

**УИЛЬЯМ  
ШЕКСПИР**

CORIOLANUS

**Уильям Шекспир**  
**Coriolanus**

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*Coriolanus:*

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# William Shakespeare

## Coriolanus

### Dramatis Personae

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards CAIUS MARCIUS  
CORIOLANUS

Generals against the Volscians

TITUS LARTIUS

COMINIUS

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, friend to Coriolanus

Tribunes of the People

SICINIUS VELUTUS

JUNIUS BRUTUS

YOUNG MARCIUS, son to Coriolanus

A ROMAN HERALD

NICANOR, a Roman

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, General of the Volscians

LIEUTENANT, to Aufidius

CONSPIRATORS, With Aufidius

ADRIAN, a Volscian

A CITIZEN of Antium

TWO VOLSCIAN GUARDS

VOLUMNIA, mother to Coriolanus

VIRGILIA, wife to Coriolanus

VALERIA, friend to Virgilia

GENTLEWOMAN attending on Virgilia

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Aediles, Lictors,  
Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Servants to Aufidius, and  
other

Attendants

# **SCENE: Rome and the neighbourhood; Corioli and the neighbourhood; Antium**

## **ACT I. SCENE I. Rome. A street**

Enter a company of mutinous citizens, with staves, clubs, and other weapons

FIRST CITIZEN. Before we proceed any further, hear me speak.

ALL. Speak, speak.

FIRST CITIZEN. You are all resolv'd rather to die than to famish?

ALL. Resolv'd, resolv'd.

FIRST CITIZEN. First, you know Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.

ALL. We know't, we know't.

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

ALL. No more talking on't; let it be done. Away, away!

SECOND CITIZEN. One word, good citizens.

FIRST CITIZEN. We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good.

What authority surfeits on would relieve us; if they would yield

us but the superfluity while it were wholesome, we might guess

they relieved us humanely; but they think we are too dear. 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. Let us revenge this with our pikes ere we become

rakes; for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in

thirst for revenge.

SECOND CITIZEN. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?

FIRST CITIZEN. Against him first; he's a very dog to the commonalty.

SECOND CITIZEN. 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.

SECOND CITIZEN. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

FIRST CITIZEN. I say unto you, what he hath done famously he  
did it

to that end; though soft-conscienc'd 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.

SECOND CITIZEN. 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. [Shouts

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

ALL. Come, come.

FIRST CITIZEN. Soft! who comes here?

Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA

SECOND CITIZEN. Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that  
hath always  
lov'd

the people.

FIRST CITIZEN. He's one honest enough; would all the



rest were  
so!

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  
neighbours,

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 the 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  
car'd for  
us

yet. Suffer us to famish, and their storehouses cramm'd with  
grain; make edicts for usury, to support usurers; repeal  
daily

any wholesome act established 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 accus'd of folly. I shall tell you

A pretty tale. It may be you have heard it;

But, since it 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

Rebell'd against the belly; thus accus'd 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 labour 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 answer'd-

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.

FIRST CITIZEN. Your belly's answer- What?

The kingly crowned head, the vigilant eye,  
The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,  
Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,  
With other muniments and petty helps  
Is this our fabric, if that they-

MENENIUS. What then?

Fore me, this fellow speaks! What then? What then?

FIRST CITIZEN. Should by the cormorant belly be  
restrain'd,

Who is the sink o' th' 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. Y'are long about it.

MENENIUS. Note me this, good friend:

Your most grave belly was deliberate,  
Not rash like his accusers, and thus answered.  
'True is it, my incorporate friends,' quoth he  
'That I receive the general food at first  
Which you do live 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 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, digest 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.

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS

Hail, noble Marcius!

MARCIUS. Thanks. 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.

MARCIUS. 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 trusts to 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 offence 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 favours 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 garland. 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? What's their seeking?  
MENENIUS. For corn at their own rates, whereof they say  
The city is well stor'd.  
MARCIUS. 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 quarter'd 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?

MARCIUS. They are dissolv'd. Hang 'em!

They said they were an-hungry; sigh'd forth proverbs-  
That hunger broke stone walls, that dogs must eat,  
That meat was made for mouths, that the gods sent not  
Corn for the rich men only. With these shreds  
They vented their complainings; which being answer'd,  
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.

MENENIUS. What is granted them?

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

MENENIUS. This is strange.

MARCIUS. Go get you home, you fragments.

Enter a MESSENGER, hastily

MESSENGER. Where's Caius Marcius?

MARCIUS. Here. What's the matter?

MESSENGER. The news is, sir, the Volscres are in arms.

MARCIUS. I am glad on't; then we shall ha' means to vent  
Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders.

**Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS,  
with other SENATORS; JUNIUS  
BRUTUS and SICINIUS VELUTUS**

FIRST SENATOR. Marcius, 'tis true that you have lately  
told us:

The Volscres are in arms.

MARCIUS. They have a leader,

Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to't.

I sin in envying his nobility;

And were I anything but what I am,

I would wish me only he.

COMINIUS. You have fought together?

MARCIUS. 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 Marcius,

Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

COMINIUS. It is your former promise.



MARCIUS. Sir, it is;

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

What, art thou stiff? Stand'st out?

LARTIUS. No, Caius Marcius;

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.

LARTIUS. [To COMINIUS] Lead you on.

[To MARCIUS] Follow Cominius; we must follow you;  
Right worthy your priority.

COMINIUS. Noble Marcius!

FIRST SENATOR. [To the Citizens] Hence to your homes;  
be  
gone.

MARCIUS. Nay, let them follow.

The Volsces have much corn: take these rats thither  
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutineers,  
Your valour puts well forth; pray follow.

Ciitzens steal away. Exeunt all but SICINIUS and  
BRUTUS

SICINIUS. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius?

BRUTUS. He has no equal.

SICINIUS. When we were chosen tribunes for the people-

BRUTUS. Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

SICINIUS. Nay, but his taunts!

BRUTUS. Being mov'd, 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.

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 is well grac'd- cannot  
Better be held nor more attain'd 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 Marcius 'O, if he  
Had borne the business!'

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

BRUTUS. Come.  
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius,  
Though Marcius earn'd them not; and all his faults  
To Marcius shall be honours, 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. Exeunt

## SCENE II. Corioli. The Senate House

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS with SENATORS of Corioli

FIRST SENATOR. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,  
That they of Rome are ent'red in our counsels  
And know how we proceed.

AUFIDIUS. Is it not yours?

What ever have been thought on in this state  
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome  
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone  
Since I heard thence; these are the words- I think  
I have the letter here; yes, here it is:

[Reads] 'They have press'd a power, but it is not known  
Whether for east or west. The dearth is great;  
The people mutinous; and it is rumour'd,  
Cominius, Marcius your old enemy,  
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,  
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,  
These three lead on this preparation  
Whither 'tis bent. Most likely 'tis for you;  
Consider of it.'

FIRST SENATOR. 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 pretences veil'd till when  
They needs must show themselves; which in the hatching,  
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery  
We shall be short'ned in our aim, which was  
To take in many towns ere almost Rome  
Should know we were afoot.

SECOND SENATOR. Noble Aufidius,  
Take your commission; hie you to your bands;  
Let us alone to guard Corioli.  
If they set down before's, for the remove  
Bring up your army; but I think you'll find  
Th' have not prepar'd 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 honours.  
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,  
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike  
Till one can do no more.

ALL. The gods assist you!

AUFIDIUS. And keep your honours safe!

FIRST SENATOR. Farewell.

SECOND SENATOR. Farewell.

ALL. Farewell. Exeunt

### **SCENE III. Rome. MARCIUS' house**

Enter VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA, mother and wife to

MARCIUS; they set them down on two low stools and sew

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

comfortable sort. If my son were my husband, I should  
freelier

rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the  
embracements of his bed where he would show most love.

When  
yet

he was but tender-bodied, and the only son of my womb;  
when  
youth

with comeliness pluck'd all gaze his way; when, for a day of  
kings' entreaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from  
her

beholding; I, considering how honour would become such a  
person-

that it was no better than picture-like to hang by th' wall,  
if

renown made it not stir- was pleas'd to let him seek danger  
where

he was to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him, from whence  
he

return'd 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 Marcius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country

than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

Enter a GENTLEWOMAN

GENTLEWOMAN. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

VIRGILIA. 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 call thus:

'Come on, you cowards! You were got in fear,

Though you were born in Rome.' His bloody brow

With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,

Like to a harvest-man that's task'd 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, look'd not lovelier  
Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood  
At Grecian sword, contemning. Tell Valeria  
We are fit to bid her welcome. Exit GENTLEWOMAN  
VIRGILIA. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!  
VOLUMNIA. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee  
And tread upon his neck.

Re-enter GENTLEWOMAN, With VALERIA and an usher

VALERIA. My ladies both, good day to you.

VOLUMNIA. Sweet madam!

VIRGILIA. I am glad to see your ladyship.

VALERIA. How do you both? You are manifest  
housekeepers. What  
are

you sewing 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 look'd upon him a Wednesday  
half

an

hour together; has such a confirm'd 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, catch'd it again; or whether his fall enrag'd him, or  
how

'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it. O, I warrant, how  
he

mammock'd it!

VOLUMNIA. One on's father's moods.

VALERIA. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

VIRGILIA. A crack, madam.

VALERIA. Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you  
play  
the

idle huswife 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 labour, 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.

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. Your

lord  
and

Titus Lartius are set down before their city Corioli; they  
nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is  
true,

on mine honour; 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. 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. Exeunt

## **SCENE IV. Before Corioli**

Enter MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, with drum and colours,  
with CAPTAINS and soldiers. To them a MESSENGER

MARCIUS. Yonder comes news; a wager- they have met.

LARTIUS. My horse to yours- no.

MARCIUS. 'Tis done.

LARTIUS. Agreed.

MARCIUS. Say, has our general met the enemy?

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

LARTIUS. So, the good horse is mine.

MARCIUS. I'll buy him of you.

LARTIUS. No, I'll nor sell nor give him; lend you him I will

For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

MARCIUS. How far off lie these armies?

MESENTER. Within this mile and half.

MARCIUS. 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.

## **They sound a parley. Enter two SENATORS with others, on the walls of Corioli**

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

FIRST SENATOR. No, nor a man that fears you less than he:

That's lesser than a little. [Drum afar off] 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 pinn'd with rushes;  
They'll open of themselves. [Alarum far off] Hark you far  
off!

There is Aufidius. List what work he makes  
Amongst your cloven army.

MARCIUS. O, they are at it!

LARTIUS. Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho!

Enter the army of the Volsces

MARCIUS. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.  
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 Volscie,  
And he shall feel mine edge.

**Alarum. The Romans are beat back to their trenches**

**Re-enter MARCIUS, cursing**

MARCIUS. 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 abhorr'd  
Farther than seen, and one 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 us to our trenches. Follow me.

**Another alarum. The Volsces fly, and  
MARCIUS follows them to the gates**

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.

[MARCIUS enters the gates]

FIRST SOLDIER. Fool-hardiness; not I.

SECOND SOLDIER. Not I. [MARCIUS is shut in]

FIRST SOLDIER. See, they have shut him in.

ALL. To th' pot, I warrant him. [Alarum continues]

Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS

LARTIUS. What is become of Marcius?

ALL. Slain, sir, doubtless.

FIRST SOLDIER. Following the fliers at the very heels,  
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden,  
Clapp'd to their gates. He is himself alone,  
To answer all the city.

LARTIUS. O noble fellow!

Who sensibly outdares his senseless sword,  
And when it bows stand'st up. Thou art left, Marcius;  
A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,  
Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier  
Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible  
Only in strokes; but with thy grim looks and  
The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds  
Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world  
Were feverous and did tremble.

Re-enter MARCIUS, bleeding, assaulted by the enemy

FIRST SOLDIER. Look, sir.

LARTIUS. O, 'tis Marcius!

Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.

[They fight, and all enter the city]

## SCENE V. Within Corioli. A street

Enter certain Romans, with spoils

FIRST ROMAN. This will I carry to Rome.

SECOND ROMAN. And I this.

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

[Alarum continues still afar off]

Enter MARCIUS and TITUS LARTIUS With a trumpeter

MARCIUS. See here these movers that do prize their hours

At a crack'd 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!

### Exeunt pillagers

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

There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius,

Piercing our Romans; then, valiant Titus, take

Convenient numbers to make good the city;

Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste

To help Cominius.

LARTIUS. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;

Thy exercise hath been too violent

For a second course of fight.

MARCIUS. Sir, praise me not;

My work hath yet not warm'd me. Fare you well;

The blood I drop is rather physical

Than dangerous to me. To Aufidius thus

I will appear, and fight.

LARTIUS. 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!

MARCIUS. Thy friend no less

Than those she placeth highest! So farewell.

LARTIUS. Thou worthiest Marcius! Exit MARCIUS

Go sound thy trumpet in the market-place;

Call thither all the officers o' th' town,

Where they shall know our mind. Away! Exeunt

## **SCENE VI. Near the camp of COMINIUS**

Enter COMINIUS, as it were in retire, with soldiers

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 charg'd 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 powers, with smiling fronts encount'ring,  
May give you thankful sacrifice!

Enter A MESSENGER

Thy news?

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

COMINIUS. Though thou speak'st 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 forc'd to wheel  
Three or four miles about; else had I, sir,  
Half an hour since brought my report.

Enter MARCIUS

COMINIUS. Who's yonder  
That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods!  
He has the stamp of Marcius, and I have

Before-time seen him thus.

MARCIUS. Come I too late?

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

MARCIUS. Come I too late?

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

MARCIUS. O! let me clip ye  
In arms as sound as when I woo'd, in heart  
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,  
And tapers burn'd to bedward.

COMINIUS. Flower of warriors,  
How is't with Titus Lartius?

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

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

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

COMINIUS. But how prevail'd you?

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

Where is the enemy? Are you lords o' th' field?

If not, why cease you till you are so?

COMINIUS. Marcius,

We have at disadvantage fought, and did

Retire to win our purpose.

MARCIUS. How lies their battle? Know you on which side

They have plac'd their men of trust?

COMINIUS. As I guess, Marcius,

Their bands i' th' vaward are the Antiates,

Of their best trust; o'er them Aufidius,

Their very heart of hope.

MARCIUS. I do beseech you,

By all the battles wherein we have fought,

By th' blood we have shed together, by th' vows

We have made to endure friends, that you directly

Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates;

And that you not delay the present, but,

Filling the air with swords advanc'd 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 your choice of those

That best can aid your action.

MARCIUS. Those are they

That most are willing. If any such be here-

As it were sin to doubt- that love this painting

Wherein you see me smear'd; 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 Marcius. [They all shout and wave their

swords, take him up in their arms and cast up their caps]  
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 from all; the rest  
Shall bear the business in some other fight,  
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march;  
And four shall quickly draw out my command,  
Which men are best inclin'd.  
COMINIUS. March on, my fellows;  
Make good this ostentation, and you shall  
Divide in all with us. Exeunt

## **SCENE VII. The gates of Corioli**

TITUS LARTIUS, having set a guard upon Corioli, going  
with drum and trumpet toward COMINIUS and CAIUS  
MARCIUS, enters with a LIEUTENANT, other soldiers, and a

scout

LARTIUS. 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 care, sir.

LARTIUS. Hence, and shut your gates upon's.

Our guider, come; to th' Roman camp conduct us. Exeunt

## **SCENE VIII. A field of battle between the Roman and the Volscian camps**

Alarum, as in battle. Enter MARCIUS and AUFIDIUS at  
several doors

MARCIUS. 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.

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

AUFIDIUS. If I fly, Marcius,  
Halloa me like a hare.

MARCIUS. Within these three hours, Tullus,

Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,  
And made what work I pleas'd. 'Tis not my blood  
Wherein thou seest me mask'd. For thy revenge  
Wrench up thy power to th' highest.  
AUFIDIUS. Wert thou the Hector  
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,  
Thou shouldst not scape me here.

**Here they fight, and certain Volsces come  
in the aid of AUFIDIUS. MARCIUS  
fights till they be driven in breathless**

Officious, and not valiant, you have sham'd me  
In your condemned seconds. Exeunt

## **SCENE IX. The Roman camp**

Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Enter, at one door, COMINIUS with the Romans; at another door, MARCIUS, with his arm in a scarf

COMINIUS. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,  
Thou't not believe thy deeds; but I'll report it  
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles;

Where great patricians shall attend, and shrug,  
I' th' end admire; where ladies shall be frighted  
And, gladly quak'd, hear more; where the dull tribunes,  
That with the fusty plebeians hate thine honours,  
Shall say against their hearts 'We thank the gods  
Our Rome hath such a soldier.'  
Yet cam'st thou to a morsel of this feast,  
Having fully din'd before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, with his power, from the pursuit

LARTIUS. O General,  
Here is the steed, we the caparison.  
Hadst thou beheld-

MARCIUS. 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; induc'd  
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  
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,  
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.  
MARCIUS. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart  
To hear themselves rememb'red.  
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 achiev'd and city,  
We render you the tenth; to be ta'en forth  
Before the common distribution at  
Your only choice.

MARCIUS. 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 the doing.

**A long flourish. They all cry 'Marcius,  
Marcius!' cast up their caps and lances.  
COMINIUS and LARTIUS stand bare**

May these same instruments 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-fac'd soothing. When steel grows  
Soft as the parasite's silk, let him be made



An overture for th' wars. No more, I say.  
For that I have not wash'd my nose that bled,  
Or foil'd some debile wretch, which without note  
Here's many else have done, you shout me forth  
In acclamations hyperbolical,  
As if I lov'd my little should be dieted  
In praises sauc'd 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 incens'd, we'll put you-  
Like one that means his proper harm- in manacles,  
Then reason safely with you. Therefore be it known,  
As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius  
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 Corioli, call him  
With all th' applause-and clamour of the host,  
Caius Marcius Coriolanus.  
Bear th' addition nobly ever!

[Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums]

ALL. Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

CORIOLANUS. I will go wash;  
And when my face is fair you shall perceive  
Whether I blush or no. Howbeit, I thank you;  
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 Corioli back. Send us to Rome  
The best, with whom we may articulate  
For their own good and ours.

LARTIUS. I shall, my lord.

CORIOLANUS. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now  
Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg  
Of my Lord General.

COMINIUS. Take't- 'tis yours; what is't?

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

COMINIUS. O, well begg'd!

Were he the butcher of my son, he should  
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

LARTIUS. Marcius, his name?

CORIOLANUS. By Jupiter, forgot!  
I am weary; yea, my memory is tir'd.  
Have we no wine here?

COMINIUS. Go we to our tent.

The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time  
It should be look'd to. Come. Exeunt

## SCENE X. The camp of the Volsces

A flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS bloody, with two or three soldiers

AUFIDIUS. The town is ta'en.

FIRST SOLDIER. 'Twill be deliver'd 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, Marcius,  
I have fought with thee; so often 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 honour 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.

FIRST SOLDIER. He's the devil.

AUFIDIUS. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's  
poison'd

With only suff'ring 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,  
Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up  
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst  
My hate to Marcius. 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.

FIRST SOLDIER. 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.

FIRST SOLDIER. I shall, sir. Exeunt

## ACT II. SCENE I. Rome. A public place

Enter MENENIUS, with the two Tribunes of the people, SICINIUS and BRUTUS

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 Marcius. 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 plebeians would the noble Marcius. 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. BOTH TRIBUNES. Well, sir. MENENIUS. In what enormity is Marcius poor in that you two have not in abundance? BRUTUS. He's poor in no one fault, but stor'd with all. SICINIUS. Especially in pride. BRUTUS. And topping all others in boasting. MENENIUS. This is strange now. Do you two know how you are censured here in the city- I mean of us o' th' right-hand file? Do you? BOTH TRIBUNES. Why, how are we censur'd? MENENIUS. Because you talk of pride now- will you not be angry? BOTH TRIBUNES. 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 Marcius 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 infant-like 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! BOTH TRIBUNES. 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 favouring the first complaint, hasty and tinder-like 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 deliver'd 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 any thing. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs; you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller, and then rejoin 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 pinch'd 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. BRUTUS. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary benchman in the Capitol. 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 honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion or to be entomb'd in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying Marcius 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. God-den to your worships. More of your conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen of the beastly plebeians. I will be bold to take my leave of you. [BRUTUS and SICINIUS go aside]

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