIDIUS

Why, noble lords, / Will you be put  
in mind of his blind fortune, /  
Which was your shame, by this  
unholy braggart, / 'Fore your own  
eyes and ears?

The Conspirators make their appearance.

CONSPIRATOR #1

Let him die for't.

CONSPIRATOR #2

Tear him to pieces!

CONSPIRATOR #3

Do it presently!

More Volscian citizens (VCits) in the crowd pipe up.

(CONTINUED)



VCIT #1  
He killed my son!

VCIT #2  
My daughter!

VCIT #3  
He killed my cousin Marcus!

VCIT #4  
He killed my father!

VSEN.2  
Peace, ho! No outrage. Peace! /  
The man is noble and his fame folds  
in / This orb o' th' earth. His  
last offences to us / Shall have  
judicious hearing. Stand,  
Aufidius, / And trouble not the  
peace.

CORIOLANUS  
O that I had him, / With six  
Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe, /  
To use my lawful sword!

AUFIDIUS  
Insolent villain!

Aufidius draws his sword. The Conspirators likewise draw their blades. They descend upon Coriolanus, already surrounded by angry people.

CONSPIRATORS  
Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!

The Conspirators and Aufidius thrust their blades into Coriolanus, who falls dead. Aufidius stands on him.

SENATORS  
Hold, hold, hold, hold!

AUFIDIUS  
My noble masters, hear me speak.

The first Volscian Senator pulls Aufidius off the body.

VSEN.1  
O Tullus -

VSEN.2  
Thou hast done a deed whereat valor  
will weep.

## VNOBLE

Tread not upon him. Masters all,  
be quiet! / Put up your swords.

Aufidius wipes his sword with a rag and sheathes it.

## AUFIDIUS

My lords, when you shall know - as  
in this rage / Provoked by him you  
cannot - the great danger / Which  
this man's life did owe you, you'll  
rejoice / That he is thus cut  
off. Please it your honors / To  
call me to your Senate. I'll  
deliver / Myself your loyal  
servant, or endure / Your heaviest  
censure.

## VSEN.1

Bear from hence his body, / And  
mourn you for him. Let him be  
regarded / As the most noble corpse  
that ever herald / Did follow to  
his urn.

## VSEN.2

His own impatience / Takes from  
Aufidius a great part of blame. /  
Let's make the best of it.

## AUFIDIUS

(stares down at his enemy's  
bloody corpse)  
My rage is gone, / And I am struck  
with sorrow.  
(to Conspirators)  
Take him up. / Help, three o' th'  
chiefest soldiers; I'll be one.

Aufidius, the Conspirators and a couple of Soldiers surround  
the body, as the crowd backs off.

## AUFIDIUS

Beat thou the drum, that it speak  
mournfully. / Trail your steel  
pikes. Though in this city he /  
Hath widowed and unchilded many a  
one, / Which to this hour bewail  
the injury, / Yet he shall have  
noble memory.  
(to Conspirators, Soldiers)  
Assist.

Aufidius, the Conspirators and Soldiers lift up and bear the body of Coriolanus. A dead march is sounded.

Fade out.