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**Shakespear, William**

**Oxford, 1771**

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*F. Hayman inv.*

CORIOLANUS. Act. 5. Sc. 3.

*H. Gravelot sculp.*



DRAMATIS PERSONAE

CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS, a noble Roman, banish'd by the  
Common People.

\*\*\*\*\*

COMINIUS, Friend to CORIOLANUS.

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, Tribune of the People, and enemy to  
CORIOLANUS.

JUNIUS BRUTUS, General of the Volscians.

TULLUS AURIBUS, Lieutenant to AURIBUS.

Young MARTIUS, Son to CORIOLANUS.

CASSINIUS, Servant to AURIBUS.

VALENTIA, Friend to VIRGILIA.

Roman and Volscian Senators, Knights, Ladies, Soldiers, Common  
People, Servants to AURIBUS, and other Attendants.

The SCENE is partly in Rome and partly in the Territory  
of the Volscians, and Antissa.

\*\*\*\*\*

The whole History exactly followed, and many of the principal  
Speeches copied from the life of CORIOLANUS in PLUTARCH.

CORIOLANUS  
Vol. V

L





## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS, *a noble Roman, hated by the common People.*

TITUS LARTIUS, } *Generals against the Volscians, and friends to*  
COMINIUS, } *CORIOLANUS.*

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, *Friend to CORIOLANUS.*

SICINIUS VELUTUS, } *Tribunes of the People, and enemies to*  
JUNIUS BRUTUS, } *CORIOLANUS.*

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, *General of the Volscians.*

*Lieutenant to AUFIDIUS.*

*Young MARTIUS, Son to CORIOLANUS.*

*Conspirators with AUFIDIUS.*

VOLUMNIA, *Mother to CORIOLANUS.*

VIRGILIA, *Wife to CORIOLANUS.*

VALERIA, *Friend to VIRGILIA.*

*Roman and Volscian Senators, Ædiles, Liçtors, Soldiers, Common People, Servants to AUFIDIUS, and other Attendants.*

*The SCENE is partly in Rome and partly in the Territory of the Volscians, and Antiates.*

*The whole History exactly follow'd, and many of the principal speeches copy'd from the life of CORIOLANUS in PLUTARCH.*

CORIOLANUS.



\*\*\*\*\*  
C O R I O L A N U S.

ACT I. SCENE I.

*A Street in Rome.*

*Enter a company of mutinous Citizens with staves, clubs,  
and other weapons.*

I CITIZEN.

**B**EFORE we proceed any further, hear me speak.

*All.* Speak, speak.

*1 Cit.* You are all resolv'd rather to die than to  
famish?

*All.* Resolv'd, resolv'd.

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

*All.* We know't.

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

*All.* No more talking on't; let't be done: away, away!

*2 Cit.* One word, good citizens.

*1 Cit.* 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 pitchforks, ere we  
become rakes: for the gods know, I speak this in hunger for  
bread, not in thirst for revenge.

L 2

*2 Cit.*





*2 Cit.* Would you proceed especially against *Caius Martius*?

*All.* Against him first; he's a very dog to the commonalty.

*2 Cit.* Consider you what services he has done for his country?

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

*All.* Nay, but speak not maliciously.

*1 Cit.* 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 partly to be proud; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue.

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

*1 Cit.* 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 those? the other side o' th' city is risen: why stay we prating here? to th' capitol.

*All.* Come, come.

*1 Cit.* Soft; who comes here?

## S C E N E II.

*Enter Menenius Agrippa.*

*2 Cit.* Worthy *Menenius Agrippa*; one that hath always lov'd the people.

*1 Cit.* He's one honest enough; 'would all the rest were so!

*Men.* What work's, my countrymen, in hand? where go you With your bats and clubs? the matter? Speak, I pray you.

*2 Cit.* Our business is not unknown to the 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.

*Men.* Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours, Will you undo yourselves?

*2 Cit.* We cannot, sir, we are undone already.

*Men.* I tell you, friends, most charitable care Have the patricians of you. For your wants,

Your



Your sufferings 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 links afunder, 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.

*2 Cit.* 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.

*Men.* 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.

*2 Cit.* Well,  
We'll hear it, sir; but yet you must not think  
To sob off our disgraces with a tale:  
But, an't please you, deliver.

*Men.* 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





Unto the appetite and affection common  
Of the whole body. The belly answer'd, —

*2 Cit.* Well, fir, what answer made the belly?

*Men.* 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 reply'd  
To the 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.

*2 Cit.* 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  
In this our fabrick, if that they —

*Men.* What then? — for me this fellow speaks.  
What then? what then?

*2 Cit.* Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,  
Who is the sink o' th' body —

*Men.* Well, what then?

*2 Cit.* The former agents, if they did complain,  
What could the belly answer?

*Men.* I will tell you,  
If you'll bestow a small (of what you have little)  
Patience, a while; you'll hear the belly's answer.

*2 Cit.* Y'are long about it.

*Men.* Note me this, good friend;  
Your most grave belly was deliberate,  
Not rash, like his accusers, and thus answer'd:  
*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*



*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 inferiour 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, —*

*2 Cit. Ay, fir, well, well.*

*Men. 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 flow'r of all,  
And leave me but the bran. What say you to't*

*2 Cit. It was an answer: how apply you this?*

*Men. 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 publick 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?*

*2 Cit. I the great toe! why the great toe?*

*Men. For that, being one o' th' lowest, basest, poorest  
Of this most wise rebellion, thou goest foremost;  
Thou rascal, that art first from blows 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 bane.*

S C E N E III.

*Enter Caius Martius.*

Hail, noble *Martius*!

*Mar. Thanks. — What's the matter, you dissentious rogues,  
That,*





That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,  
Make yourselves scabs?

*2 Cit.* We have ever your good word.

*Mar.* He that will give good words to thee, will flatter  
Beneath abhorring. — What would you have, ye curs,  
That like not 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 furer, 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 the 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?

*Men.* For corn at their own rates; whereof, they say,  
The city is well stor'd.

*Mar.* 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,  
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



A quarry with thousands of these quarter'd slaves,  
As high as I could pitch my lance.

*Men.* Nay, these  
Are almost thoroughly persuaded: for  
Although abundantly they lack discretion,  
Yet are they passing cowardly. I beseech you,  
What says the other troop?

*Mar.* They are dissolv'd:  
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.

*Men.* What is granted?

*Mar.* Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,  
Of their own choice. One of them's *Junius Brutus*,  
*Sicinius Velutus*, and I know not — s'death!  
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.

*Men.* This is strange.

*Mar.* Go, get you home, you fragments!

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mes.* Where's *Caius Martius*?

*Mar.* Here: what is the matter?

*Mes.* The news is, sir, the *Volscians* are in arms.

*Mar.* I am glad on't; then we shall have means to vent  
Our musty superfluity. See! our best elders —





## SCENE IV.

*Enter Sicinius Velutus, Junius Brutus, Cominius, Titus Lartius,  
with other Senators.*

*1 Sen. Martius, 'tis true, that you have lately told us,  
The Volscians are in arms.*

*Mar. 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'd wish me only him.*

*Com. You have fought together?*

*Mar. 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.*

*1 Sen. Then, worthy Martius,  
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.*

*Com. It is your former promise.*

*Mar. 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?*

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

*Men. O, true bred!*

*1 Sen. Your company to th' capitol; where, I know,  
Our greatest friends attend us.*

*Lar. Lead you on: —  
Follow, Cominius! we must follow you,  
Right worthy your priority.*

*Com. Noble Lartius!*

*1 Sen. Hence to your homes; be gone. [to the Citizens.*

*Mar. Nay, let them follow:*

The



The *Volsicians* have much corn; take these rats thither  
To gnaw their garners. — Worshipful mutineers,  
Your valour puts well forth: I pray you, follow. [Exeunt.

[Citizens steal away. Manent Sicinius and Brutus.

*Sic.* Was ever man so proud as is this *Martius*?

*Bru.* He has no equal.

*Sic.* When we were chosen tribunes for the people, —

*Bru.* Mark'd you his lip and eyes?

*Sic.* Nay, but his taunts!

*Bru.* Being mov'd, he will not spare to gird the gods.

*Sic.* Bemock the modest moon.

*Bru.* The present wars devour him! he is grown  
Too proud of being so valiant.

*Sic.* 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*.

*Bru.* Fame, at which he aims,  
In which 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 *Martius*,  
O, if he had born the business!

*Sic.* And if things go well,  
Opinion, that so sticks on *Martius*, shall  
Of his demerits rob *Cominius*.

*Bru.* Come;  
Half all *Cominius*' honours are to *Martius*,  
Though *Martius* earn them not; and all his faults  
To *Martius* shall be honours, though, indeed,  
In aught he merit not.

*Sic.* Let's hence, and hear  
How the despatch is made; and in what fashion,





More than this singularity, he goes  
Upon this present action.

*Bru.* Let's along.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.

Corioli.

*Enter Tullus Aufidius, with Senators of Corioli.*

*1 Sen.* SO, your opinion is, *Aufidius*,  
That they of *Rome* are enter'd in our counfels,  
And know how we proceed.

*Auf.* Is it not yours?

What ever hath 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:

*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, Martius 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.*

*1 Sen.* Our army's in the field:

We never yet made doubt but *Rome* was ready  
To answer us.

*Auf.* 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 seems, appear'd to *Rome*. By the discovery  
We shall be shorten'd in our aim, which was

To



To take in many towns, ere, almost *Rome*  
Should know we were afoot.

*2 Sen.* Noble *Aufidius*,  
Take your commission, hie you to your bands;  
Let us alone to guard *Corioli*:  
If they sit down before's, for the remove  
Bring up your army; but, I think, you'll find  
They've not prepar'd for us,

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

*All.* The gods assist you!

*Auf.* And keep your honours safe!

*1 Sen.* Farewel.

*2 Sen.* Farewel.

*All.* Farewel.

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E VI.

*Caius Martius' House in Rome.*

*Enter Volumnia, and Virgilia; they sit down on two low  
stools, and sew.*

*Vol.* I Pray you, daughter, sing; or express yourself in a more  
comfortable sort: if my son were my husband, I would  
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 plucked 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





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 like 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.

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

*Vol.* 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 eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

*Enter a Gentlewoman.*

*Gent.* Madam, the lady *Valeria* is come to visit you.

*Vir.* Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

*Vol.* Indeed, thou shalt not:

Methinks, I hither hear your husband's drum;  
I see him pluck *Aufidius* down by th' hair;  
As children a bear, the *Volsci* shunning him:  
Methinks, I see him stamp thus, and call thus, —  
*Come on, ye cowards; ye 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 harvestman that's task'd to mow  
Or all, or lose his hire.

*Vir.* His bloody brow! o, *Jupiter*, no blood!

*Vol.* Away, you fool! it more becomes a man  
Than gilt his trophy. The breast of *Hecuba*,  
When she did suckle *Hector*, look'd not lovelier  
Than *Hector's* forehead, when it spit forth blood  
At *Grecian* swords contending. — Tell *Valeria*  
We are fit to bid her welcome.

[*Exit Gent.*

*Vir.* Heav'ns bless my lord from fell *Aufidius*!

*Vol.* He'll beat *Aufidius'* head below his knee,  
And tread upon his neck.

*Enter*



*Enter Valeria with an Usher, and a Gentlewoman.*

*Val.* My ladies both, good day to you!

*Vol.* Sweet madam, —

*Vir.* I am glad to see your ladyship.

*Val.* How do you both? you are manifest housekeepers. What are you sewing here? a fine spot, in good faith. — How does your little son?

*Vir.* I thank your ladyship; well, good madam.

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

*Val.* O' my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I look'd on him o' wednesday half an hour together — h'as 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, and caught it again: and whether his fall enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth and did tear it; o, I warrant how he mammock'd it!

*Vol.* One of's father's moods.

*Val.* Indeed la, 'tis a noble child.

*Vir.* A crack, madam.

*Val.* Come, lay aside your stitchery; I must have you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

*Vir.* No, good madam; I will not out of doors.

*Val.* Not out of doors!

*Vol.* She shall, she shall.

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

*Val.* Fie, you confine yourself unreasonably: come, you must go visit the good lady that lies in.

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

*Vol.* Why, I pray you?

*Vir.* 'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love.

*Val.* You would be another *Penelope*: yet, they say, all the yarn she





she spun in *Ulysses'* absence, did but fill *Ithaca* full of moths. Come; I would your cambrick were sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

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

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

*Vir.* O, good madam, there can be none yet.

*Val.* Verily, I do not jest with you; there came news from him last night.

*Vir.* Indeed, madam?

*Val.* In earnest, it's true; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is: — the *Volscians* 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 my honour; and so, I pray, go with us.

*Vir.* Give me excuse, good madam; I will obey you in every thing hereafter.

*Vol.* Let her alone, lady; as she is now, she will but disease our better mirth.

*Val.* In troth, I think she would: fare you well then. — Come, good sweet lady. — Pr'ythee, *Virgilia*, turn thy solemnness out o'door, and go along with us.

*Vir.* No: at a word, madam; indeed, I must not. I wish you much mirth.

*Val.* Well, then farewell.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

*The Walls of Corioli.*

*Enter Martius, Titus Lartius, with Captains and Soldiers:  
To them a Messenger.*

*Mar.* **Y**ONDER comes news: a wager, they have met.

*Lar.* My horse to yours, no.

*Mar.*



*Mar.* 'Tis done.

*Lar.* Agreed.

*Mar.* Say, has our general met the enemy?

*Mes.* They lie in view; but have not spoke as yet.

*Lar.* So, the good horse is mine.

*Mar.* I'll buy him of you.

*Lar.* No, I'll not sell, nor give him: lend him you  
I will, for half an hundred years or so. —

Summon the town.

*Mar.* How far off lie these armies?

*Mes.* Within a mile and half.

*Mar.* Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours. —  
Now, *Mars*, I pr'ythee, make us quick in work;  
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,  
To help our fielded friends! — Come, blow the blast.

*They sound a parley. Enter two Senators with others on the walls.*

*Tullus Aufidius* is he within your wall?

*1 Sen.* No, nor a man that fears you less than he,  
That's lesser than a little. Hark, our drums [*drum afar off.*  
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. Hark you, far off [*alarum far off.*  
There is *Aufidius*: list, what work he makes  
Amongst your cloven army.

*Mar.* O, they are at it.

*Lar.* Their noise be our instruction! — Ladders, ho!

*Enter the Volscians.*

*Mar.* 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 *Volscian*,

VOL. V.

N

And





And he shall feel mine edge.

[*alarum*; the Romans are beat back to their trenches.

SCENE VIII.

*Reenter Martius.*

*Mar.* All the contagion of the south light on you,  
You shames of Rome, you herds, you! 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 heav'n, 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 followed.

[*another alarum*, and *Martius* 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.

[*he enters the gates, and is shut in.*

1 *Sol.* Foolhardiness, not I.

2 *Sol.* Nor I.

1 *Sol.* See, they have shut him in.

[*alarum continues.*

*All.* To th' pot, I warrant him.

*Enter Titus Lartius.*

*Lar.* What is become of *Martius*?

*All.* Slain, sir, doubtless.

1 *Sol.* Following the fliers at the very heels,  
With them he enters; who, upon the sudden,  
Clap'd to their gates: he is himself alone,  
To answer all the city.

*Lar.*



*Lar.* O noble fellow!  
 Who sensible outdoes his senseless sword,  
 And, when it bows, stands up! Thou art left, *Martius*:  
 A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art,  
 Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier  
 Even to *Cato's* wish<sup>a</sup>, not fierce and terrible  
 Only in strokes, but with thy grim looks, and  
 The thunder-like percussions of thy sounds,  
 Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world  
 Were feverous, and did tremble.

*Enter Martius bleeding, assaulted by the Enemy.*

*1 Sol.* Look, sir.

*Lar.* O, 'tis *Martius*:  
 Let's fetch him off, or make remain<sup>b</sup> alike.  
 [they fight and all enter the City.]

*Enter certain Romans with Spoils.*

*1 Rom.* This will I carry to *Rome*.

*2 Rom.* And I this.

*3 Rom.* A murrain on't, I took this for silver.

[alarum continues still afar off.]

*Enter Martius, and Titus Lartius, with a Trumpet.*

*Mar.* See here these movers, that do prize their honours  
 At a crack'd drachm! 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. —  
 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

<sup>a</sup> Plutarch in the life of *Coriolanus* relates this as the opinion of *Cato the elder*, that a great soldier should carry terror in his looks and tone of voice: and the poet here by following the historian inadvertently is fallen into a great chronological impropriety.

<sup>b</sup> Make remain is an old way of speaking which signifies but the same as remain.





Convenient numbers to make good the city,  
 Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste  
 To help *Cominius*.

*Lar.* Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;  
 Thy exercise hath been too violent for  
 A second course of fight.

*Mar.* Sir, praise me not:  
 My work hath yet not warm'd me: fare you well.  
 The blood I drop is rather physical  
 Than dangerous. T' *Aufidius* thus I will  
 Appear, and fight.

*Lar.* 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!

*Mar.* Thy friend no less,  
 Than to those she placeth highest! so, farewell.

*Lar.* Thou worthiest *Martius*! —  
 Go, sound thy trumpet in the market-place; [to the Trumpet.  
 Call thither all the officers o'th' town,  
 Where they shall know our mind. Away! [Exeunt.

## S C E N E IX.

*The Roman Camp.*

*Enter Cominius retreating, with Soldiers.*

*Com.* 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. — Ye *Roman* gods,  
 Lead their successes, as we wish our own,  
 That both our powers, with smiling fronts encount'ring,  
 May give you thankful sacrifice! — Thy news?

*Enter*



*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mes.* The citizens of *Corioli* have issued,  
And given to *Lartius* and to *Martius* battle:  
I saw our party to their trenches driven,  
And then I came away.

*Com.* Though thou speak'st truth,  
Methinks, thou speak'st not well. How long is't since?

*Mes.* Above an hour, my lord.

*Com.* 'Tis not a mile: briefly we heard their drums.  
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,  
And bring the news so late?

*Mes.* Spies of the *Volscians*  
Held me in chafe, that I was forc'd to wheel  
Three or four miles about; else had I, sir,  
Half an hour since brought my report.

*Enter Martius.*

*Com.* Who's yonder,  
That does appear as he were flea'd? O gods!  
He has the stamp of *Martius*, and I have  
Before-time seen him thus.

*Mar.* Come I too late?

*Com.* The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor,  
More than I know the found of *Martius'* tongue  
From every meaner man's.

*Mar.* Come I too late?

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

*Mar.* 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.

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

*Mar.* As with a man busied about decrees;

Condemning





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.

*Com.* Where is that slave  
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches?  
Where is he? call him hither.

*Mar.* Let him alone,  
He did inform the truth: but for our gentlemen,  
The common file, (a plague on't! tribunes for them!)  
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat, as they did budge  
From rascals worse than they.

*Com.* But how prevail'd you?

*Mar.* 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?

*Com.* *Martius*, we have at disadvantage fought,  
And did retire to win our purpose.

*Mar.* How lies their battle? know you on what side  
They have plac'd their men of trust?

*Com.* 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.

*Mar.* I do beseech you,  
By all the battles wherein we have fought,  
By th' blood w'ave shed together, by the vows  
W'ave made to endure friends, that you directly  
Set me against *Aufidius*, and his *Antiat's*;  
And that you not delay the present, but,  
Filling the air with swords advanc'd, and darts,  
We prove this very hour.

*Com.* Though I could wish  
You were conducted to a gentle bath,  
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never

Deny



Deny your asking; take your choice of those  
That best can aid your action.

*Mar.* 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  
Less for 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 many, if so minded)  
Wave thus, t'express his disposition,  
And follow *Martius*.

*[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 *Volscians*? 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 obey'd. Please you to march,  
And four shall quickly draw out my command,  
Which men are best inclin'd.

*Com.* March on, my fellows:  
Make good this ostentation, and you shall  
Divide in all with us.

*[Exeunt.]*

## SCENE X.

Corioli.

*Titus Lartius having set a guard upon Corioli, going with drum  
and trumpet toward Cominius and Caius Martius; Enter with  
a Lieutenant other Soldiers and a Scout.*

*Lar.*





*Lar.* SO, let the ports be guarded; keep your duties  
As I have set them down. If I do send,  
Despatch those centuries to our aid; the rest  
Will serve for a short holding: if we lose  
The field, we cannot keep the town.

*Lieu.* Fear not  
Our care, sir.

*Lar.* Hence, and shut your gates upon's. —  
Our guider, come, to th' Roman camp conduct us. [*Exeunt.*]

## SCENE XI.

*The Roman Camp.*

*Alarum as in battle. Enter Martius, and Aufidius, at several doors.*

*Mar.* I'LL fight with none but thee, for I do hate thee  
Worse than a promise-breaker.

*Auf.* We hate alike;  
Not *Africk* owns a serpent I abhor  
More than thy fame, and envy: fix thy foot.

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

*Auf.* If I fly, *Martius*, hollow me like a hare.

*Mar.* Within these three hours, *Tullus*,  
Alone I fought in your *Corioli*'s walls,  
And made what work I pleas'd: 'tis not my blood,  
Wherein thou see'st me mask'd; for thy revenge  
Wrench up thy power to th' highest.

*Auf.* Wert thou the *Hector*,  
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,  
Thou shouldst not 'scape me here.

[*here they fight, and certain Volscians come to the aid of Aufidius.*]

*Martius fights till they be driven in breathless.*  
Officious and not valiant! you have sham'd me  
In your condemned seconding. [*Exeunt Mar. and Auf. fighting.*  
*Flourish.*]



*Flourish. Alarum. A retreat is sounded. Enter at one door Cominius, with the Romans: at another door Martius, with his arm in a scarf.*

*Com.* If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,  
Thou'lt 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'ft thou to a morsel of this feast,  
Having fully din'd before.

*Enter Titus Lartius with his power from the pursuit.*

*Lar.* O general,  
Here is the steed, we the caparison!  
Hadst thou beheld —

*Mar.* 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 also been; that's for my country:  
He that has but effected his good will  
Hath overta'en mine act.

*Com.* 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.

VOL. V.

O

*Mar.*





*Mar.* I have some wounds upon me, and they smart  
To hear themselves remember'd.

*Com.* Should they not,  
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude,  
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,  
Whereof we've ta'en good, and good store, of all  
The treasure in the field atchiv'd, and city,  
We render you the tenth, to be ta'en forth,  
Before the common distribution,  
At your own choice.

*Mar.* 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, Martius! Martius! cast up their  
caps and lances: Cominius and Lartius stand bare.*]

*Mar.* May these same instruments, which you profane,  
Never sound more! When drums and trumpets shall  
I'th' field prove flatterers, let camps as cities  
Be made of false-fac'd soothing! When steel grows  
Soft, as the parasite's silk, let hymns 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 hyperbolic,  
As if I lov'd my little should be dieted  
In praises sauc'd with lies.

*Com.* 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 Martius*

Wears



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 the applause and clamour of the host,  
*Caius Martius Coriolanus*. — Bear th' addition nobly ever!

[flourish: trumpets sound, and drums.]

*Omnes. Caius Martius Coriolanus!*

*Mar.* 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.

*Com.* 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.

*Lar.* I shall, my lord.

*Mar.* The gods begin to mock me: I, that but now  
 Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg  
 Of my lord general.

*Com.* Take't; 'tis yours: what is't?

*Mar.* I sometime lay here in *Corioli*,  
 And at a poor man's house; he us'd me kindly:  
 He cry'd 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.

*Com.* O, well begg'd!

Were he the butcher of my son, he should  
 Be free as is the wind: — deliver him, *Titus*.

*Lar.* *Martius*, his name?

*Mar.* By *Jupiter*, forgot:

O 2

I'm





I'm weary; yea, my memory is tir'd:—  
Have we no wine here?

*Com.* Go we to our tent:  
The blood upon your visage dries; 'tis time  
It should be look'd to: come. [Exeunt.]

## S C E N E XII.

*The Camp of the Volsci.*

*A flourish. Cornets. Enter Tullus Aufidius bloody, with two  
or three Soldiers.*

*Auf.* THE town is ta'en.

*Sol.* 'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition.

*Auf.* Condition!

I would I were a *Roman*, for I cannot,  
Being a *Volscian*, 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 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.

*Sol.* He's the devil.

*Auf.* Bolder, though not so subtle: my valour (poison'd  
With only suffering stain by him) for him  
Shall fly out of itself: not sleep, nor sanctuary,  
Being naked, sick, nor fane, nor capitol,  
The prayers of priests, nor times of sacrifice,  
Embankments all of fury, shall lift up

Their



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*.

*Sol.* Will not you go?

*Auf.* 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.

*Sol.* I shall, sir.

[*Exeunt.*]



## ACT II. SCENE I.

Rome.

*Enter Menenius with Sicinius and Brutus.*

MENENIUS.

THE augur tells me, we shall have news to-night.

*Bru.* Good or bad?

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

*Sic.* Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

*Men.* Pray you, whom does the wolf love?

*Sic.* The lamb.

*Men.* Ay, to devour him; as the hungry plebeians would the  
 noble *Martius*.

*Bru.* He's a lamb, indeed, that baes like a bear.

*Men.* 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.* Well, sir.

*Men.*





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

*Bru.* He's poor in no one fault, but stor'd with all.

*Sic.* Especially, in pride.

*Bru.* And topping all others in boast.

*Men.* This is strange now! do you two know how you are censur'd here in the city, I mean of us o'th'right hand file, do you?

*Bru.* Why, how are we censur'd?

*Men.* Because you talk of pride now, will you not be angry?

*Both.* Well, well, fir, well.

*Men.* 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?

*Bru.* We do it not alone, fir.

*Men.* 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 towards the napes of your necks, and make but an interiour survey of your good selves! o, that you could!

*Bru.* What then, fir?

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

*Sic.* *Menenius*, you are known well enough too.

*Men.* 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 weal's-men as you are (I cannot call you *Lycurgusses*) if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I can't say, your worships  
have



have deliver'd the matter well, when I find the as 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 bison conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too?

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

*Men.* 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 foffet-seller; and then adjourn a controversy of three-pence 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 cholick, 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 entangl'd by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause, is, calling both the parties knaves. You are a pair of strange ones.

*Bru.* Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter gyber for the table, than a necessary bencher in the capitol.

*Men.* 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 as's pack-saddle. 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 them were hereditary hangmen. Good e'en 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. [*Exeunt Brutus and Sicinius.*]

S C E N E





## SCENE II.

*Enter Volumnia, Virgilia, and Valeria.*

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

*Vol.* Honourable *Menenius*, my boy *Martius* approaches: for the love of *Juno*, let's go.

*Men.* Ha! *Martius* coming home?

*Vol.* Ay, worthy *Menenius*; and with most prosperous approbation.

*Men.* Take my cap, *Jupiter*, and I thank thee: hoo, *Martius* coming home!

*Both.* Nay, 'tis true.

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

*Men.* I will make my very house reel to-night: a letter for me!

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

*Men.* 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 empirick, and, to this preservative, of no better report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded? he was wont to come home wounded.

*Vir.* O no, no, no.

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

*Men.* So do I too, if he be not too much: brings he a victory in his pocket, the wounds become him.

*Vol.* On's brows, *Menenius*; he comes the third time home with the oaken garland.\*

*Men.* Hath he disciplin'd *Aufidius* soundly?

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

*Men.* And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant him that: if he had stay'd by him, I would not have been so *fidius'd* for all the chests in *Corioli*, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possess'd of this?

[\*The *Corona civica* was given to any soldier who saved the life of a Roman citizen in an engagement; and was reckon'd more honourable than any other crown, though compos'd of no better materials than oaken boughs. Dr. Grey.]

*Vol.*



*Vol.* 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.

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

*Men.* Wondrous! ay, I warrant you, and not without his true purchasing.

*Vir.* The gods grant them true!

*Vol.* True? pow waw.

*Men.* True? I'll be sworn they are true. — Where is he wounded? God save their good worships! *Martius* is coming home; he has more cause to be proud: — where is he wounded?

*Val.* 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 receiv'd in the repulse of *Tarquin* seven hurts i'th' body.

*Men.* One i'th' neck, and one too i'th' thigh; there's nine that I know.

*Vol.* He had, before his last expedition, twenty five wounds upon him.

*Men.* Now 'tis twenty seven: every gash was an enemy's grave. Hark, the trumpets. [a shout and flourish.]

*Vol.* These are th' ushers of *Martius*; before him He carries noise, behind him he leaves tears: Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie, Which being advanc'd declines, and then men die.

## S C E N E III.

*Trumpets sound.* Enter *Cominius* the General and *Titus Lartius*; between them *Coriolanus*, crown'd with an oaken garland, with Captains and Soldiers, and a Herald.

*Her.* Know, *Rome*, that all alone *Martius* did fight Within *Corioli's* gates, where he hath won, With fame, a name to *Caius Martius*. Welcome to *Rome*, renown'd *Coriolanus*! [sound. flourish.]





*All.* Welcome to *Rome*, renown'd *Coriolanus*!

*Cor.* No more of this, it does offend my heart;  
Pray now, no more.

*Com.* Look, fir, your mother.

*Cor.* O,

You have, I know, petition'd all the gods  
For my prosperity.

*Vol.* Nay, my soldier, up:

My gentle *Martius*, my worthy *Caius*,  
By deed-atchieved honour newly nam'd,  
What is it, *Coriolanus*, must I call thee?

But, o, thy wife —

*Cor.* My gracious silence, hail!

Wouldst thou have laugh'd, had I come coffin'd home,  
That weep'ft to see me triumph? ah, my dear,  
Such eyes the widows in *Corioli* wear,

And mothers that lack sons.

*Men.* Now the gods crown thee!

*Cor.* And live you yet? — O, my sweet lady, pardon. [*to Val.*]

*Vol.* I know not where to turn. — O, welcome home; —  
And welcome, general! — y'are welcome all.

*Men.* A hundred thousand welcomes: I could weep,  
And I could laugh; I'm light and heavy: welcome!  
A curse begin at very root on's heart

That is not glad to see thee! You are three

That *Rome* should dote on: yet, by the faith of men,  
We've some old crab-trees here at home, that will not  
Be grafted to your relish. Welcome, warriors!

We call a nettle, but a nettle; and

The faults of fools, but folly.

*Com.* Ever right.

*Cor.* *Menenius*, ever, ever.

*Her.* Give way there, and go on.

*Cor.* Your hand, and yours.

Ere in our own house I do shade my head

The good patricians must be visited;

From



From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings,  
But with them, charge of honour.

*Vol.* I have lived,  
To see inherited my very wishes,  
And buildings of my fancy; only one thing  
Is wanting, which I doubt not but our *Rome*  
Will cast upon thee.

*Cor.* Know, good mother, I  
Had rather be their servant in my way,  
Than sway with them in theirs.

*Com.* On, to the capitol.

[*flourish. cornets.*  
[*Exeunt in state, as before.*

## SCENE IV.

*Enter Brutus, and Sicinius.*

*Bru.* ALL tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights  
Are spectacled to see him: your prating nurse  
Into a rapture let's her baby cry,  
While she chats him: the kitchen maikin pins  
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,  
Clamb'ring the walls to eye him: stalls, bulks, windows,  
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges hors'd  
With 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 veil'd dames  
Commit the war of white and damask in  
Their nicely gawded cheeks, to th' wanton spoil  
Of *Phœbus'* burning kisses: such a pother,  
As if that whatsoever god who leads him,  
Were sily crept into his human powers,  
And gave him graceful posture.

*Sic.* On the sudden,  
I warrant him consul.

P 2

*Bru.*





*Bru.* Then our office may,  
During his power, go sleep.

*Sic.* He cannot temp'rately transport his honours  
From where he should begin, and end; but will  
Lose those he'ath won.

*Bru.* In that there's comfort.

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

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

*Sic.* 'Tis right.

*Bru.* It was his word: o, he would miss it, rather  
Than carry it, but by the suit o'th' gentry,  
And the desire o'th' nobles.

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

*Bru.* 'Tis most like, he will.

*Sic.* It shall be to him then, as our good wills;  
A sure destruction.

*Bru.* So it must fall out  
To him, or our authorities. For our end,  
We must suggest the people, in what hatred  
He still hath held them; that, to's power, he would  
Have made them mules, silenc'd their pleaders, and  
Disproperty'd their freedoms: holding them,  
In human action and capacity,  
Of no more soul nor fitness for the world,

Than



Than camels in the war, who have their provender  
Only for bearing burdens, and fore blows  
For sinking under them.

*Sic.* This, as you say, suggested  
At some time 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 the fire  
To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze  
Shall darken him for ever.

*Enter a Messenger.*

*Bru.* What's the matter?

*Mes.* You're sent for to the capitol; 'tis thought,  
That *Martius* shall be consul: I have seen  
The dumb men throng to see him, and the blind  
To hear him speak; the matrons flung their gloves,  
Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchiefs,  
Upon him as he pass'd; 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.

*Bru.* Let's to the capitol,  
And carry with us ears and eyes for th' time,  
But hearts for the event.

*Sic.* Have with you.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.

The Capitol.

*Enter two Officers, to lay cushions.*

1 *Off.* COME, come, they are almost here: how many stand  
for consulships?

2 *Off.* Three, they say: but 'tis thought of every one, *Coriolanus*  
will carry it.

1 *Off.*





1 *Off.* That's a brave fellow; but he's vengeance proud, and loves not the common people.

2 *Off.* Faith, there have been many great men that have flatter'd the people, who ne'er lov'd 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 disposition; and, out of his noble carelessness, he let's them plainly see't.

1 *Off.* If he did not care whether he had their love or no, he waded 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.

2 *Off.* He hath deserved worthily of his country: and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as theirs who have been supple and courteous to the people bonneted, without any further deed to heave them at all into their estimation and report: but he hath so planted his honours 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 ev'ry ear that heard it.

1 *Off.* No more of him; he is a worthy man: make way, they are coming.

S C E N E VI.

*Enter the Patricians, and the Tribunes of the People, Licitors before them; Coriolanus, Menenius, Cominius the Consul: Sicinius and Brutus take their places by themselves.*

*Men.* Having determin'd of the *Volscians*, and To send for *Titus Lartius*, it remains, As the main point of this our after-meeting,

To



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 perform'd  
 By *Caius Martius Coriolanus*; whom  
 We meet here, both to thank, and to remember  
 With honours like himself.

*1 Sen.* Speak, good *Cominius*:  
 Leave nothing out for length; and make us think  
 Rather our state's defective for requital,  
 Than that we stretch it out. — Masters o'th' people,  
 We do request your kindest ear: and, after,  
 Your loving motion toward the common body,  
 To yield to what passes here.

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

*Bru.* Which the rather  
 We shall be blest to do, if he remember  
 A kinder value of the people, than  
 He hath hitherto priz'd them at.

*Men.* That's off, that's off;  
 I would you rather had been silent: please you  
 To hear *Cominius* speak?

*Bru.* Most willingly:  
 But yet my caution was more pertinent  
 Than the rebuke you give.

*Men.* He loves your people;  
 But tie him not to be their bedfellow. —  
 Worthy *Cominius*, speak. — [*Coriolanus rises and offers to go away.*  
 Nay, keep your place.

*1 Sen.* Sit, *Coriolanus*; never shame to hear  
 What you have nobly done.

*Cor.*





*Cor.* Your honour's pardon:  
I had rather have my wounds to heal again,  
Than hear say how I got them.

*Bru.* Sir, I hope,  
My words disbench'd you not.

*Cor.* No, sir; yet oft,  
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.  
You sooth not, therefore hurt not: but your people,  
I love them as they weigh.

*Men.* Pray now, sit down.

*Cor.* I had rather have one scratch my head i'th' sun,  
When the alarum were struck, than idly sit  
To hear my nothings monster'd. — [Exit Coriolanus.]

*Men.* Masters of the people,  
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter,  
That's thousand to one good one, when you see  
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour,  
Than one of's ears to hear't? — Proceed, *Cominius*.

*Com.* I shall lack voice: the deeds of *Coriolanus*  
Should not be utter'd feebly. — It is held,  
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and  
Most dignifies the haver: if it be,  
The man I speak of cannot in the world  
Be singly counterpois'd. 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'erpress'd *Roman*, and i'th' consul's view  
Slew three opposers: *Tarquin's* self he met,  
And struck him on his knee: in that day's feats,  
When he might act the woman in the scene,  
He prov'd best man i'th' field, and for his meed  
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil-age  
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea;

And,



And in the brunt of seventeen battles since,  
 He lurch'd all swords o'th' garland. For this last,  
 Before, and in *Corioli*, let me say  
 I cannot speak him home: he stop'd the fliers,  
 And by his rare example made the coward  
 Turn terrour into sport. As waves before  
 A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,  
 And fell below his stern: 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 tim'd with dying cries: alone he enter'd.  
 The gate o'th' city, which he mortal painted  
 With shunless destiny; aidless came off,  
 And with a sudden reinforcement struck  
*Corioli*, like a planet. Nor's this all:  
 For by and by the din of war 'gan pierce  
 His ready sense; when 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 call'd  
 Both field and city ours, he never stood  
 To ease his breast with panting.

*Men.* Worthy man!

*1 Sen.* He cannot but with measure fill the honours  
 Which we devise him.

*Com.* All our spoils he kick'd at;  
 And look'd upon things precious, as they were  
 The common muck o'th' world: he covets less  
 Than misery itself would give; rewards  
 His deeds with doing them, and is content  
 To spend his time to end it.

*Men.* He's right noble;  
 Let him be called for.

*Sen.* Call *Coriolanus*.

*Off.* He doth appear.

VOL. V

Q

*Reenter.*





*Reenter Coriolanus.*

*Men.* The senate, *Coriolanus*, are well pleas'd  
To make thee consul.

*Cor.* I do owe them still  
My life and services.

*Men.* It then remains  
That you do speak to th' people.

*Cor.* I 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 suffrages:  
Please you, that I may overpass this doing.

*Sic.* Sir, but the people too must have their voices;  
Nor will they bate one jot of ceremony.

*Men.* Put them not to't: pray, fit you to the custom,  
And take t'ye, as your predecessors have,  
Your honour with the form.

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

*Bru.* Mark you that?

*Cor.* To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus;  
Show them th' unaking scars, which I would hide,  
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire  
Of their breath only.

*Men.* Do not stand upon't. —  
We recommend t'ye, tribunes of the people,  
Our purpose, and to them: to our noble consul  
Wish we all joy and honour.

*Sen.* To *Coriolanus* come all joy and honour!

[*flourish cornets. then Exeunt.*]

*Manent Sicinius and Brutus.*

*Bru.* You see how he intends to use the people.

*Sic.* May they perceive's intent! he will require them,

As



As if he did contemn what he requested  
Should be in them to give.

*Bru.* Come, we'll inform them  
Of our proceedings here: on th' market-place  
I know they do attend us.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.

*The Forum.*

*Enter seven or eight Citizens.*

1 *Cit.* ONCE<sup>a</sup>, if he do require our voices, we ought not to deny him.

2 *Cit.* We may, sir, if we will.

3 *Cit.* 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 tells us his noble deeds, we must also tell him of 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.

1 *Cit.* And to make us no better thought of, a little help will serve: for once, when we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed monster.

3 *Cit.* We have been call'd so of many; not that our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn, some bald, but that our wits are so diversly colour'd: and truly, I think, if all our wits were to issue out of our sculls, they would fly east, west, north, south; and their consent of one direct way would be at once to all points o'th' compass.

2 *Cit.* Think you so? which way do you judge my wit would fly?

3 *Cit.* Nay, your wit will not so soon out as another man's

<sup>a</sup> Once here means the same as when we say once for all.





will, 'tis strongly wedg'd up in a blockhead: but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

2 *Cit.* Why that way?

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

2 *Cit.* You are never without your tricks: you may, you may.

3 *Cit.* Are you all resolv'd 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.

*Enter Coriolanus in a gown, with Menenius.*

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility; mark his behaviour: we are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by one's, by two's, and by three's. He's to make his requests by particulars; wherein every one of us has a single honour, 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.

*Men.* O, fir, you are not right; have you not known  
The worthiest men have done't?

*Cor.* What must I say? —

I pray, fir, — plague upon't! I cannot bring  
My tongue to such a pace. — Look, fir, — my wounds —  
I got them in my country's service, when  
Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran  
From noise of our own drums.

*Men.* O me, the gods!

You must not speak of that, you must desire them  
To think upon you.

*Cor.* Think upon me? hang 'em!

I would they would forget me, like the advices  
Which our divines lose on 'em.

*Men.* You'll mar all.

I'll leave you: pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,  
In wholesome manner.

[*Exit.*  
*Two*]



*Two Citizens approach.*

*Cor.* Bid them wash their faces,  
And keep their teeth clean. — So, here comes a brace: —  
You know the cause, firs, of my standing here.

*1 Cit.* We do, fir; tell us what hath brought you to't.

*Cor.* Mine own desert.

*2 Cit.* Your own desert?

*Cor.* Ay, not mine own desire.

*1 Cit.* How! not your own desire?

*Cor.* No, fir; 'twas never my desire yet  
To trouble the poor with begging.

*1 Cit.* You must think,

If we give you any thing, we hope to gain by you.

*Cor.* Well then; I pray, your price o'th' consulship?

*1 Cit.* The price is, to ask it kindly.

*Cor.* Kindly, fir,

I pray let me ha't: I have wounds to show you,  
Which shall be yours in private. — Your good voice, fir;  
What say you?

*2 Cit.* You shall ha't, worthy fir.

*Cor.* A match, fir; there's in all two worthy voices begg'd: —  
I have your alms; adieu.

*1 Cit.* But this is something odd.

*2 Cit.* An 'twere to give again, — but 'tis no matter. [*Exeunt.*]

*Two other Citizens.*

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

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

*Cor.* Your ænigma?

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

*Cor.*





*Cor.* You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love: but I will, fir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; for 'tis a condition they account gentle: and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my cap than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod, and be off to them most counterfeitly; that is, fir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man, and give it bountifully to the desirers: therefore, 'beseech you I may be consul.

3 *Cit.* We hope to find you our friend; and therefore give you our voices heartily.

1 *Cit.* You have received many wounds for your country.

*Cor.* I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble you no further.

*Both.* The gods give you joy, fir, heartily! [*Exeunt.*]

*Cor.* Most sweet voices!

Better it is to die, better to starve,  
Than crave the hire, which first we do deserve.\*

*Three Citizens more.*

Here come more voices. —

Your voices: for your voices I have fought,  
Watch'd for your voices; for your voices, bear  
Of wounds two dozen and odd: battles thrice six  
I've seen, and heard of; for your voices, have  
Done many things, some less, some more: your voices:  
Indeed, I would be consul.

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

\*----- we do deserve.

Why in this wolfish gown should I stand here,  
To beg of *Hob* and *Dick*, that do appear,  
Their needless voucher? 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 heap'd,  
For truth to o'erpeer. Rather than fool it so,  
Let the high office and the honour go,  
To one that would do thus. I am half through;  
The one part suffer'd, the other will I do.

*Three citizens &c.*

2 *Cit.*





*2 Cit.* Therefore let him be consul: the gods give him joy,  
and make him a good friend to the people!

*All.* Amen, amen.—God save thee, noble consul! [*Exeunt.*

*Cor.* Worthy voices!

*Enter Menenius, with Brutus and Sicinius.*

*Men.* You've 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.

*Cor.* Is this done?

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

*Cor.* Where? at the senate-house?

*Sic.* There, *Coriolanus.*

*Cor.* May I then change these garments?

*Sic.* Sir, you may.

*Cor.* That I'll straight do: and knowing myself again,  
Repair to th' senate-house.

*Men.* I'll keep you company.—Will you along?

*Bru.* We stay here for the people.

*Sic.* Fare you well. [*Exeunt Coriol. and Men.*

## SCENE VIII.

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

*Bru.* With a proud heart he wore  
His humble weeds: will you dismiss the people?

*Reenter Citizens.*

*Sic.* How now, my masters, have you chose this man?

*1 Cit.* He has our voices, sir.

*Bru.* We pray the gods, he may deserve your loves.

*2 Cit.* Amen, sir: to my poor unworthy notice,

He





He mock'd us, when he begg'd our voices.

3 *Cit.* Certainly, he flouted us downright.

1 *Cit.* No, 'tis his kind of speech, he did not mock us.

2 *Cit.* Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says,  
He us'd us scornfully: he should have show'd us  
His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for's country.

*Sic.* Why so he did, I am sure.

*All.* No, no man saw 'em.

3 *Cit.* He said, he'd wounds, which he could show in private:

And with his cap, thus waving it in scorn,

*I would be consul*, says 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 nothing further with you.* — Wa'n't this mockery?

*Sic.* Why, either were you impotent to see't,

Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness,

To yield your voices?

*Bru.* Could you not have told him,

As you were lesson'd? when he had no power,

But was a petty servant to the state,

He was your enemy, still spake against

Your liberties, and charters that you bear

I'th' body of the weal: and now, arriving

At place of potency, and sway o'th' state,

If he should still malignantly remain

Fast foe to the plebeians, your voices might

Be curses to yourselves. You should have said,

That, as his worthy deeds did claim no less

Than what he stood for; so his gracious nature

Would think upon you for your voices, and

Translate his malice tow'rd's you into love,

Standing your friendly lord.

*Sic.* Thus to have said,

As you were fore-advis'd, had touch'd his spirit,

And



And try'd his inclination; from him pluck'd  
 Either his gracious promise, which you might,  
 As cause had call'd you up, have held him to;  
 Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,  
 Which easily endures not artifice,  
 Tying him to aught; so putting him to rage,  
 You should have ta'en th' advantage of his choler,  
 And pass'd him unselected.

*Bru.* 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?

*Sic.* Have you  
 Ere now deny'd the asker; and now again,  
 On him that did not ask, but mock, bestow'd  
 Your su'd-for tongues?

*3 Cit.* He's not confirm'd, we may  
 Deny him yet.

*2 Cit.* Ay, and we will deny him:  
 I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

*1 Cit.* Ay, twice five hundred, and their friends to piece 'em.

*Bru.* Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,  
 They've 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.

*Sic.* Let them assemble; and, on safer judgment,  
 Revoke your ignorant election:  
 Enforce his pride, and his old hate to you:  
 Besides, forget not,  
 With what contempt he wore the humble weed,  
 How in his suit he scorn'd you: but your loves  
 Thinking upon his services, took from you





The apprehension of his present portance,  
Which gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion  
After th' inveterate hate he bears to you.

*Bru.* Nay, lay a fault on us, your tribunes, that  
We labour'd, no impediment between,  
But that you must cast your election on him.

*Sic.* Say, you chose him more after our commandment,  
Than guided by your own affections:  
And that your minds, pre-occupied with what  
You rather must do than with what you should do,  
Made you against the grain to voice him consul.  
Lay the fault on us.

*Bru.* 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 of *Martius*; from whence came  
That *Ancus Martius*, *Numa's* daughter's son,  
Who, after great *Hoftilius*, here was king:  
Of the same house *Publius* and *Quintus* were,  
That our best water brought by conduits hither.  
And *Censorinus*, darling of the people,  
(And nobly nam'd so for twice being cenfor)  
Was his great ancestor.\*

*Sic.* One thus descended,  
That had beside well in his person wrought,  
To be set high in place, we did commend  
To your remembrances; but you have found,  
Scaling his present bearing with his past,  
That he's your fixed enemy, and revoke  
Your sudden approbation.

*Bru.* Say, you ne'er had done't,  
(Harp on that still) but by our putting on;

\* Plutarch in his account of the Martian family enumerates the several great men who had sprung from it, in which list stand *Publius Martius* and *Quintus Martius* and *Censorinus*; who, though they lived before Plutarch, came after Coriolanus. Shakespear therefore by copying Plutarch too closely and hastily hath fallen into this inadvertence of making a cotemporary with Coriolanus mention the men who lived long after him.

And



And presently, when you have drawn your number,  
Repair to th' capitol.

*All.* We will: almost all  
Repent in their election.

[*Exeunt Citizens.*]

*Bru.* Let 'em 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.

*Sic.* Come; to th' capitol.  
We will be there before the stream o' th' people:  
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,  
Which we have goaded onward.

[*Exeunt.*]

\*\*\*\*\*

## ACT III. SCENE I.

Rome.

*Cornets.* Enter Coriolanus, Menenius, Cominius, Titus Lartius,  
and other Senators.

CORIOLANUS.

**T**ULLUS *Aufidius* then had made new head?

*Lar.* He had, my lord; and that it was, which caus'd  
Our swifter composition.

*Cor.* So then the *Volsicians* stand but as at first,  
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make inroad  
Upon's again.

*Com.* They're worn, lord consul, so,  
That we shall hardly in our ages see  
Their banners wave again.

*Com.* Saw you *Aufidius*?

*Lar.* On safeguard he came to me, and did curse

R 2

Against





Against the *Volsicians*, for they had so vilely  
Yielded the town; he is retir'd to *Antium*.

*Cor.* Spoke he of me?

*Lar.* He did, my lord.

*Cor.* How? what? —

*Lar.* 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 call'd your vanquisher.

*Cor.* At *Antium* lives he?

*Lar.* At *Antium*.

*Cor.* I wish I had a cause to seek him there,  
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home.

*Enter Sicinius, and Brutus.*

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.

*Sic.* Pass no further.

*Cor.* Hah! what is that! —

*Bru.* It will be dangerous to go on: no further.

*Cor.* What makes this change?

*Men.* The matter?

*Com.* Hath he not pass'd the nobles and the commons?

*Bru.* *Cominius*, no.

*Cor.* Have I had children's voices?

*Sen.* Tribunes, give way; he shall to th' market-place.

*Bru.* The people are incens'd against him.

*Sic.* Stop,

Or all will fall in broil.

*Cor.* 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



Have you not set them on?

*Men.* Be calm, be calm.

*Cor.* It is a purpos'd 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 rul'd.

*Bru.* Call't not a plot:

The people cry, you mock'd them; and, of late,  
When corn was given them *gratis*, you repin'd,  
Scandal'd the suppliant for the people, call'd them  
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

*Cor.* Why, this was known before.

*Bru.* Not to them all.

*Cor.* Have you inform'd them since?

*Bru.* How! I inform them!

*Cor.* Yes, you are like enough to do such business.

*Bru.* Not unlike, either way, to better you.

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

*Sic.* You show too much of that,  
For which the people stir: if you will pass  
To where you're 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.

*Men.* Let's be calm.

*Com.* The people are abus'd, set on; this pal'tring  
Becomes not *Rome*: nor has *Coriolanus*  
Deserv'd this so dishonour'd rub, lay'd falsely  
I'th' plain way of his merit.

*Cor.* Tell me of corn!

This was my speech, and I will speak't again.

*Men.* Not now, not now.

*Sen.* Not in this heat, fir, now.

*Cor.* Now as I live, I will. —

As





As for my nobler friends, I crave their pardons: —  
 But for the mutable rank-scented many,  
 Let them regard me, as I do not flatter,  
 And there behold themselves: — I say again,  
 In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate  
 The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,  
 Which we ourselves have plow'd for, sow'd and scatter'd,  
 By mingling them with us, the honour'd number;  
 Who lack not virtue, no, nor power, but that  
 Which we have given to beggars.

*Men.* Well, no more.

*Sen.* No more words, we beseech you.

*Cor.* 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 seek  
 The very way to catch them.

*Bru.* You speak o'th' people, fir, as if you were  
 A god to punish, not as being a man  
 Of their infirmity.

*Sic.* 'Twere well we let  
 The people know't.

*Men.* What, what? his choler?

*Cor.* Choler!

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,  
 By *Jove*, 'twould be my mind.

*Sic.* It is a mind  
 That shall remain a poison where it is,  
 Not poison any further.

*Cor.* Shall remain!

Hear you this *Triton* of the minnows? mark you  
 His absolute *shall*?

*Com.* 'Twas from the canon.

*Cor.* Shall!

O good but most unwise patricians, why

You



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' monsters, wants not spirit  
 To say, he'll turn your current in a ditch,  
 And make your channel his? If they have power,  
 Let them have cushions by you; if none, awake  
 Your dang'rous lenity: if you are learned,  
 Be not as common fools; if you are not,  
 Then veil your ignorance. You are plebeians,  
 If they be senators: and they are no less,  
 When, both your voices blended, the greatest 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 frown'd in *Greece*. By *Jove* himself,  
 It makes the consuls base: and my soul akes,  
 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.

*Com.* Well, on to th' market-place.

*Cor.* Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth  
 The corn o' th' storehouse *gratis*, as 'twas us'd  
 Sometime in *Greece*, —

*Men.* Well, well, no more of that.

*Cor.* Though there the people had more absolute power;  
 I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed  
 The ruin of the state.

*Bru.* Shall th' people give,  
 One that speaks thus, their voice?

*Cor.* I'll give my reasons, —  
 More worthy than their voice. They know, the corn  
 Was not their recompence; resting well assur'd  
 They ne'er did service for't: being press'd to th' war,  
 Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,

They





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 show'd  
 Most valour, 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 this 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 feats, and make the rabble  
 Call our cares, fears; which will in time break open  
 The locks o' th' senate, and bring in the crows  
 To peck the eagles.

*Men.* Come, enough, enough.

*Bru.* Enough, with over measure.

*Cor.* No, take more:  
 What may be sworn by, both divine and human,  
 Seal what I end withal! This double worship,  
 Where one part does disdain with cause, the other  
 Insult without all reason; where gentry, title, wisdom,  
 Cannot conclude but by the yea and no  
 Of gen'ral ignorance, it must omit  
 Real necessities, and give way the while  
 T' unstable slightness: purpose so barr'd; 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 do the change of't; that prefer  
 A noble life before a long, and wish  
 To vamp a body with a dangerous physick,  
 That's sure of death without,) at once pluck out  
 The multitudinous tongue, let them not lick  
 The sweet which is their poison. Your dishonour

Mangles



Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state  
Of that integrity which should become it:  
Not having power to do the good it would  
For th' ill which doth control it.

*Bru.* Ha's said enough.

*Sic.* H'as spoken like a traitor, and shall answer  
As traitors do.

*Cor.* 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, that must be law,  
And throw their power i'th' dust.

*Bru.* Manifest treason —

*Sic.* This a consul? no.

*Bru.* The ædiles, ho! let him be apprehended.

*Sic.* Go, call the people, in whose name myself  
Attach thee as a traiterous innovator;  
A foe to th' publick weal. Obey, I charge thee,  
And follow to thine answer. *[laying hold on Coriolanus.*

*Cor.* Hence, old goat!

*All.* We'll surety him.

*Com.* Hold, aged sir, hands off.

*Cor.* Hence, rotten thing, or I will shake thy bones  
Out of thy garments.

*Sic.* Help me, citizens.

## SCENE II.

*Enter a rabble of Plebeians with the Ædiles.*

*Men.* On both sides more respect.

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

*Bru.* Seize him, ædiles.

*All.* Down with him, down with him!

VOL. V.

S

2 Sen.





2 *Sen.* Weapons, weapons, weapons!

[*they all bustle about Coriolanus.*  
Tribunes, patricians, citizens! what ho!

*Sicinius, Brutus, Coriolanus*, citizens!

*All.* Peace, peace, peace, stay, hold, peace!

*Men.* What is about to be? I am out of breath;

Confusion's near: I cannot speak. — You tribunes, —

*Coriolanus*, patience; — speak, *Sicinius*.

*Sic.* Hear me, people; peace.

*All.* Let's hear our tribune: peace, ho! — Speak, speak, speak.

*Sic.* You are at point to lose your liberties:

*Martius* would have all from you; *Martius*,

Whom late you nam'd for consul.

*Men.* Fie, fie, fie!

This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

*Sen.* To unbuild the city, and to lay all flat.

*Sic.* What is the city, but the people?

*All.* True, the people are the city.

*Bru.* By the consent of all, we were establish'd

The people's magistrates.

*All.* You so remain.

*Men.* And so are like to do.

*Cor.* 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.

*Sic.* This deserves death.

*Bru.* 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.

*Sic.* Therefore, lay hold on him;

Bear him to th' rock *Tarpeian*, and from thence

Into destruction cast him.

*Bru.* Ædiles, seize him.

*All Ple.*



*All Ple.* Yield, *Martius*, yield.

*Men.* Hear me one word, 'beseech you,  
Ye tribunes, hear me but a word.

*Ædiles.* Peace, peace.

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

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

*Cor.* No; I'll die here. [drawing his sword.]  
There's some among you have beheld me fighting;  
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

*Men.* Down with that sword; — tribunes, withdraw a while.

*Bru.* Lay hands upon him.

*Men.* Help, help *Martius*! help,  
You that be noble, help him young and old!

*All.* Down with him, down with him.

[In this mutiny, the Tribunes, the Ædiles, and the People  
are beat in.]

## SCENE III.

*Men.* Go, get you to your house; be gone, away,  
All will be naught else.

*2 Sen.* Get you gone, away!

*Com.* Stand fast; we have as many friends as enemies.

*Men.* Shall it be put to that?

*Sen.* The gods forbid!

I pr'ythee, noble friend, home to thy house;

Leave us to cure this case.

*Men.* For 'tis a fore

You cannot tent yourself: begone, 'beseech you.

*Com.* Come, sir, along with us.

*Men.* I would they were *Barbarians*, as they are,  
Though in *Rome* litter'd; not *Romans*, as they are not,





Though calved in the porch o'th' capitol. —  
Be gone, be gone; put not your worthy rage  
Into your tongue, one time will owe another.

*Cor.* On fair ground I could beat forty of them.

*Men.* I could myself, I think, take up a brace  
O'th' best of them; yea, even the two tribunes.

*Com.* But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetick;  
And manhood is call'd fool'ry, when it stands  
Against a falling fabrick. — Will you hence,  
Before the tag return, whose rage doth rend  
Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear  
What they are us'd to bear?

*Men.* Pray you, be gone:  
I'll try if my old wit be in request  
With those that have but little; this must be patch'd  
With cloth of any colour.

*Com.* Come away. [Exeunt Coriolanus and Cominius.]

## S C E N E IV.

*1 Sen.* This man has marr'd his fortune.

*Men.* 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. — [a noise within.]  
Here's goodly work!

*2 Sen.* I would they were a-bed.

*Men.* I would they were in *Tiber*. What the vengeance,  
Could he not speak 'em fair?

*Enter Brutus and Sicinius, with the rabble again.*

*Sic.* Where is this viper,  
That would depopulate the city, and  
Be every man himself?

*Men.*



*Men.* You worthy tribunes, —

*Sic.* 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 publick power,  
Which he so sets at nought.

*Cit.* He shall well know the noble tribunes are  
The people's mouths, and we their hands.

*All.* He shall,  
Be sure on't.

*Men.* Sir, sir, —

*Sic.* Peace.

*Men.* Do not cry, havock, where you should but hunt  
With modest warrant.

*Sic.* Sir, how comes it, you  
Have help to make this rescue?

*Men.* Hear me speak:  
As I do know the consul's worthiness,  
So can I name his faults: —

*Sic.* Consul! what consul?

*Men.* The consul *Coriolanus*.

*Bru.* He the consul!

*All.* No, no, no, no, no.

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

*Sic.* Speak briefly then;  
For we are peremptory to despatch  
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 to-night.

*Men.* Now the good gods forbid,  
That our renowned *Rome*, whose gratitude  
Tow'rd her deserving children is enroll'd

In





In *Jove's* own book, like an unnatural dam  
Should now eat up her own!

*Sic.* He's a disease that must be cut away.

*Men.* O, he is but a limb, that has disease;  
Mortal, to cut it off; to cure it, easy.  
What has he done to *Rome*, that's worthy death?  
Killing our enemies? The blood he hath lost  
(Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath,  
By many an ounce) he drop'd 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.

*Sic.* This is clean kam.

*Bru.* Merely awry: when he did love his country,  
It honour'd him.

*Sic.* The service of the foot  
Being once gangren'd, it is not then respected  
For what before it was; —

*Bru.* We'll hear no more: —  
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence;  
Left his infection, being of catching nature,  
Spread further.

*Men.* One word more, hear me one word:  
This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find  
The harm of unscann'd swiftness, will, too late,  
Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process,  
Left parties (as he is belov'd) break out,  
And sack great *Rome* with *Romans*.

*Bru.* If 'twere so —

*Sic.* What do ye talk?  
Have we not had a taste of his obedience?  
Our ædiles smote? ourselves resisted? — Come: —

*Men.* Consider this; he hath been bred i' th' wars  
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill-school'd  
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.

1 *Sen.* Noble tribunes,

It is the humane way: the other course  
Will prove too bloody; and the end of it  
Unknown to the beginning.

*Sic.* Noble *Menenius*,

Be you then as the people's officer. —  
Masters, lay down your weapons.

*Bru.* Go not home.

*Sic.* Meet on the *Forum*: — we'll attend you there;  
Where if you bring not *Martius*, we'll proceed  
In our first way.

*Men.* I'll go, and bring him to you. —  
Let me desire your company: he must come, [*to the Senators.*  
Or what is worst will follow.

1 *Sen.* Pray, let's to him.

[*Exeunt.*

## SCENE V.

*The House of Coriolanus.*

*Enter Coriolanus with Nobles.*

*Cor.* **L**ET 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 fight, yet will I still  
Be thus to them.

*Enter Volumnia.*

*Noble.* You do the nobler.

*Cor.* I muse, my mother  
Does not approve me further, who was wont  
To call them woollen vassals, things created

To





To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads  
 In congregations, yawn, be still, and wonder,  
 When one but of my ordinance stood up  
 To speak of peace or war: — I talk of you; [to his Mother.]  
 Why did you wish me milder? wou'd you have me  
 False to my nature? rather say, I play  
 Truly the man I am.

*Vol.* O, fir, fir, fir,

I would have had you put your power well on,  
 Before you had worn it out.

*Cor.* Why, let it go.

*Vol.* You might have been enough the man you are,  
 With striving less to be so. Lesser had been  
 The thwartings of your disposition, if  
 You had not show'd *them* how you were dispos'd  
 Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

*Cor.* Let them hang.

*Vol.* Ay, and burn too.

*Enter Menenius, with the Senators.*

*Men.* Come, come, you've been too rough, something too rough:  
 You must return, and mend it.

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

*Vol.* Pray, be counsell'd:  
 I have a heart as little apt as yours,  
 But yet a brain that leads my use of anger  
 To better vantage.

*Men.* Well said, noble woman:  
 Before he should thus stoop to th' herd, but that  
 The violent fit o'th' times craves it as physick  
 For the whole state, I'd put mine armour on,  
 Which I can scarcely bear.

*Cor.* What must I do?

*Men.* Return to th' tribunes.

*Cor.*



*Cor.* Well, what then? what then?

*Men.* Repent what you have spoke.

*Cor.* For them? I cannot do it for the gods,  
Must I then do't to them?

*Vol.* You are too absolute;  
Though therein you can never be too noble,  
But when extremities speak. I've heard you say,  
Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,  
I'th' war do grow together: grant that, and tell me,  
In peace what each of them by th' other loses,  
That they combine not there?

*Cor.* Tush, tush!

*Men.* A good demand.

*Vol.* If it be honour in your wars, to seem  
The same you are not (which, for your best ends,  
You call your policy) how is't less or worse  
That it shall hold companionship in peace  
With honour, as in war, since that to both  
It stands in like request?

*Cor.* Why force you this?

*Vol.* Because it lies on you to speak to th' people:  
Not by your own instruction, nor by th' matter  
Which your heart prompts you to, but with such words  
But roated on your tongue; bastards, and syllables  
Of no allowance to your bosom's truth.  
Now, this no more dishonours 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 requir'd  
I should do so in honour. I'm 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.

*Men.* Noble lady! —

Come, go with us; speak fair: you may salve so  
Not what is dangerous present, but the loss  
Of what is past.

*Vol.* I pr'ythee now, my son,  
Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand,  
And thus far having stretch'd 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 hand,  
Which soften, thus, correcting thy stout heart  
Now humble as the ripest mulberry,  
That will not hold the handling: 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 use, as them to claim,  
In asking their good loves; but thou wilt frame  
Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs so far,  
As thou hast power and person.

*Men.* This but done,  
Ev'n as she speaks, why, all their hearts were yours:  
For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free,  
As words to little purpose.

*Vol.* Pr'ythee now,  
Go, and be rul'd: although I know, thou'dst rather  
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf  
Than flatter him in a bower.

*Enter Cominius.*

Here is *Cominius*.

*Com.* I have been i' th' market-place; and, fir, 'tis fit  
You have strong party, or defend yourself  
By calmness, or by absence: all's in anger.

*Men.* Only fair speech.

*Com.* I think, 'twill serve, if he

Can



Can thereto frame his spirit.

*Vol.* He must and will:

Pr'ythee now, say you will, and go about it.

*Cor.* Must I go show them my unbarbed sponce?  
Must my base tongue give to my noble heart  
A lie, that it must bear? well, I will do't:  
Yet were there but this single pelt to lose,  
This mould of *Martius*; they to dust should grind it,  
And throw't against the wind. To th' market-place!  
You've put me now to such a part, which never  
I shall discharge to th' life.

*Com.* Come, come, we'll prompt you.

*Vol.* Ay, pr'ythee 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.

*Cor.* Well, I must do't: —  
Away, my disposition, and possess me  
Some harlot's spirit! my throat of war be turn'd,  
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe  
Small as an eunuch's, 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 tongue  
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd knees  
Which bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his  
That hath receiv'd an alms! I will not do't,  
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,  
And by my body's action teach my mind  
A most inherent baseness.

*Vol.* At thy choice then:  
To beg of thee, it is my more dishonour,  
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.

T 2

Thy





Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me:  
But own thy pride thyself.

*Cor.* Pray, be content:

Mother, I'm going to the market-place;  
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,  
Cog their hearts from them, and come home belov'd  
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.

*Vol.* Do your will. [Exit Volumnia.]

*Com.* Away, the tribunes do attend you: arm  
Yourself to answer mildly; for they're prepar'd  
With accusations, as I hear, more strong  
Than are upon you yet.

*Cor.* The word is, *mildly*. — Pray you, let us go.  
Let them accuse me by invention; I  
Will answer in mine honour.

*Men.* Ay, but mildly.

*Cor.* Well, mildly be it then, mildly. [Exeunt.]

SCENE VI.

The Forum.

*Enter Sicinius, and Brutus.*

*Bru.* **I**N this point charge him home, that he affects  
Tyrannick 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. — What, will he come?

*Enter an Ædile.*

*Æd.* He's coming.

*Bru.* How accompanied?

*Æd.*



*Æd.* With old *Menenius*, and those senators  
That always favour'd him.

*Sic.* Have you a catalogue  
Of all the voices that we have procur'd,  
Set down by th' poll?

*Æd.* I have; 'tis ready, here.

*Sic.* Have you collected them by tribes?

*Æd.* I have.

*Sic.* 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.

*Æd.* I will inform them.

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

*Æd.* Very well.

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

*Bru.* Go about it. —

[*Exit Ædile.*]

Put him to choler straight; he hath been us'd  
Ever to conquer, and to have no word  
Of contradiction. Being once chaf'd, he cannot  
Be rein'd again to temp'rance; then he speaks  
What's in his heart; and that is there, which works  
With us to break his neck.

*Enter Coriolanus, Menenius, and Cominius, with Senators.*

*Sic.* Well, here he comes.

*Men.* Calmly, I do beseech you.

*Cor.* Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece  
Will bear the knave by th' volume. — The honour'd gods

Keep





Keep *Rome* in safety, and the chairs of justice  
Supply with worthy men! plant love amongst you!  
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,  
And not our streets with war!

*Sen.* Amen, amen.

*Men.* A noble wish.

*Reenter the Ædile, with the Plebeians.*

*Sic.* Draw near, ye people.

*Æd.* Lift to your tribunes: audience;  
Peace, I say.

*Cor.* First, hear me speak.

*Both Tri.* Well, say: — peace, ho.

*Cor.* Shall I be charg'd no further than this present?  
Must all determine here?

*Sic.* I do demand,  
If you submit you to the people's voices,  
Allow their officers, and are content  
To suffer lawful censure for such faults  
As shall be prov'd upon you?

*Cor.* I am content.

*Men.* Lo, citizens, he says, he is content:  
The warlike service he has done, consider;  
Think on the wounds his body bears, which show  
Like graves i' th' holy churchyard.

*Cor.* Scratches with briars, scars to move laughter only.

*Men.* 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.

*Com.* Well, well, no more.

*Cor.* What is the matter,  
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,

I'm



I'm so dishonour'd, that the very hour  
You take it off again?

*Sic.* Answer to us.

*Cor.* Say then: 'tis true, I ought so.

*Sic.* We charge you, that you have contriv'd to take  
From *Rome* all season'd office, and to wind  
Yourself unto a power tyrannical;  
For which you are a traitor to the people.

*Cor.* How! traitor?

*Men.* Nay, temperately: your promise.

*Cor.* The fires i' th' lowest hell fold in the people!  
Call me their traitor! — Thou injurious tribune!  
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,  
In thy hands clutch'd 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.

*Sic.* Mark you this, people?

*All.* To th' rock with him!

*Sic.* 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.

*Bru.* But since he hath  
Serv'd well for *Rome*, —

*Cor.* What do you prate of service?

*Bru.* I talk of that, that know it.

*Cor.* You?

*Men.* Is this the promise that you made your mother?

*Com.* Know, I pray you, —

*Cor.* I'll know no further:

Let them pronounce the steep *Tarpeian* death,

Vagabond





Vagabond exile, fleaing, 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 faying, *Good-morrow*.

*Sic.* For that he has  
 (As much as in him lies) from time to time  
 Envy'd against the people, seeking means  
 To pluck away their power; has now at last  
 Giv'n hostile strokes, and that not only in presence  
 Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers  
 That do distribute it; in the name o'th' people,  
 And in the power of us the tribunes, we  
 (Ev'n from this instant) banish him our city,  
 In peril of precipitation  
 From off the rock *Tarpeian*, never more  
 To enter our *Rome's* 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 banish'd, and it shall be so.

*Com.* Hear me, my masters, and my common friends, —

*Sic.* He's sentenc'd: no more hearing.

*Com.* Let me speak:

I have been consul, and can show for *Rome*  
 Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love  
 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 —

*Sic.* We know your drift. Speak what?

*Bru.* There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd  
 As enemy to the people, and his country.  
 It shall be so.

*All.* It shall be so, it shall be so.

*Cor.* You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate,

As



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 rumour 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 enemies) deliver you  
 As most abated\* captives to some nation  
 That won you without blows! Despising then,  
 For you, the city, thus I turn my back:  
 There is a world elsewhere.

[*Exeunt Coriolanus, Cominius, and Senators.*

[*the People shout, and throw up their caps.*

*Æd.* The people's enemy is gone, is gone!

*All.* Our enemy is banish'd; he is gone! Hoo, hoo!

*Sic.* Go, see him out at gates, and follow him  
 As he hath follow'd you; with all despite  
 Give him deserv'd vexation. Let a guard  
 Attend us through the city.

*All.* Come, come; let's see him out at the gates; come.  
 The gods preserve our noble tribunes! come. [Exeunt.

\* Abated here carries the sense of sunk and diminish'd in spirit and courage.







## ACT IV. SCENE I.

*The Gates of Rome.*

*Enter Coriolanus, Volumnia, Virgilia, Menenius, Cominius,  
with the young Nobility of Rome.*

CORIANUS.

COME, leave your tears; a brief farewell: the beast  
With many heads butts me away. — Nay, mother,  
Where is your ancient courage? you were us'd  
To say, extremity was the trier of spirits;  
That common chances common men could bear;  
That, when the sea was calm, all boats alike  
Show'd mastership in floating; fortune's blows  
When most struck home, being greatly warded, crave  
A noble cunning: you were us'd to load me  
With precepts that would make invincible  
The heart that con'd them.

*Vir.* O heav'ns! O heav'ns!

*Cor.* Nay, I pr'ythee, woman, —

*Vol.* Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,  
And occupations perish!

*Cor.* What! what! what!

I shall be lov'd, when I am lack'd. Nay, mother,  
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,  
If you had been the wife of *Hercules*,  
Six of his labours you'd have done, and sav'd  
Your husband so much sweat. — *Cominius*,  
Droop not; adieu: — farewell, my wife, my mother;  
I'll do well yet. — Thou old and true *Menenius*,  
Thy tears are saltier than a younger man's,  
And venomous to thine eyes. — My sometime general,

I've





I've seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld  
Heart-hard'ning spectacles: tell these sad women,  
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes,  
As 'tis to laugh at 'em. — Mother, you wot  
My hazards still have been your solace: and  
Believ't not lightly, (though I go alone,  
Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen  
Makes fear'd, and talk'd of more than seen) your son  
Will or exceed the common, or be caught  
With cautelous baits and practice.

*Vol.* First, my son,  
Where will you go? take good *Cominius*  
With thee a while: determine on some course,  
More than a wild exposure to each chance,  
That starts i'th' way before thee.

*Cor.* O the gods!

*Com.* I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee  
Where thou shalt rest, that thou may'st 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.

*Cor.* Fare ye well: —

Thou'st years upon thee, and thou art too full  
Of the war's surfeits, to go rove with one  
That's yet unbruis'd: bring me but out at gate. —  
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.

*Men.* That's worthily

As any ear can hear. — Come, let's not weep. —  
If I could shake off but one seven years

U 2

From





From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,  
I'd with thee every foot.

*Cor.* Give me thy hand. [*Exeunt.*

## S C E N E II.

*Enter Sicinius, and Brutus, with the Ædile.*

*Sic.* Bid them all home; he's gone, and we'll no further. —  
Vex'd are the nobles, who, we see, have sided  
In his behalf.

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

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

*Bru.* Dismiss them home.  
Here comes his mother.

*Enter Volumnia, Virgilia, and Menenius.*

*Sic.* Let's not meet her.

*Bru.* Why?

*Sic.* They say, she's mad.

*Bru.* They have ta'en note of us: keep on your way.

*Vol.* O, y'are well met:

The hoarded plague o'th' gods requite your love!

*Men.* Peace, peace, be not so loud.

*Vol.* If that I could for weeping, you should hear —

Nay, and you shall hear some. — Will you be gone? [*to Virgilia.*

You shall stay too: I would I had the power

To say so to thy husband.

*Sic.* Are you mankind?

*Vol.* 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?

*Sic.*



*Sic.* O bleſſed heav'ns!

*Vol.* More noble blows, than ever thou wiſe words;  
And for *Rome's* good. I'll tell thee 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.

*Sic.* What then?

*Vol.* What then?

He'd make an end of thy poſterity:

Baſtards, and all. —

Good man, the wounds that he does bear for *Rome*!

*Men.* Come, come, peace.

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

*Bru.* I would he had.

*Vol.* I would he had! 'Twas you incens'd the rabble:  
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth,  
As I can of thoſe myſteries which heav'n  
Will not have earth to know.

*Bru.* Pray, let us go.

*Vol.* Now, pray, ſir, get you gone.

You've 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 baniſh'd, does exceed you all.

*Bru.* Well, well, we'll leave you.

*Sic.* Why ſtay you to be baited  
With one that wants her wits?

[*Exe. Tribunes.*

*Vol.* Take my prayers with you. —

I wiſh 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.

*Men.* You've told them home,

And





And, by my troth, have cause. You'll sup with me?

*Vol.* Anger's my meat; I sup upon myself,  
And so shall starve with feeding. — Come, let's go:  
Leave this faint puling, and lament as I do, [to *Virgilia*.  
In anger, *Juno*-like. Come, come, fie, fie! [Exeunt.

## SCENE III.

Antium.

Enter a Roman, and a Volscian.

*Rom.* I know you well, fir, and you know me: your name, I think, is *Adrian*.

*Vol.* It is so, fir: truly, I have forgot you.

*Rom.* I am a *Roman*; but my services are as you are, against 'em; know you me yet?

*Vol.* *Nicanor*? No.

*Rom.* The same, fir.

*Vol.* You had more beard when I last saw you; but your favour is well affect'd 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.

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

*Vol.* 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.

*Rom.* 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 for ever. This lies glowing I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out.

*Vol.* *Coriolanus* banish'd?

*Rom.* Banish'd, fir.

*Vol.*



*Vol.* You will be welcome with this intelligence, *Nicanor*.

*Rom.* 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 fallen out with her husband. Your noble *Tullus Aufidius* will appear well in these wars, his great opposer *Coriolanus* being now in no request with his country.

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

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

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

*Rom.* 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.

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

*Rom.* Well, let us go together. [Exeunt.

*Enter Coriolanus in mean Apparel, disguis'd and muffled.*

*Cor.* A goodly city is this *Antium*. City,  
'Tis I that made thy widows: many an heir  
Of these fair edifices for my wars  
Have I heard groan, and drop: then know me not;  
Left that thy wives with spits, and boys with stones,  
In puny battle slay me. — Save you, sir.

*Enter a Citizen.*

*Cit.* And you.

*Cor.* Direct me, if it be your will,  
Where great *Aufidius* lies: is he in *Antium*?

*Cit.* He is, and feasts the nobles of the state  
At his house this night.

*Cor.*





*Cor.* Which is his house, I beseech you?

*Cit.* This here before you.

*Cor.* Thank you, sir: farewell.

[*Exit Citizen.*]

O world, thy slippery turns! friends now fast sworn,  
Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,  
Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,  
Are still together, who twine (as 'twere) in love  
Unseparable, shall within this hour,  
On a dissention 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 have I and my lovers left;  
This enemy's house I'll enter: if he slay me,  
He does fair justice; if he give me way,  
I'll do his country service.

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E IV.

*A Hall in Aufidius' House.*

*Musick plays. Enter a Serving-man.*

1 *Ser.* **W**INE, wine, wine! what service is here? I think,  
our fellows are asleep. [Exit.]

*Enter another Serving-man.*

2 *Ser.* Where's *Cotus*? my master calls for him: — *Cotus*! [Exit.]

*Enter Coriolanus.*

*Cor.* A goodly house: the feast smells well; but I  
Appear not like a guest.

*Enter*



*Enter the first Serving-man.*

1 *Ser.* What would you have, friend? whence are you? here's no place for you: pray, go to the door. [Exit.

*Cor.* I have deserv'd no better entertainment, in being *Coriolanus*.

*Enter second Servant.*

2 *Ser.* Whence are you, fir? — Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions? — Pray, get you out.

*Cor.* Away!

2 *Ser.* Away? get you away.

*Cor.* Now thou'rt troublesome.

2 *Ser.* Are you so brave? I'll have you talk'd with anon.

*Enter a third Servant. The first meets him.*

3 *Ser.* What fellow's this?

1 *Ser.* A strange one as ever I look'd on: I cannot get him out o'th'house: pr'ythee, call my master to him.

3 *Ser.* What have you to do here, fellow? pray you, avoid the house.

*Cor.* Let me but stand, I will not hurt your hearth.

3 *Ser.* What are you?

*Cor.* A gentleman.

3 *Ser.* A marvellous poor one.

*Cor.* True; so I am.

3 *Ser.* Pray you, poor gentleman, take up some other station: here's no place for you; pray you, avoid: come.

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

*[pushes him away from him.*

3 *Ser.* What, will you not? — Pr'ythee, tell my master, what a strange guest he has here.

2 *Ser.* And I shall.

*[Exit second Serving-man.*

3 *Ser.* Where dwell'st thou?

*Cor.* Under the canopy.

3 *Ser.* Under the canopy?

*Cor.* Ay.

VOL. V

X

3 *Ser.*





3 *Ser.* Where's that?

*Cor.* I'th' city of kites and crows.

3 *Ser.* I'th' city of kites and crows? — What an afs it is! —  
Then thou dwell'st with daws too?

*Cor.* No, I serve not thy master.

3 *Ser.* How, fir! do you meddle with my master?

*Cor.* Ay; 'tis an honefter service, than to meddle with thy  
mistress: thou prat'st, and prat'st; serve with thy trencher:  
hence!

[beats him away.]

*Enter Aufidius, with a Serving-man.*

*Auf.* Where is this fellow?

2 *Ser.* Here, fir; I'd have beaten him like a dog, but for  
disturbing the lords within.

*Auf.* Whence com'st thou? what would'st thou? thy name?  
Why speak'st not? speak, man: what's thy name?

*Cor.* If, *Tullus*, yet thou know'st me not, and, seeing me,  
Dost not yet take me for the man I am,  
Necessity commands me name myself.

*Auf.* What is thy name?

*Cor.* A name unmufical to *Volscian* ears,  
And harsh in found to thine.

*Auf.* Say, what's thy name?  
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face  
Bears a command in't; though thy tackle's torn,  
Thou show'st a noble vessel: what's thy name?

*Cor.* Prepare thy brow to frown: know'st thou me yet?

*Auf.* I know thee not; thy name?

*Cor.* My name is *Caius Martius*, who hath done  
To thee particularly, and to all the *Volscians*,  
Great hurt and mischief; thereto witness may  
My surname, *Coriolanus*. The painful service,  
The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood  
Shed for my thankless country, are requited  
But with that surname; a good memorial  
And witness of the malice and displeasure

Which



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 devour'd the rest;  
 And suffer'd me by th' voice of slaves to be  
 Whoop'd 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 fear'd death, of all the men i' th' world  
 I'd have avoided 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 will 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 canker'd country, with the spleen  
 Of all the under fiends. But if so be  
 Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes  
 Thou'rt tir'd; 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 follow'd 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.

*Auf.* O *Martius*, *Martius*,  
 Each word thou'st spoke hath weeded from my heart  
 A root of ancient envy. If *Jupiter*  
 Should from yon cloud speak to me things divine,  
 And say, 'Tis true; I'd not believe them more  
 Than thee, all-noble *Martius*. Let me twine  
 Mine arms about that body, where against

X 2

My





My grained ash an hundred times hath broke,  
 And scar'd 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 valour. Know thou first,  
 I lov'd the maid I married; never man  
 Sigh'd 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 my arm for't: thou hast beat me out  
 Twelve several times, and I have nightly since  
 Dream'd of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;  
 We have been down together in my sleep,  
 Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,  
 And wak'd half dead with nothing. Worthy *Martius*,  
 Had we no quarrel else to *Rome*, but that  
 Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all  
 From twelve to seventy; and, pouring war  
 Into the bowels of ungrateful *Rome*,  
 Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O, come, go in,  
 And take our friendly senators by th' hands,  
 Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,  
 Who am prepar'd against your territories,  
 Though not for *Rome* itself.

*Cor.* You bless me, gods!

*Auf.* Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have  
 The leading of thine own revenges, take  
 One half of my commission; and set down,  
 As best thou art experienc'd, 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



To fright them, ere destroy. But come, 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!

[*Exeunt.*

S C E N E V.

*Enter two Servants.*

1 *Ser.* Here's a strange alteration.

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

1 *Ser.* What an arm he has! he turn'd me about with his  
 finger and his thumb, as one would set up a top.

2 *Ser.* Nay, I knew by his face that there was something in  
 him. He had, fir, a kind of face, methought, — I cannot tell  
 how to term it.

1 *Ser.* He had so: looking, as it were, —'would I were hanged,  
 but I thought there was more in him than I could think.

2 *Ser.* So did I, I'll be sworn: he is simply the rarest man  
 i' th' world.

1 *Ser.* I think, he is: but a greater foldier than he, you wot  
 one.

2 *Ser.* Who? my master?

1 *Ser.* Nay, it's no matter for that.

2 *Ser.* Worth six on him.

1 *Ser.* Nay, not so neither: but I take him to be the greater  
 foldier.

2 *Ser.* 'Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that: for  
 the defence of a town, our general is excellent.

1 *Ser.* Ay, and for an assault too.

*Enter a third Servant.*

3 *Ser.* O slaves, I can tell you news; news, you rascals.

*Both.* What, what, what? let's partake.

3 *Ser.*





3 *Ser.* I would not be a *Roman*, of all nations; I had as lief be a condemn'd man.

*Both.* Wherefore? wherefore?

3 *Ser.* Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general, *Caius Martius*.

1 *Ser.* Why do you say, thwack our general?

3 *Ser.* I do not say thwack our general; but he was always good enough for him.

2 *Ser.* Come, we are fellows and friends: he was ever too hard for him; I have heard him say so himself.

1 *Ser.* He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't: before *Corioli*, he scotch'd him and notch'd him like a carbonado.

2 *Ser.* And, had he been cannibally given, he might have broil'd and eaten him too.

1 *Ser.* But, more of thy news?

3 *Ser.* 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 ask'd him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him. Our general himself makes a mistress of him, sanctifies himself with's hands, 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 fowle the porter of *Rome* gates by th' ears. He will mow down all before him, and leave his passage poll'd.

2 *Ser.* And he's as like to do't as any man I can imagine.

3 *Ser.* Do't! he will do't: for, look you, fir, he has as many friends as enemies; which friends, fir, as it were durst not (look you, fir) show themselves (as we term it) his friends, whilst he's in directitude.

1 *Ser.* Directitude! what's that?

3 *Ser.* But when they shall see, fir, his crest up again and the man in blood, they will out of their burrows (like conies after rain) and revel all with him.

1 *Ser.* But when goes this forward?

3 *Ser.* To-morrow, to-day, presently; you shall have the drum struck



struck up this afternoon: 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

2 *Ser.* Why, then we shall have a stirring world again: this peace is worth nothing, but to rust iron, increase tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

1 *Ser.* Let me have war, 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, mull'd, deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children than war's a destroyer of men.

2 *Ser.* '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.

1 *Ser.* Ay, and it makes men hate one another.

3 *Ser.* 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.

*Both.* In, in, in, in. [Exeunt.

## SCENE VI.

Rome.

*Enter Sicinius, and Brutus.*

*Sic.* WE hear not of him, neither need we fear him;  
His remedies are tame: the present peace  
And quietness of the people, which before  
Were in wild hurry here, do make his friends  
Blush, that the world goes well; who rather had,  
Though they themselves did suffer by't, beheld  
Dissentious numbers pest'ring streets, than see  
Our tradesmen singing in their shops, and going  
About their functions friendly.

*Enter Menenius.*

*Bru.* We stood to't in good time. Is this *Menenius*?

*Sic.*





*Sic.* 'Tis he, 'tis he: O, he is grown most kind  
Of late. — Hail, fir.

*Men.* Hail to you both!

*Sic.* Your *Coriolanus* is not much mis'd,  
But with his friends: the commonwealth doth stand;  
And so would do, were he more angry at it.

*Men.* All's well, and might have been much better, if  
He could have temporiz'd.

*Sic.* Where is he, hear you?

*Men.* Nay, I hear nothing:  
His mother and his wife hear nothing from him.

*Enter three or four Citizens.*

*All.* The gods preserve you both!

*Sic.* Good-e'en, neighbours.

*Bru.* Good-e'en to you all, good-e'en to you all.

*1 Cit.* Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our knees  
Are bound to pray for you both.

*Sic.* Live and thrive!

*Bru.* Farewel, kind neighbours: we wish'd *Coriolanus*  
Had lov'd you, as we did.

*All.* Now the gods keep you!

*Both Tri.* Farewel, farewel.

[*Exeunt Citizens.*

*Sic.* This is a happier and more comely time,  
Than when these fellows ran about the streets,  
Crying confusion.

*Bru.* *Caius Martius* was  
A worthy officer i'th' war, but insolent,  
O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,  
Self-loving.

*Sic.* And affecting one sole throne,  
Without assistants.

*Men.* Nay, I think not so.

*Sic.* We had by this, to all our lamentaion,  
If he had gone forth consul, found it so.

*Bru.*



*Bru.* The gods have well prevented it, and *Rome*  
Sits safe and still without him.

*Enter Ædile.*

*Æd.* Worthy tribunes,  
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,  
Reports, the *Volsians* with two several powers  
Are enter'd in the *Roman* territories,  
And with the deepeſt malice of the war  
Destroy what lies before 'em.

*Men.* 'Tis *Aufidius*,  
Who, hearing of our *Martius*' banishment,  
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;  
Which were inſhell'd, when *Martius* ſtood for *Rome*,  
And durſt not once peep out.

*Sic.* Come, what talk you of *Martius*?

*Bru.* Go, ſee this rumourer whip'd. — It cannot be,  
The *Volsians* dare break with us.

*Men.* Cannot be!  
We have record that very well it can;  
And three examples of the like have been  
Within my age. But reaſon with the fellow  
Before you puniſh him, where he heard this;  
Left you ſhall chance to whip your information,  
And beat the meſſenger who bids beware  
Of what is to be dreaded.

*Sic.* Tell not me:  
I know, this cannot be.

*Bru.* Not poſſible.

*Enter a Meſſenger.*

*Meſ.* The nobles in great earneſtneſs are going  
All to the ſenate-houſe: ſome news is come  
That turns their countenances.

*Sic.* 'Tis this ſlave: —





Go, whip him 'fore the people's eyes: his raising!  
Nothing but his report!

*Mef.* Yes, worthy sir,  
The slave's report is seconded; and more,  
More fearful is delivered.

*Sic.* What more fearful?

*Mef.* It is spoke freely out of many mouths,  
(How probable I do not know) that *Martius*,  
Join'd with *Aufidius*, leads a power 'gainst *Rome*,  
And vows revenge as spacious, as between  
The young'st and oldest thing.

*Sic.* This is most likely!

*Bru.* Rais'd only, that the weaker sort may with  
Good *Martius* home again.

*Sic.* The very trick on't.

*Men.* This is unlikely.

He and *Aufidius* can no more attone  
Than violentest contrarieties.

*Enter another Messenger.*

2 *Mef.* You are sent for to the senate:  
A fearful army, led by *Caius Martius*,  
Associated with *Aufidius*, rages  
Upon our territories; they've already  
O'er-born their way, consum'd with fire, and took  
What lay before them.

*Enter Cominius.*

*Com.* O, you have made good work.

*Men.* What news? what news?

*Com.* You have help to ravish your own daughters, and  
To melt the city leads upon your pates,  
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses.

*Men.* What's the news? what's the news?

*Com.* Your temples burned in their cement, and

Your



Your franchises, whereon you stood, confin'd  
Into an auger's bore.

*Men.* Pray now, the news? —

You've made fair work, I fear me: — pray, your news?  
If *Martius* should be joined with the *Volscians*, —

*Com.* 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.

*Men.* You've made good work,  
You and your apron-men; that stood so much  
Upon the voice of occupation, and  
The breath of garlick-eaters!

*Com.* He'll shake your *Rome*  
About your ears.

*Men.* As *Hercules* did shake  
Down mellow fruit: so you have made fair work.

*Bru.* But is this true, sir?

*Com.* Ay; and you'll look pale  
Before you find it other. All the regions  
Do smilingly revolt; and who resist  
Are only mock'd for valiant ignorance,  
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him?  
Your enemies and his find something in him.

*Men.* We're all undone, unless  
The noble man have mercy.

*Com.* Who shall ask it?  
The tribunes cannot do't for shame; the people  
Deserve such pity of him, as the wolf  
Does of the shepherds: his best friends, if they  
Shou'd say, *Be good to Rome*, they charge him even  
As those should do that had deserv'd his hate,  
And therein shou'd like enemies.

Y 2

*Men.*





*Men.* 'Tis true.

If he were putting to my house the brand  
That would consume it, I have not the face  
To say, 'Beseech you, cease. — You've made fair hands,  
You and your crafts! you've crafted fair!

*Com.* You've brought  
A trembling upon *Rome*, such as was never  
So incapable of help.

*Tri.* Say not, we brought it.

*Men.* How! was it we? we lov'd him; but, like beasts  
And coward nobles, gave way to your clusters,  
Who hooted him out o' th' city.

*Com.* 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 defence,  
That *Rome* can make against them.

S C E N E VII.

*Enter a Troop of Citizens.*

*Men.* Here come the clusters. —  
And is *Aufidius* with him? — You are they  
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast  
Your stinking greasy caps, in hooting at  
*Coriolanus*' exile. Now he's coming,  
And not a hair upon a soldier's head  
Which will not prove a whip: as many coxcombs,  
As you threw caps up, will he tumble down,  
And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter,  
If he should burn us all into one coal,  
We have deserv'd it.

*Omnes.* 'Faith, we hear fearful news.

1 *Cit.* For mine own part,  
When I said, *banish him*, I said, 'twas pity.

2 *Cit.*



*2 Cit.* And so did I.

*3 Cit.* And so did I; 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.

*Com.* Y'are goodly things; you voices! —

*Men.* You have made you good work, You and your cry. — Shall's to the capitol?

*Com.* O, ay, what else? [*Exeunt Com. and Men.*]

*Sic.* Go, masters, get you home, be not dismay'd: These are a fide, that would be glad to have This true, which they so seem to fear. Go home, And show no sign of fear.

*1 Cit.* The gods be good to us! Come, masters, let's home. I ever said, we were i' th' wrong, when we banish'd him.

*2 Cit.* So did we all: but come, let's home. [*Exeunt Citizens.*]

*Bru.* I do not like this news.

*Sic.* Nor I.

*Bru.* Let's to the capitol: 'would half my wealth Would buy this for a lie!

*Sic.* Pray, let us go. [*Exeunt tribunes.*]

S C E N E VIII.

*A Camp at a small distance from Rome.*

*Enter Aufidius, with his Lieutenant.*

*Auf.* DO they still fly to th' Roman?

*Lieu.* 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 darken'd in this action, sir, Even by your own.

*Auf.* I cannot help it now; Unless, by using means, I lame the foot Of our design. He bears himself more proudly

Even





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.

*Lieu.* Yet I wish, fir,  
(I mean for your particular) you had not  
Join'd in commission with him; but had born  
The action of yourself, or else to him  
Had left it solely.

*Auf.* I understand thee well; and be thou sure,  
When he shall come to his account, he knows not  
What I can urge against him: though 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 dragon-like, and does atchieve 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.

*Lieu.* Sir, I beseech, think you he'll carry *Rome*?

*Auf.* All places yield to him ere he sits down;  
And the nobility of *Rome* 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 honours even: whether pride,  
Which out of daily fortune ever taints  
The happy man; whether defect of judgment,  
To fail in the disposing of those chances  
Whereof he was the lord; or whether nature,  
Not to be other than one thing, not moving  
From th' cask to th' cushion, but commanding peace

Even



Even with the same austerity and garb,  
 As he controll'd the war: but one of these,  
 (As he hath spices of them all, not all,  
 For I dare so far free him) made him fear'd,  
 So hated, and so banish'd; but he has merit  
 Though chokes it in the utterance. So our virtues  
 Lie in th' interpretation of the time;  
 And power, in 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;  
 Right's by right foiled, strengths by strengths do fail.  
 Come, let's away. When, *Caius*, Rome is thine,  
 Thou'rt poor'st of all, then shortly art thou mine. [Exeunt.

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## ACT V. SCENE I.

Rome.

*Enter Menenius, Cominius, Sicinius, Brutus, with others.*

MENENIUS.

NO, I'll not go: you hear what he hath said  
 Which was sometime his general; who lov'd him  
 In a most dear particular. He call'd me, father:  
 But what o' that? go, you that banish'd him,  
 A mile before his tent fall down, and knee  
 The way into his mercy: nay, if he coy'd  
 To hear *Cominius* speak, I'll keep at home.

*Com.* He would not seem to know me.

*Men.* Do you hear?

*Com.* Yet one time he did call me by my name:  
 I urg'd our old acquaintance, and the drops  
 That we have bled together. *Coriolanus*

He





He would not answer to; forbad all names;  
 He was a kind of nothing, titleless,  
 Till he had forg'd himself a name o' th' fire  
 Of burning *Rome*.

*Men.* Why, so; you've made good work:  
 A pair of tribunes, that have sack'd fair *Rome*,  
 To make coals cheap: a noble memory!

*Com.* I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon  
 When it was least expected. He reply'd,  
 It was a bare petition of a state  
 To one whom they had punish'd.

*Men.* Very well; could he say less?

*Com.* I offer'd 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' offence.

*Men.* For one poor grain  
 Or two? I'm one of those: his mother, wife,  
 His child, and this brave fellow, we're the grains;  
 You are the musty chaff, and you are smelt  
 Above the moon. We must be burnt for you.

*Sic.* 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.

*Men.* No; I'll not meddle.

*Sic.* Pray you, go to him.

*Men.* Why? what should I do?

*Bru.* Only make trial what your love can do  
 For *Rome*, tow'rd's *Martius*.

*Men.* Well, and say that *Martius*  
 Return me, as *Cominius* is return'd,

Unheard,



Unheard, but as a discontented friend  
Grief-shot with his unkindness: and what then?

*Sic.* Say it be so; yet your good will, *Menenius*,  
Must have the thanks of *Rome* after the measure  
As you intended well.

*Men.* I'll undertake it:  
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 din'd:  
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then  
We pout upon the morning, are unapt  
To give or to forgive; but when we've stuff'd  
These pipes, and these conveyances of blood  
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls  
Than in our priest-like fasts: therefore I'll watch him  
Till he be dieted to my request,  
And then I'll set upon him.

*Bru.* You know the very road into his kindness,  
And cannot lose your way.

*Men.* Good faith, I'll prove him,  
Speed how it will. You shall ere long have knowledge  
Of my success.

[*Exit.*

*Com.* He'll never hear him.

*Sic.* Not?

*Com.* I tell you, he does sit in gold, his eye  
Red as 'twould burn *Rome*; and his injury  
The jailer to his pity. I kneel'd before him:  
'Twas very faintly he said, *Rise*; dismiss'd me  
Thus with his speechless hand: what he would do,  
He sent in writing after; what he would not,  
Bound with an oath, not yield to new conditions.  
So that all hope is vain; unless from's mother  
And 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.*





## SCENE II.

*The Volscian Camp.**Enter Menenius to the Watch or Guard.**1 Watch.* STAY: whence are you?*2 Watch.* Stand, and go back,*Men.* You guard like men; 'tis well: but, by your leave, I am an officer of state, and come To speak with *Coriolanus*.*1 Watch.* Whence?*Men.* From *Rome*.*1 Watch.* You may not pass, you must return: our general Will no more hear from thence.*2 Watch.* You'll see your *Rome* embrac'd with fire, before You'll speak with *Coriolanus*.*Men.* 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 touch'd your ears; it is *Menenius*.*1 Watch.* Be it so, go back: the virtue of your name Is not here passable.*Men.* I tell thee, fellow, Thy general is my lover: I have been The book of his good acts, whence men have read His fame unparallel'd haply amplified. For I have ever magnified my friends, (Of whom he's chief) to all the size that verity Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes, Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground Iv'e tumbled past the throw; and in his praise Have, almost, stamp'd the leasing. Therefore, fellow, I must have leave to pass.*1 Watch.* 'Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in his behalf,



behalf, as you have utter'd words in your own, you should not pass here: no, though it were as virtuous to lie, as to live chastly. Therefore, go back.

*Men.* Pr'ythee, fellow, remember my name is *Menenius*, always factionary of the party of your general.

*2 Watch.* 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.

*Men.* Has he din'd, canst thou tell? for I would not speak with him till after dinner.

*1 Watch.* You are a *Roman*, are you?

*Men.* I am as thy general is.

*1 Watch.* Then you should hate *Rome*, as he does. Can you, when you have push'd out of 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 decay'd dotard 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 deceiv'd; therefore, back to *Rome*, and prepare for your execution: you are condemn'd, our general has sworn you out of reprieve and pardon.

*Men.* Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he would use me with estimation.

*1 Watch.* Come, my captain knows you not.

*Men.* I mean, thy general.

*1 Watch.* My general cares not for you. Back, I say, go; lest I let forth your half pint of blood, that's the utmost of your having: back, back.

*Men.* Nay, but fellow, fellow, —

*Enter Coriolanus, with Aufidius.*

*Cor.* What's the matter?

*Men.* Now, you companion, I'll say an errand for you; you shall know now that I am in estimation; you shall perceive, that a jack-gardant cannot office me from my son *Coriolanus*: guess





by my entertainment with him, if thou stand'st not i' th' state of hanging, or of some death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering; behold now presently, and swoon for what's to come upon thee. — 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 mov'd 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 thee to pardon *Rome*, and thy petitionary countrymen. The good 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.

*Cor.* Away!

*Men.* How! away?

*Cor.* Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs  
Are servanted to others: though I owe  
My revenge properly, remission lies  
In *Volscian* breasts. That we have been familiar,  
Ingrate forgetfulness shall prison, 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, [gives him a letter.  
And would have sent it. Another word, *Menenius*,  
I will not hear thee speak. — This man, *Aufidius*,  
Was my belov'd in *Rome*; yet thou behold'st —

*Auf.* You keep a constant temper. [Exeunt.

*Manent the guard and Menenius.*

*1 Watch.* Now, sir, is your name *Menenius*?

*2 Watch.* 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power: you know the way home again.

*1 Watch.* Do you hear how we are shent for keeping your greatness back?

*2 Watch.* What cause do you think I have to swoon?

*Men.* I neither care for th' world, nor your general: for such things



things as you, I can scarce think there's any, y'are 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 what you are, long! and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away!

[Exit.

1 *Watch.* A noble fellow, I warrant him.

2 *Watch.* The worthy fellow is our general.  
He is the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [Ex. *Watch.*

## S C E N E III.

*Reenter* Coriolanus, and Aufidius.

*Cor.* We will before the walls of *Rome* to-morrow  
Set down our host. My partner in this action,  
You must report to th' *Volscian* lords how plainly  
I've born this business.

*Auf.* Only their ends you have respected; stop'd  
Your ears against the general suit of *Rome*;  
Never admitted private whisper, no  
Not with such friends that thought them sure of you.

*Cor.* This last old man,  
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to *Rome*,  
Lov'd 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 show'd sourly to him) once more offer'd  
The first conditions which they did refuse,  
And cannot now accept, to grace him only,  
That thought he could do more: a very little  
I've yielded to. Fresh embassy, and suits,  
Nor for the state, nor private friends, hereafter  
Will I lend ear to. — Ha! what sight is this?  
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow  
In the same time 'tis made? I will not. —

*Enter*





*Enter Virgilia, Volumnia, Valeria, young Martius,  
with Attendants, all in Mourning.*

My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould  
Wherein this trunk was fram'd, 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.  
What is that court'fy worth? or those dove's eyes,  
Which can make gods forsworn? 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 *Volscians*  
Plough *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.

*Vir.* My lord and husband!

*Cor.* These eyes are not the same I wore in *Rome*.

*Vir.* The sorrow that delivers us thus chang'd,  
Makes you think so.

*Cor.* 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 heav'n, that kiss  
I carried from thee, dear; and my true lip  
Hath virgin'd it e'er since. — You gods! I prate,  
And the most noble mother of the world  
Leave unsaluted: sink, my knee, i' th' earth;  
Of *thy* deep duty more impression show  
Than that of common sons.

[*kneels.*

*Vol.*



*Vol.* O, stand up blest!  
 Whilst with no softer cushion than the flint  
 I kneel before thee, and unproperly  
 Show duty as mistaken all the while,  
 Between the child and parent.

[kneels.

*Cor.* What is this?  
 Your knees to me? to your corrected son?  
 Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach  
 Fillop 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.

*Vol.* Thou art my warriour;  
 I holp to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

*Cor.* The noble sister of *Poplicola*,  
 The moon of *Rome*, chaste as the icicle  
 That's curdled by the frost from purest snow,  
 And hangs on *Dian's* temple: dear *Valeria*!

*Vol.* This is a poor epitome of yours, [showing young *Martius*.  
 Which by th' interpretation of full time  
 May show like all yourself.

*Cor.* The god of soldiers,  
 With the consent of supreme *Jove*, inform  
 Thy thoughts with nobleness, that thou may'st prove  
 To shame invulnerable, and stick i' th' wars  
 Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,  
 And saving those that eye thee!

*Vol.* Your knee, firrah.

*Cor.* That's my brave boy.

*Vol.* Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,  
 Are suitors to you.

*Cor.* 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 denial. Do not bid me  
 Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate

Again





Again with *Rome's* mechanicks: tell me not  
 • Wherein I seem unnatural: desire not  
 T' allay my rages and revenges, with  
 Your colder reasons.

*Vol.* O, no more: no more:  
 You've said you will not grant us any thing;  
 For we have nothing else to ask, but that  
 Which you deny already: yet we will ask,  
 That, if we fail in our request, the blame  
 May hang upon your hardness: therefore hear us.

*Cor. Aufidius,* and you *Volscians,* mark; for we'll  
 Hear nought from *Rome* in private. — Your request?

*Vol.* Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment  
 And state of bodies would bewray what life  
 We've led since thy exile. Think with thyself,  
 How more unfortunate than all living women  
 Are we come hither: since thy fight, 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, to see  
 The son, the husband, and the father, tearing  
 His country's bowels out: and to poor us  
 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're bound, together with thy victory,  
 Whereto we're bound? Alack! or we must lose  
 The country, our dear nurse; or else thy person,  
 Our comfort in the country. We must find  
 An eminent calamity, though we had  
 Our wish, which side should win: for either thou  
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led  
 With manacles along our streets, or else  
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,  
 And bear the palm for having bravely shed

Thy



Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,  
I purpose not to wait on fortune, till  
These wars determine: if I can't persuade thee  
Rather to show a noble grace to both parts,  
Than seek the end of one; thou shalt not 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.

*Vir.* Ay, and mine too,  
That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name  
Living to time.

*Boy.* He shall not tread on me:  
I'll run away till I'm bigger, but then I'll fight.

*Cor.* Not of a woman's tenderneſs to be,  
Requires nor child nor woman's face to ſee.  
I've ſat too long.

*Vol.* Nay, go not from us thus:  
If it were ſo, that our request did tend  
To ſave the *Romans*, thereby to deſtroy  
The *Volſcians* whom you ſerve, you might condemn us,  
As poiſoners of your honour. No; our ſuit  
Is, that you reconcile them: while the *Volſcians*  
May ſay, *This mercy we have ſhow'd*; the *Romans*,  
*This we receiv'd*; 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 dogg'd with curſes:  
Whoſe chronicle thus writ, *The man was noble,*  
*But with his laſt attempt he wip'd it out,*  
*Deſtroy'd his country, and his name remains*  
*To th' enſuing age, abhorr'd.* Speak to me, ſon:  
Thou haſt affected the firſt ſtrains of honour,  
To imitate the graces of the gods;

VOL. V.

A a

Who





Who tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' th' air,  
 And yet do charge their sulphur with a bolt,  
 That shall but rive an oak. Why dost not speak?  
 Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man  
 Still to remember wrongs? — Daughter, speak you:  
 He cares not for your weeping. — Speak thou, boy;  
 Perhaps, thy childishness will move him more  
 Than can our reasons. — There's no man in the world  
 More bound to's mother, yet here he lets me prate  
 Like one i' th' stocks. Thou'st never in thy life  
 Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy;  
 When she (poor hen!) fond of no second brood,  
 Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home  
 Loaden with honour. 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. — He turns away:  
 Down, ladies; let us shame him with our knees.  
 To his surname *Coriolanus* 'longs more pride,  
 Than pity to our prayers. Down; and end;  
 This is the last. So we will home to *Rome*,  
 And die among our neighbours. — Nay, behold us:  
 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. — Come, let us go:  
 This fellow had a *Volscian* to his mother;  
 His wife is in *Corioli*, and this child  
 Like him by chance: — yet give us our despatch:  
 I'm hush'd until our city be afire,  
 And then I'll speak a little.

*Cor.* Mother, mother! [holds her by the hands, silent.  
 What have you done? behold, the heav'ns do ope,  
 The gods look down, and this unnatural scene  
 They laugh at. O, my mother, mother! o!

You've



You've won a happy victory to *Rome* :  
 But for your son, believe it, o, believe it,  
 Most dang'rously you have with him prevail'd,  
 If not most mortal to him. Let it come : —

*Aufidius*, though I cannot make true wars,  
 I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good *Aufidius*,  
 Were you in my stead, say, would you have heard  
 A mother less? or granted less, *Aufidius*?

*Auf.* I too was mov'd.

*Cor.* I dare be sworn, you 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. — O mother ! wife !

*Auf.* I'm glad thou'st set thy mercy and thy honour  
 At difference in thee ; out of that I'll work  
 Myself my former fortune.

[*aside.*

*Cor.* Ay, by and by ;  
 But we will drink together ; and you shall bear

[*to Volumnia, Virg. &c.*

A better witness back than words, which we  
 On like conditions will have counter-seal'd.  
 Come, enter with us.

*Auf.* Ladies, you deserve  
 To have a temple built you : all the swords  
 In *Italy*, and her confederate arms,  
 Could not have made this peace.

[*Exeunt.*





## SCENE IV.

Rome.

*Enter Menenius, and Sicinius.*

*Men.* SEE you yond' coin o' th' capitol, yond' corner stone?

*Sic.* Why, what of that?

*Men.* 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 sentenc'd, and stay upon execution.

*Sic.* Is't possible that so short a time can alter the condition of a man?

*Men.* There is difference 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.

*Sic.* He lov'd his mother dearly.

*Men.* So did he me; and he no more remembers his mother now, than an eight years old horse. The tartness of his face fours 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 eye; talks like a knell, and his hum is a battery. He fits in his state as a thing made for *Alexander*. What he bids be done is finish'd with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god, but eternity, and a heaven to throne in.

*Sic.* Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

*Men.* 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.

*Sic.* The gods be good unto us!

*Men.* No, in such a case the gods will not be good unto us. When we banish'd him, we respected not them: and he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

*Enter*



*Enter a Messenger.*

*Mef.* Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house:  
The plebeians have got your 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.

*Enter another Messenger.*

*Sic.* What's the news?

*Mef.* Good news, good news; the ladies have prevail'd,  
The *Volscians* are dislodg'd, and *Martius* gone:  
A merrier day did never yet greet *Rome*,  
No, not th' expulsion of the *Tarquins*.

*Sic.* Friend,

Art certain this is true? is it most certain?

*Mef.* As certain as I know the sun is fire:  
Where have you lurk'd, that you make doubt of it?  
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,  
As the recomforted through th' gates. Why, hark you;  
[trumpets, hautboys, drums beat, all together.

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,  
Tabors, and cymbals, and the shouting *Romans*  
Make the sun dance. Hark you! [a shout within.

*Men.* This is good news:

I will go meet the ladies. This *Volumnia*  
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,  
A city full: of tribunes, such as you,  
A sea and land full. You've pray'd well to-day:  
This morning, for ten thousand of your throats  
I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy!  
[sound still with the shouts.

*Sic.* First, the gods bless you for your tidings! next,  
Accept my thankfulness.

*Mef.* Sir, we have all great cause to give great thanks.

*Sic.*





*Sic.* They're near the city?

*Mef.* Almost at point to enter.

*Sic.* We'll meet them, and help the joy. [Exeunt.

*Enter two Senators with the Ladies passing over the stage,  
with other Lords.*

*Sen.* 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 banish'd *Martius*;  
Repeal him with the welcome of his mother:  
Cry, *Welcome, ladies, welcome!*

*All.* Welcome, ladies, welcome! [Exeunt.  
[a flourish with drums and trumpets.

## S C E N E V.

Antium.

*Enter Tullus Aufidius, with Attendants.*

*Auf.* GO tell the lords o'th' city, I am here:  
Deliver them this paper: having read it,  
Bid them repair to th' market-place; where I,  
Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,  
Will vouch the truth of it. He I accuse  
The city ports by this hath enter'd, and  
Intends t' appear before the people, hoping  
To purge himself with words. Despatch. — [Exit Attendant.

*Enter three or four Conspirators of Aufidius' faction.*

Most welcome!

*1 Con.* How is it with our general?

*Auf.* Even so,  
As with a man by his own alms impositon'd,

And



And with his charity slain.

*2 Con.* Most noble sir,  
If you do hold the same intent, wherein  
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you  
Of your great danger.

*Auf.* Sir, I cannot tell;  
We must proceed as we do find the people.

*3 Con.* The people will remain uncertain, whilst  
'Twixt you there's difference; but the fall of either  
Makes the survivor heir of all.

*Auf.* I know it;  
And my pretext to strike at him admits  
A good construction. I rais'd him, and pawn'd  
Mine honour for his truth; who being so heighten'd,  
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,  
Seducing so my friends: and, to this end,  
He bow'd his nature, never known before  
But to be rough, unswayable, and fierce.

*3 Con.* His stoutness, sir,  
When he did stand for consul, which he lost  
By lack of stooping, —

*Auf.* That I would have spoke of:  
Being banish'd 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; serv'd his designments  
In mine own person; help to reap the fame  
Which he did make all his; and took some pride  
To do myself this wrong: till at the last,  
I seem'd his follower, not partner; and  
He wag'd me with his countenance, as if  
I had been mercenary.

*1 Con.* So he did, my lord:

The





The army marvell'd at it; and, at last,  
When he had carried *Rome*, and that we look'd  
For no less spoil, than glory, —

*Auf.* There was it;

For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him:  
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are  
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour  
Of our great action; therefore shall he die,  
And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark.

*[drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the people.]*

*1 Con.* Your native town you enter'd like a post,  
And had no welcomes home; but he returns,  
Splitting the air with noise.

*2 Con.* And patient fools,  
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear,  
Giving him glory.

*3 Con.* 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 pronounc'd shall bury  
His reasons with his body.

*Auf.* Say no more;  
Here come the lords.

*Enter the Lords of the City.*

*All Lords.* You are most welcome home.

*Auf.* I have not deserv'd it.  
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perus'd  
What I have written?

*All.* We have.

*1 Lord.* And grieve to hear it.  
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



The benefit of our levies, answering us  
With our own charge, making a treaty where  
There was a yielding, admits no excuse.

*Auf.* He approaches, you shall hear him.

## SCENE VI.

*Enter Coriolanus marching with drums and colours, the Commons  
being with him.*

*Cor.* Hail, lords! I am return'd your foldier;  
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've made peace  
With no less honour to the *Antiates*  
Than shame to th' *Romans*: and we here deliver,  
Subscribed by the consuls and patricians,  
Together with the seal o' th' senate, what  
We have compounded on.

*Auf.* Read it not, noble lords;  
But tell the traitor, in the highest degree  
He hath abus'd your powers.

*Cor.* Traitor! How now! —

*Auf.* Ay, traitor, *Martius*.

*Cor.* *Martius*! —

*Auf.* Ay, *Martius*, *Gaius Martius*; dost thou think  
I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name  
*Coriolanus*, in *Corioli*? —

You lords and head o' th' state, perfidiously  
He has betray'd your business, and given up,  
For certain drops of salt, your city *Rome*,

VOL. V.

B b

I say,





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 whin'd and roar'd away your victory,  
 That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart  
 Look'd wond'ring each at other.

*Cor.* Hear'st thou, *Mars*?

*Auf.* Name not the god, thou boy of tears.

*Cor.* Ha!

*Auf.* No more.

*Cor.* Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart  
 Too great for what contains it. Boy! O slave! —  
 Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time I ever  
 Was forc'd to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,  
 Must give this cur the lie; and his own notion,  
 Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him, that  
 Must bear my beating to his grave, shall join  
 To thrust the lie unto him.

*1 Lord.* Peace, both, and hear me speak.

*Cor.* Cut me to pieces, *Volscians*, men and lads,  
 Stain all your edges in me. — Boy! false hound! —  
 If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,  
 That like an eagle in a dovecot, I  
 Flutter'd your *Volscians* in *Corioli*:  
 Alone I did it. Boy!

*Auf.* 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?

*All Con.* Let him die for't.

*All Cit.* Tear him to pieces, do it presently.

*1 Cit.* He kill'd my son.

*2 Cit.* My daughter.

*3 Cit.* Kill'd my cousin.

*4 Cit.*



4 *Cit.* He kill'd my father.

2 *Lord.* Peace; 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.

*Cor.* O, that I had him,  
With six *Aufiduses*, or more, his tribe,  
To use my lawful sword!

*Auf.* Insolent villain!

*All Con.* Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him.

[*the Conspirators all draw, and kill Martius, who falls, and  
Aufidius stands on him.*]

*Lords.* Hold, hold, hold, hold.

*Auf.* My noble lords, hear me speak.

1 *Lord.* O, *Tullus*, —

2 *Lord.* Thou hast done a deed, whereat  
Valour will weep.

3 *Lord.* Tread not upon him. — Masters all, be quiet;  
Put up your swords.

*Auf.* My lords, when I shall show (as in this rage  
Provok'd by him, I cannot) the great danger  
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice  
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours  
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver  
Myself your loyal servant, or endure  
Your heaviest censure.

1 *Lord.* Bear from hence his body,  
And mourn you for him. Let him be regarded  
As the most noble corse that ever herald  
Did follow to his urn.

2 *Lord.* His own impatience  
Takes from *Aufidius* a great part of blame:  
Let's make the best of it.

*Auf.* My rage is gone,

B b 2

And





And I am struck with sorrow. — Take him up:  
Help, three o' th' chiefest soldiers; I'll be one. —  
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 a noble memory.

*[Exeunt, bearing the body of Martius. A dead march sounded.]*





