

XXVIII.

C O R I O L A N U S.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS, a noble Roman.
 TITUS LARTIUS, } Generals against the Volscians.
 COMINIUS, }
 MENENIUS AGRIPPA, Friend to Coriolanus.
 SICIINIUS VELUTUS, } Tribunes of the People.
 JUNIUS BRUTUS, }
 YOUNG MARCIUS, Son to Coriolanus.
 A Roman Herald.
 TULLUS AUFIDIUS, General of the Volscians.
 Lieutenant to Aufidius.
 Conspirators with Aufidius.

A Citizen of Antium.
 Two Volscian Guards.

VOLUMNIA, Mother to Coriolanus.
 VIRGILIA, Wife to Coriolanus.
 VALERIA, Friend to Virgilia.
 Gentlewoman attending Virgilia.

Roman and Volscian Senators, Patricians, Ædiles,
 Lictors, Soldiers, Citizens, Messengers, Ser-
 vants to Aufidius, and other Attendants.

SCENE — partly in Rome; and partly in the Territories of the Volscians and Antiates.

ACT I.

SCENE I. Rome. A Street.

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

1 Citizen.

BEFORE we proceed any further, hear me speak.
Cit. Speak, speak. [Several speaking at once.]
 1 *Cit.* You are all resolved rather to die, than to famish?
Cit. Resolved, resolved.
 1 *Cit.* First you know, Caius Marcius is chief enemy to the people.
Cit. We know't, we know't.
 1 *Cit.* Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at our own price. Is't a verdict?
Cit. No more talking on't; let it be done: away, away.
 2 *Cit.* One word, good citizens.
 1 *Cit.* We are accounted poor citizens; the patricians, good: ¹⁾ 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: ²⁾ the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularize their abundance; our sufferance is a gain to them. — Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes: ³⁾ for the gods know, I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge.
 2 *Cit.* Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius?
Cit. 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.
 2. *Cit.* 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 to be partly 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 these? The other side o'the city is risen: Why stay we prating here? to the Capitol.
Cit. Come, come.
 1 *Cit.* Soft; who comes here?

Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.

2 *Cit.* Worthy Menenius Agrippa; one that hath always loved 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 bats and clubs? The matter? Speak, I pray you.
 1 *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?
 1 *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 suffering in this dearth, you may as well Strike at the heaven with your staves, as lift them Against the Roman state; whose course will on The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs Of more strong link asunder, than can ever

XXVIII.

ACT I.

C O R I O L A N U S.

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'the state, who care for you like fathers, When you curse them as enemies.
 1 *Cit.* Care for us! — True, indeed! — They ne'er cared for us yet. Suffer us to famish, and their store-houses crammed 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 wond'rous 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 scale't a little more. ⁴⁾
 1 *Cit.* Well, I'll hear it, sir: yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale: ⁵⁾ 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 gulph it did remain I'the midst o'the body, idle and inactive, Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing Like labour with the rest; where the other instruments ⁶⁾
 Did see, and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel, And, mutually participate, ⁷⁾ did minister Unto the appetite and affection common Of the whole body. The belly answered, —
 1 *Cit.* Well, sir, what answer made the belly?
Men. Sir, I shall tell you. — With a kind of smile, Which ne'er came from the lungs, ⁸⁾ but even thus, (For, look you, I may make the belly smile, As well as speak,) it tauntingly replied To the discontented members, the mutinous parts That envied his receipt; even so most fitly ⁹⁾ As you malign our senators, for that They are not such as you.
 1 *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 helms In this our fabric, if that they —
Men. What then? —
 'Fore me, this fellow speaks! — what then? what then?
 1 *Cit.* Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd, Who is the sink o'the body, —
Men. Well, what then?
 1 *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.
 1 *Cit.* You 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 store-house, and the shop Of the whole body: But if you do remember, I send it through the rivers of your blood, Even to the court, the heart, — to the seat o'the brain;
 And, through the cranks and offices of man, ¹⁰⁾

The strongest nerves, and small inferior veins, From me receive that natural competency Whereby they live: And though that all at once, You, my good friends, (this says the belly), mark me, —
 1 *Cit.* Ay, sir; 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 flower of all, And leave me but the bran. What say you to't?
 1 *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'the common; you shall find, No public benefit, which you receive, But it proceeds, or comes, from them to you, And no way from yourselves. — What do you think? You, the great toe of this assembly? —
 1 *Cit.* I the great toe? Why the great toe?
Men. For that being one o'the lowest, basest, poorest, Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost: Thou rascal, that art worst in blood, to run Lead'st first, to win some vantage. — But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs; Rome and her rats are at the point of battle, The one side must have bale. — ¹¹⁾ Hail, noble Marcius!

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.

Mar. Thanks. — What's the matter, you dissentious rogues, That rubbing the poor itch of your opinion, Make yourselves scabs?
 1 *Cit.* We have ever your good word.
Mar. He that will give good words to thee, will flatter
 Beneath abhorring. — What would you have, you curs, That like nor peace, nor war? the one affrights you, The other makes you proud. He that trusts you, Where he should find you lions, finds you hares; Where foxes, geese: You are no surer, no, Than is the coal of fire upon the ice, Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is, To make him worthy, whose offence subdues him, And curse that justice did it. ¹²⁾ Who deserves greatness,
 Deserves your hate: and your affections are A sick man's appetite, who desires most that Which would increase his evil. He that depends Upon your favours, swims with fins of lead, And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye! Trust ye? With every minute you do change a mind; And call him noble, that was now your hate, Him vile, that was your garland. What's the matter, That in these several places of the city You cry against the noble senate, who, Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else Would feed on one another? — What's their seeking?
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 the fire, and presume to know What's done i'the Capitol: who's like to rise, Who thrives, and who declines: side factions, and give out Conjectural marriages; making parties strong, And feeling such as stand not in their liking, Below their cobbled shoes. They say, there's grain enough?
 Would the nobility lay aside their ruth, ¹³⁾ And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry ¹⁴⁾

XXVIII.

With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high
As I could pick my lance.¹⁵⁾

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

Mar. They are dissolved: Hang 'em!
They said, they were an hungry; sigh'd forth pro-
verbs; —

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 an-
swer'd,

And a petition granted them, a strange one,
(To break the heart of generosity,¹⁶⁾
And make bold power look pale,) they threw their caps
As they would hang them on the horns o'the moon,
Shouting their emulation.¹⁷⁾

Men. What is granted them?
Mar. Five tribunes, to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
Of their own choice: One's Junius Brutus,
Sicinius Velutus, and I know not — 'Sdeath!

The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,
Ere so prevail'd with me: it will in time
Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing.¹⁸⁾

Men. This is strange.
Mar. Go, get you home, you fragments!

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. Where's Caius Marcius?
Mar. Here: What's the matter?

Mess. The news is, sir, the Volces are in arms.
Mar. I am glad on't; then we shall have means
to vent

Our musty superfluity: — See, our best elders.

*Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other Sena-
tors; JUNIUS BRUTUS, and SICINIUS VELUTUS.*

1 Sen. Marcius, 'tis true, that you have lately told us;
The Volces 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 would wish me only he.

Com. You have fought together.
Mar. Were half to half the world by the 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 Marcius,
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?

Tit. No, Caius Marcius;
I'll lean upon one crutch, and fight with the other,
Ere stay behind this business.

Men. O, true bred!
1 Sen. Your company to the Capitol; where, I know,
Our greatest friends attend us.

Tit. Lead you on:
Follow, Cominius; we must follow you;
Right worthy you priority.¹⁹⁾

Com. Noble Lartius!
1 Sen. Hence! To your homes, be gone.

Mar. *[To the Citizens.]*
Nay, let them follow:

The Volces have much corn; take these rats thither,
To gnaw their garners: — Worshipful mutineers,
Your valour puts well forth:²⁰⁾ pray, follow.

*[Exeunt Senators, COM. MAR. TIT. and
MENEN. Citizens steal away.]*

Sic. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius?
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 gird²¹⁾
the gods.

Sic. Be-mock the modest moon.
Bru. The present wars devour him: he is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.²²⁾

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 the which he aims, —
In whom already he is well grac'd, — cannot
Better be held, nor more attain'd, than by
A place below the first: for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
To the utmost of a man; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius, O, if he
Had borne the business!

Sic. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Marcius, shall
Of his demerits rob Cominius.²³⁾

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

Sic. Let's hence, and hear
How the despatch is made; and in what fashion,
More than in singularity,²⁴⁾ he goes
Upon his present action.

Bru. Let's along. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE II.

Corioli. The Senate-House.

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, and certain Senators.

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

Auf. Is it not yours?
What ever hath²⁵⁾ been thought on in this state,
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome
Had circumvention? 'Tis not four days gone,
Since I heard thence; these are the words: I think,
I have the letter here; yes, here it is: *[Reads.]*
*They have press'd a power, but it is not known
Whether for east, or west: The dearth is great;
The people mutinous: and it is rumour'd,
Cominius, Marcius, your old enemy,
(Who is of Rome worse hated than of you),
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparation
Whither 'tis bent: most likely, 'tis for you:
Consider of it.*

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 seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery,

We shall be shorten'd in our aim; which was,
To take in many towns,²⁶⁾ 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 set down before us, for the remove
Bring up your army; but, I think, you'll find
They have not prepar'd for us.

Auf. O, doubt not that;
I speak from certainties. Nay, more,
Some parcels of their powers are forth already,
And only hitherward. I leave your honours.

If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,
'Tis sworn between us, we shall never strike
Till one can do no more.

All. The gods assist you!
Auf. And keep your honours safe!

1 Sen. Farewell.
2 Sen. Farewell. *[Exeunt.]*

All. Farewell.

SCENE III.

Rome. An Apartment in Marcius' House.

*Enter VOLUMNIA, and VIRGILIA: They sit down
on two low stools, and sew.*

Vol. I pray you, daughter, sing; or express your-
self in a more comfortable sort: If my son were my
husband, I should freelier rejoice in that absence
wherein he won honour, than in the embracements
of his bed, where he would show most love. When
yet he was but tender-bodied, and the only son of
my womb; when youth with comeliness plucked all
gaze his way;²⁷⁾ when, for a day of kings' en-
treaties, a mother should not sell him an hour from
her beholding; I, — considering how honour would
become such a person; that it was no better than
picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made
it not stir, — was pleased to let him seek danger
where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war
I sent him; from whence he returned, his brows
bound with oak.²⁸⁾ 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 Marcius, — I had rather had eleven die
nobly for their country, than one voluptuously sur-
feit out of action.

Vir. Indeed, it's true; I heard a senator speak
it. Thus it is: — The Volces have an army forth;
against whom Cominius the general is gone, with
one part of our Roman power: your lord, and Titus
Lartius, are set down before their city Corioli;
they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief
wars. This is true, on mine honour; and so, I pray,
go with us.

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.

Vol. In truth, I think, she would: — Fare you
well then. — Come, good sweet lady. — 'Pr'ythee,

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. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius!
Vol. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee,
And tread upon his neck.

*Re-enter Gentlewoman, with VALERIA and
her Usher.*

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 house-
keepers. What, are you sewing here? A fine spot,³⁰⁾
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 school-master.

Val. O'my word, the father's son: I'll swear, 'tis
a very pretty boy. O'my troth, I looked upon him
o'Wednesday half an hour together: he has such a
confirmed countenance. I saw him run after a gilded
butterfly; and when he caught it, he let it go again;
and after it again: and over and over he comes,
and up again; caught it again: or whether his fall
enraged him, or how 'twas, he did so set his teeth,
and tear it; O, I warrant, how he mammed it!³¹⁾

Vol. One of his father's moods.
Val. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.
Vir. A crack, madam.³²⁾

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 will not over
the threshold, till my lord return from the wars.
Val. Fye, you confine yourself most 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 spun, in Ulysses' absence, did
but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come; I would, your
cambric were sensible as your finger, that you
might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall
go with us.

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 Volces have an army forth;
against whom Cominius the general is gone, with
one part of our Roman power: your lord, and Titus
Lartius, are set down before their city Corioli;
they nothing doubt prevailing, and to make it brief
wars. This is true, on mine honour; and so, I pray,
go with us.

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.
Vol. In truth, 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 IV.

Before Corioli.

Enter, with Drums and Colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Officers and Soldiers. To them a Messenger.

Mar. Yonder comes news:— A wager they have met.

Lart. My horse to yours, no.

Mar. 'Tis done.

Lart. Agreed.

Mar. Say, has our general met the enemy?

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

Lart. So, the good horse is mine.

Mar. I'll buy him of you.

Lart. No, I'll nor sell, nor give him: lend you him, I will,

For half a hundred years. — Summon the town.

Mar. How far off lie these armies?

Mess. Within this 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! — ³³⁾ Come, blow thy blast.

They sound a Parley. Enter, on the Walls, some Senators, and others.

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

1 Sen. No, nor a man that fears you less than he, That's lesser than a little. Hark, our drums

[Alarums 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;

[Other Alarums.] There is Aufidius; list, what work he makes Amongst your cloven army.

Mar. O, they are at it!

Lart. Their noise be our instruction. — Ladders, ho!

The Volces enter and pass over the Stage.

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 Volce, And he shall feel mine edge.

Alarum, and exeunt Romans and Volces, fighting. The Romans are beaten back to their trenches.

Re-enter MARCIUS.

All the contagion of the south light on you, You shames of Rome! — you herd of — Boils and plagues

Plaster you o'er; that you may be abhorr'd Further than seen, and one infect another Against the wind a mile! You souls of geese, That bear the shapes of men, how have you run From slaves that apes would beat? Pluto and hell! All hurt behind; backs red, and faces pale With flight and agued fear! Mend, and charge home, Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe,

And make my wars on you: look to't: Come on; If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives, As they us to our trenches followed.

Another Alarum. The Volces and Romans re-enter, and the fight is renewed. The Volces retire into Corioli, and MARCIUS follows them to the Gates.

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

[He enters the Gates, and is shut in.]

1 Sol. Fool-hardiness; not I.

2 Sol.

Nor I.

3 Sol. See, they

Have shut him in.

[Alarum continues.]

All. To the pot, I warrant him.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS.

Lart. What is become of Marc'us?

All. Slain, sir, doubtless.

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

Lart. O noble fellow!

Who, sensible, ³⁴⁾ outdares his senseless sword, And, when it bows, stands up! — Thou art left, Marc'us:

A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art, Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible Only in strokes; but, with thy grim looks, and The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds, Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world Were feverous, and did tremble.

Re-enter MARCIUS, bleeding, assaulted by the Enemy.

1 Sol. Look, sir.

Lart. 'Tis Marc'us: ³⁵⁾

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

[They fight, and all enter the City.]

SCENE V.

Within the Town. A Street.

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 MARCIUS, and TITUS LARTIUS, with a Trumpet.

Mar. See here these movers, that do prize their hours 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 Convenient numbers to make good the city; Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste To help Cominius.

Lart. 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 to me: To Aufidius thus I will appear, and fight.

Lart. 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 those she placeth highest! So, farewell.

Lart. Thou worthiest Marc'us! — *[Exit MARCIUS.]* Go, sound thy trumpet in the market-place; Call thither all the officers of the town, Where they shall know our mind: Away. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VI.

Near the Camp of Cominius.

Enter COMINIUS and Forces, retreating.

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: — The Roman gods, Lead their successes as we wish our own; That both our powers, with smiling fronts encountering,

Enter a Messenger.

May give you thankful sacrifice! — Thy news?

Mess. The citizens of Corioli have issued, And given to Lartius and to Marc'us 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?

Mess. Above an hour, my lord.

Com. 'Tis not a mile; briefly we heard their drums: How could'st thou in a mile confound an hour, ³⁶⁾ And bring thy news so late?

Mess. Spies of the Volces

Held me in chase, that I was forc'd to wheel Three or four miles about; else had I, sir, Half an hour since brought my report.

Enter MARCIUS.

Com. Who's yonder, That does appear as he were flay'd? O gods! He has the stamp of Marc'us; 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 sound of Marc'us' tongue From every meaner man's. ³⁷⁾

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 you 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 some to death, and some to exile; Ransoming him, or pitying, ³⁸⁾ threat'ning the 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! — 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'the field? If not, why cease you till you are so?

Com. Marc'us, We have at disadvantage fought, and did Retire, to win our purpose.

Mar. How lies their battle? Know you on which side They have plac'd their men of trust?

Com. As I guess, Marc'us, Their hands in the 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 the blood we have shed together, by the vows We have made to endure friends, that you directly Set me against Aufidius, and his Antiates: And that you not delay the present; ³⁹⁾ 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 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 Lesser his person than an ill report; If any think, brave death outweighs bad life, And that his country's dearer than himself; Let him, alone, or so many, so minded, Wave thus, *[waving his hand]* to express his disposition, And follow Marc'us.

[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 Volces? 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: ⁴⁰⁾ 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 VII.

The Gates of Corioli.

TITUS LARTIUS, having set a Guard upon Corioli, going with a Drum and Trumpet toward COMINIUS and CAIUS MARCIUS, enters with a Lieutenant, a Party of Soldiers, and a Scout.

Lart. So, let the ports be guarded: keep your duties, As I have set them down. If I do send, despatch Those centuries ⁴¹⁾ 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. *Lart.* Hence, and shut your gates upon us. — Our guider, come; to the Roman camp conduct us. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VIII.

A Field of Battle between the Roman and the Volscian Camps.

Alarum. Enter MARCIUS and AUFIDIUS.

Mar. I'll fight with none but thee; for I do hate thee worse than a promise-breaker.

Auf. We hate alike; Not Afric 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, Marcius, Halloo me like a hare.

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

Auf. Wert thou the Hector, That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny, ⁴²⁾ Thou should'st not 'scape me here. —

[They fight, and certain Voices come to the aid of AUFIDIUS.]

Officious, and not valiant — you have sham'd me In your condemned seconds. ⁴³⁾

[Exeunt fighting, driven in by MARCIUS.]

SCENE IX.

The Roman Camp.

Alarum. A Retreat is sounded. Flourish. Enter at one side, COMINIUS, and Romans; at the other side, MARCIUS, with his Arm in a Scarf, and other Romans.

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, P' the end, admire; where ladies shall be frighted, And, gladly quak'd, ⁴⁴⁾ hear more; where the dull tribunes,

That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours, Shall say, against their hearts, — *We thank the gods, Our Rome hath such a soldier!* — Yet cam'st thou to a morsel of this feast, Having fully dined before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, with the Power, from the pursuit.

Lart. O general, Here is the steed, we the caparison: ⁴⁵⁾ Hadst thou beheld —

Mar. Pray now, no more: my mother, Who has a charter to extol ⁴⁶⁾ her blood, When she does praise me, grieves me. I have done, As you have done: that's what I can; induc'd As you have been; that's for my country: He, that has but effected his good will, Hath overtaken mine act. ⁴⁷⁾

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.

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

Com.

Should they not, ⁴⁸⁾ Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude, And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses, (Whereof we have ta'en good, and good store,) of all The treasure, in this field achiev'd, and city, We render you the tenth; to be ta'en forth, Before the common distribution, at Your only choice.

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, Marcius! Marcius! 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 the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be Made all of false-fac'd soothing! When steel grows Soft as the parasite's silk, let him be made An overture for the 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 Marcius Wears this war's garland: in token of the which, My noble steed known to the camp, I give him, With all his trim belonging; and, from this time, For what he did before Corioli, call him, With all the applause and clamour of the host, CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS. — Bear the addition nobly ever!

[Flourish. Trumpets sound, and Drums.]

All. Caius Marcius Coriolanus!

Cor. 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 the fairness of my power. ⁴⁹⁾

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, ⁵⁰⁾ with whom we may articulate, ⁵¹⁾ For their own good, and ours.

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

Com. Take it: 'tis yours. — What is't? *Cor.* I sometime lay, here in Corioli, At a poor man's house; he us'd me kindly: He cried to me; I saw him prisoner; But then Aufidius was within my view, And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity: I request you To give my poor host freedom.

Com. O, well begg'd! Were he the butcher of my son, he should Be free, as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

Lart. Martius, his name?

Cor. By Jupiter, forgot: —

XXVIII.

I am 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.]*

SCENE X.

The Camp of the Volces.

A Flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, bloody, with two or three Soldiers.

Auf. The town is ta'en!

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

Auf. Condition? —

I would, I were a Roman; for I cannot. Being a Volce, be that I am. — Condition! What good condition can a treaty find I the part that is at mercy? Five times, Marcius, I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me; And would'st do so, I think, should we encounter As often as we eat. — By the elements, If e'er again I meet him beard to beard, He is 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; ⁵²⁾ Or wrath, or craft, may get him.

1 Sol. He's the devil. *Auf.* Bolder, though not so subtle: My valour's poison'd,

With only suffering stain by him; for him Shall fly out of itself; ⁵³⁾ nor sleep, nor sanctuary, Being naked, sick: nor fane, nor Capitol, The prayers of priests, nor times of sacrifice, Embarkments all of fury, ⁵⁴⁾ shall lift up Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst My hate to Marcius: where I find him, were it At home, upon my brother's guard, ⁵⁵⁾ even there Against the hospitable canon, would I Wash my fierce hand in his heart. Go you to the city; Learn, how 'tis held; and what they are, that must Be hostages for Rome.

1 Sol. Will not you go?

Auf. I am attended ⁵⁶⁾ at the cypress grove: I pray you, ('Tis south the city mills,) ⁵⁷⁾ bring me word thither How the world goes; that to the pace of it I may spur on my journey.

1 Sol. I shall, sir. *[Exeunt.]*

ACT II.

SCENE I. Rome. *A public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, and BRUTUS.

Men. The augurer 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 Marcius.

Sic. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

Men. Pray you, who does the wolf love?

Sic. The lamb.

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

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 Trib. Well, sir.

Men. In what enormity is Marcius poor, ¹⁾ that you two have not in abundance?

Bru. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all. *Sic.* Especially, in pride.

Bru. And topping all others in boasting.

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

Both Trib. Why, how are we censured?

Men. Because you talk of pride now, — Will you not be angry?

Both Trib. Well, well, sir, 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 disposition the reins, and be angry at your pleasures; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you, in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud?

Bru. We do it not alone, sir.

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, ²⁾ and make but an interior survey of your good selves! O, that you could!

Bru. What then, sir?

Men. Why, then you should discover a brace of 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 Tyber 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, ³⁾ than with the forehead of the morning. What I think, I utter; and spend my malice in my breath: Meeting two such weals-men as you are (I cannot call you Lycurguses,) if the drink you give me, touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I cannot say, your worships have delivered the matter well, when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables: and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men; yet they lie deadly, that tell you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it, that I am known well enough too. What harm can your bisson conspectivities ⁴⁾ 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; ⁵⁾ you wear out a good wholesome forenoon, ⁶⁾ in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fasset-seller; and then rejoin the 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 pinched 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 entangled by your hearing: all the peace you make in their cause, is, calling both the parties knaves: You are a pair of strange ones.

Bru. Come, come, you are well understood to be a perfecter giber 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

XXVIII.

not worth the wagging of your beards; and your beards deserve not so honourable a grave, as to stuff a butcher's cushion, or to be entomb'd in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be saying, Marcius is proud; who, in a cheap estimation, is worth all your predecessors, since Deucalion; though, peradventure, some of the best of 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.

[BRUTUS and SICINIUS retire to the back of the Scene.]

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and VALERIA, &c.

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 Marcius approaches; for the love of Juno, let's go.

Men. Ha! Marcius coming home?

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

Men. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee: — Hoo! Marcius coming home!

Two Ladies. 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 it.

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 empiricuteic, 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 it be not too much: — Brings 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. Has he disciplined 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: an he had staid by him, I would not have been so fidused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this? ')

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, wow.

Men. True; I'll be sworn they are true: — Where is he wounded? — God save your good worships! [To the Tribunes, who come forward.] Marcius is coming home: he has more cause to be proud. — Where is he wounded?

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

Men. One in the neck, and two in the thigh, — there's nine that I know.

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

Men. Now it's twenty-seven: every gash was an enemy's grave: [A Shout and Flourish.] Hark! the trumpets.

Vol. These are the ushers of Marcius: before him He carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears; Death, that dark spirit, in's nervy arm doth lie; Which being advanc'd, declines; ⁸) and then men die.

A Sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS and TITUS LARTIUS; between them, CORIOLANUS, crowned with an oaken Garland; with Captains, Soldiers, and a Herald.

Her. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight Within Corioli' gates: where he hath won, With fame, a name to Caius Marcius; these In honour follows, Coriolanus: —

Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus! [Flourish.]

All. Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus!

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

Com. Look, sir, your mother, — — —
Cor. O!

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

Vol. Nay, my good soldier, up;

My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and By deed-achieving honour newly nam'd, What is it? Coriolanus, must I call thee? But O, thy wife — —

Cor. My gracious silence, hail! ⁹)

Would'st thou have laugh'd, had I come coffin'd home, That weep'st 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 VALERIA.]

Vol. I know not where to turn: — O welcome home; And, welcome, general; — And you are welcome all.

Men. A hundred thousand welcomes: I could weep, And I could laugh; I am light, and heavy: Welcome: A curse begin at very root of his heart, That is not glad to see thee! — You are three That Rome should dote on: yet, by the faith of men,

We have some old crab-trees, here at home, that will not

Be grafted to your relish. Yet welcome, warriors: We call a nettle, but a nettle; and The faults of fools, but folly.

Com. Ever right.

Cor. Menenius, ever, ever.

Her. Give way there, and go on.

Cor. Your hand, and yours: [To his Wife and Mother.]

Ere in our own house I do shade my head, The good patricians must be visited; From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings, But with them change of honours.

Vol. I have lived

To see inherited my very wishes, And the buildings of my fancy: only there Is one thing 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. Excunt in state, as before. The Tribunes remain.]

Bru. All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights Are spectacl'd to see him; Your prattling nurse

Into a rapture ¹⁰) lets her baby cry, While she chats him; the kitchen malkin ¹¹) pins Her richest lockram ¹²) 'bout her reechy neck, ¹³) Clambering 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 ¹⁴) Do press among the popular throngs, and puff To win a vulgar station: ¹⁵) our veil'd dames Commit the war of white and damask, in Their nicely-gawdied cheeks, to the wanton spoil Of Phoebus' burning kisses: such a pother, As if that whatsoever god, who leads him, Were slyly crept into his human powers, And gave him graceful posture.

Sic. On the sudden, I warrant him consul.

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

Sic. He cannot temperately transport his honours From where he should begin, and end; ¹⁶) but will Lose those that he hath 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'll give them, make as little question As he is proud to do't. ¹⁷)

Bru. I heard him swear, Were he to stand for consul, never would he Appear i'the market-place, nor on him put The napless ¹⁸) vesture of humility; Nor, showing (as the manner is) his wounds To the 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'the gentry to him, And the desire of the 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 will; ¹⁹) A sure destruction.

Bru. So it must fall out To him, or our authorities. For an end, We must suggest the people, ²⁰) in what hatred He still hath held them; that, to his power, ²¹) he would

Have made them mules, silenc'd their pleaders, and Disproportioned their freedoms: holding them, In human action and capacity, Of no more soul, nor fitness for the world, Than camels in their war; who have their provand ²²) Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows For sinking under them.

Sic. This, as you say, suggested At some time when his soaring insolence Shall teach the people, (which time shall not want, If he be put upon't; and that's as easy, As to set dogs on sheep,) will be his fire To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a Messenger.

Bru. What's the matter? **Mess.** You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought, That Marcius 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 ²³) 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 the time, But hearts for the event. **Sic.** Have with you. [Excunt.]

SCENE II.

The same. 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. 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 flattered the people, who ne'er loved them; and there be many that they have loved, they know not wherefore: so that, if they love they know not why, they hate upon no better a ground: Therefore, for Coriolanus neither to care whether they love, or hate him, manifests the true knowledge he has in their disposition; and, out of his noble carelessness, let's them plainly see't.

1 Off. If he did not care whether he had their love, or no, he waded ²⁴) 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. ²⁵) 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 those ²⁶) who, having been supple and courteous to the people, bonnetted, ²⁷) without any further deed to heaven ²⁸) 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 every ear that heard it.

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

A Sennet. Enter, with Lictors before them, COMINIUS the Consul, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, many other Senators, SICINIUS, and BRUTUS. The Senators take their places; the Tribunes take theirs also by themselves.

Men. Having determin'd of the Volces, and To send for Titus Lartius, it remains, As the main point of this our after-meeting, To gratify his noble service, that Hath thus stood for his country: Therefore, please you, Most reverend and grave elders, to desire The present consul, and last general In our well-found successes, to report A little of that worthy work perform'd By Caius Marcius 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 we to stretch it out. ²⁹) Masters o'the people, We do request your kindest ears; and, after,

Your loving motion toward the common body,³⁰
To yield what passes here.

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

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

Men. That's off, that's off;³¹
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 it.

Men. He loves your people;
But tie him not to be their bedfellow. —
Worthy Cominius, speak. — Nay, keep your place.

[CORIOLANUS rises, and offers to go away.]

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

Cor. Your honours' pardon;
I had rather have my wounds to heal again,
Than hear say how I got them.

Bru. Sir, I hope,
My words dis-bench'd you not.

Cor. No, sir: yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words,
You sooth'd 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'the sun,
When the alarm were struck, than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [Exit CORIOLANUS.]

Men. Masters o'the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter,³²
(That's thousand to one good one,) when you now see,
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour,
Than one of his ears to hear it? — 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,³³ he fought
Beyond the mark of others: our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight,
When with his Amazonian chin³⁴ he drove
The bristled lips before him: he bestrid
An o'er-press'd Roman, and i'the consul's view
Slew three opposers: Tarquin's self he met,
And struck him on his knee:³⁵ in that day's feats,
When he might act the woman in the scene,³⁶
He prov'd best man i'the field, and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea;
And, in the brunt of seventeen battles since,
He lurch'd all swords o'the garland.³⁷ For this last,
Before and in Corioli, let me say,
I cannot speak him home: He stopp'd the fliers;
And, by his rare example, made the coward
Turn terror into sport: as waves before³⁸
A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
And fell below his stem: his sword (death's stamp)
Where it did mark, it took; from face to foot
He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
Was timed with dying cries:³⁹ alone he enter'd
The mortal gate⁴⁰ o'the city, which he painted
With shunless destiny, aidless came off,
And with a sudden re-enforcement struck
Corioli, like a planet: Now all's his:

When by and by the din of war 'gan pierce
His ready sense: then straight his doubled spirit
Re-quicken'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 fit the honours⁴¹
Which we devise him.

Com. Our spoils he kick'd at;
And look'd upon things precious, as they were
The common muck o'the world; he covets less
Than misery⁴² itself would give; rewards
His deeds with doing them; and is content
To spend the time, to end it.

Men. He's right noble;
Let him be call'd for.

1 Sen. Call for Coriolanus.⁴³
Off. He doth appear.

Re-enter 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 the people.

Cor. I do beseech you
Let me o'erleap that custom; for I cannot
Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage: please
you,

That I may pass this doing.

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

Men. Put them not to't: —
Pray you, go fit you to the custom; and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with your form.⁴⁴

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 the unaking scars which I should hide,
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire
Of their breath only: —

Men. Do not stand upon't. —
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them; —⁴⁵ and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honour.

Sen. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour!

[Flourish. Then exeunt Senators.]

Bru. You see how he intends to use the people.
Sic. May they perceive his intent! He will require
them,

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

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

SCENE III.

The same. The Forum.

Enter several Citizens.

1 Cit. Once, if he do require our voice, we ought
not to deny him.

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

XXVIII.

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 tell us his noble deeds, we must
also tell him our noble acceptance of them. Ingrati-
tude 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 our-
selves to be monstrous members.

1 Cit. And to make us no better thought of, a little
help will serve: for once, when we stood up⁴⁶
about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the
many-headed multitude.

3 Cit. We have been called so of many; not that
our heads are some brown, some black, some auburn,
some bald, but that our wits are so diversely col-
oured: and truly I think, if all our wits were to
issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west,
north, south; and their consent of one direct way
should be at once to all points o'the 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 an-
other man's will, 'tis strongly wedged up in a block-
head: but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, south-
ward.

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. Your are never without your tricks: — You
may, you may.

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

Enter CORIOLANUS and MENENIUS.

Here he comes, and in the gown of humility; mark
his behaviour. We are not to stay altogether, but
to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos,
and by threes. He's to make his requests by partic-
ulars: 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. [Exit.]

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

Cor. What must I say? —
I pray, sir, — Plague upon't! I cannot bring
My tongue to such a pace: — Look, sir; — —
my wounds; —

I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd, and ran
From the 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 virtues
Which our divines lose by them.⁴⁷

Men. You'll mar all;
I'll leave you: Pray you, speak to them, I pray you,
In wholesome manner. [Exit.]

Enter two Citizens.

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

1 Cit. We do, sir; 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, sir:

'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'the consulship?

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

Cor. Kindly!
Sir, I pray, let me ha't: I have wounds to show you,
Which shall be yours in private. — Your good voice,
sir:

What say you?

2 Cit. You shall have it, worthy sir.

Cor. A match, sir: —

There is 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.
[Exit two Citizens.]

Enter 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.

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

Cor. Your enigma?

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

4 Cit. We hope to find you our friend; and there-
fore give you our voices heartily.

3 Cit. You have received many wounds for your
country.

Cor. I will not seal your knowledge⁴⁸ with
showing them. I will make much of your voices,
and so trouble you no further.

Both Cit. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily!
[Exit.]

Cor. Most sweet voices! —

Better it is to die, better to starve,
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this wolvish gown should I stand here,
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,
Their needless vouchers? 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 over-peer, — 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.

Enter three other Citizens.

Here come more voices, —

Your voices: for your voices I have fought;
Watch'd for your voices; for your voices, bear

XXVIII.

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

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

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

All. Amen, amen. —
God save thee, noble consul!
Cor. [Exit Citizens.]
Worthy voices!

Re-enter MENENIUS, with BRUTUS, and SICINIUS.

Men. You have stood your limitation; and the tribunes
Endue you with the people's voice: Remains,
That, in the official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.

Cor. Is this done?

Sic. The custom of request you have discharg'd:
The people do admit you; and are summon'd
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

Cor. Where? at the senate-house?

Sic. There, Coriolanus.
Cor. May I then change these garments? ⁴⁹⁾

Sic. You may, sir.
Cor. That I'll straight do; and, knowing myself again,
Repair to the senate-house.

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

Bru. We stay here for the people.
Sic. Fare you well.

[Exit CORIOL. and MENEN.]
He has it now; and by his looks, methinks,
'Tis warm at his heart.

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

Re-enter 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 mock'd us, when he begg'd our voices.

3 *Cit.* Certainly,
He flouted us down-right.

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 received for his country.

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

Cit. No; no man saw 'em. [Several speak.]
3 *Cit.* He said, he had wounds, which he could
show in private;

And with his hat, 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 no further with you: — Was not this mockery?

Sic. Why, either, were you ignorant to see't? ⁵⁰⁾
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: ever spake against
Your liberties, and the charters that you bear
I'the body of the weal: and now, arriving
A place of potency, and sway o'the state,
If he should still malignantly remain
Fast foe to the plebeii, 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 ⁵¹⁾ for your voices, and
Translate his malice towards you into love,
Standing your friendly lord.

Sic. Thus to have said,
As you were fore-advis'd, had touch'd his spirit,
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 article
Tying him to aught; so, putting him to rage,
You should have ta'en the advantage of his cholera,
And pass'd him unelected.

Bru. Did you perceive,
He did solicit you in free contempt, ⁵²⁾
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
Your su'd-for tongues?
3 *Cit.* He's not confirm'd, we may deny him yet.

2 *Cit.* And will deny him:
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

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

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

Sic. Let them assemble;
And, on a safer judgment, than as guided
Your ignorant election: Enforce his pride. ⁵³⁾

And his old hate unto 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, ⁵⁴⁾

Which gibingly, ⁵⁵⁾ ungravely, he did fashion
After the inveterate hate he bears you.

Bru. 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 as guided
By your own true affections: and that, your minds
Pre-occupy'd with what you rather must do
Than what you should, 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 o'the Marcians; from whence came
That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,
Who, after great Hostilius, here was king:
Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
That our best water brought by conduits hither;
And Censorinus, darling of the people,
And nobly nam'd so, being censor twice, ⁵⁶⁾
Was his great ancestor.

Sic. One thus descended,
That hath 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, ⁵⁷⁾

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; ⁵⁸⁾
And presently, when you have drawn your number,
Repair to the Capitol.

Cit. We will so: almost all [Several speak.]
Repent in their election. [Exit Citizens.]

Bru. Let them go on;
This munity 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. ⁵⁹⁾

Sic. To the Capitol:
Come; we'll be there before the stream o'the people:
And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own,
Which we have goaded onward. [Exit.]

ACT III.

SCENE I. The same. A Street.

Cornets. Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS,
TITUS LARTIUS, Senators, and Patricians.

Cor. Tullus Aufidius then had made new head?
Lart. He had, my lord; and that it was, which caus'd
Our swifter composition.

Cor. So then the Volces stand but as at first;
Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road
Upon us again.

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

Cor. Saw you Aufidius?
Lart. On safe-guard he came to me; ¹⁾ and did curse
Against the Volces, for they had so vilely
Yielded the town: he is retir'd to Antium.

Cor. Spoke he of me?
Lart. He did, my lord.

Cor. How? what?
Lart. 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?
Lart. At Antium.

Cor. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
To oppose his hatred fully. — Welcome home.
[To LARTIUS.]

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Behold! these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o'the common mouth. I do despise them;
For they do prank them in authority, ²⁾
Against all noble sufferance.

Sic. Pass no further.

Cor. Ha! 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 com-
mons?

Bru. Cominius, no.

Cor. Have I had children's voices?
1 *Sen.* Tribunes, give way; he shall to the 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 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 it, 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 suppliants 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. You are like to do such business.

Bru. Not unlike,
Each way, to better yours.

Cor. Why then should I be consul? By yon 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 are bound, you must inquire your
way,

Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit;
Or never be so noble as a consul,
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

Men. Let's be calm.
Com. The people are abus'd: — Set on. — This
palt'ring
Becomes not Rome; ³⁾ nor has Coriolanus
Deserv'd this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely ⁴⁾
I'the 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.

1 *Sen.* Not in this heat, sir, now.
Cor. Now, as I live, I will. — My nobler friends,
I crave their pardons: —
For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them
Regard me as I do not flatter, and
Therein behold themselves: ⁵⁾ I say again,
In soothing them, we nourish 'gainst our senate
The cockle of rebellion, ⁶⁾ insolence, sedition,
Which we ourselves have plough'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 they have given to beggars.

Men. Well, no more.
1 *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 meazels, ⁷⁾
Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
The very way to catch them.

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

Sic. 'Twere well,
We let the people know't.

Men. What, what? his cholera?
Cor. Cholera!
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?⁸⁾ mark you
His absolute shall?

Com. 'Twas from the canon.⁹⁾

Cor. Shall!
O good, but most unwise patricians, why,
You grave, but reckless senators, have you thus
Given Hydra here to choose an officer,
That with his peremptory shall, being but
The horn and noise o'the monsters, wants not spirit
To say, he'll turn your current in a ditch,
And make your channel his? If he have power,
Then veil your ignorance:¹⁰⁾ if none, awake
Your dangerous lenity. If you are learned,
Be not as common fools; if you are not,
Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians,
If they be senators: and they are no less,
When, both your voices blended, the greatest taste
Most palates theirs.¹¹⁾ 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 the other.

Com. Well — on to the market-place.
Cor. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
The corn o'the store-house 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. Why, shall the people give
One, that speaks thus, their voice?

Cor. I'll give my reasons,
More worthier than their voices. They know, the corn
Was not our recompense; resting well assur'd
They ne'er did service for't: Being press'd to the war,
Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,
They would not thread the gates:¹²⁾ this kind of
service

Did not deserve corn gratis: being i'the war,
Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd
Most valour, spoke not for them: The accusation
Which they have often made against the senate,
All cause unborn, could never be the native.¹³⁾
Of our so frank donation. Well, what then?
How shall this bosom multiplied¹⁴⁾ digest
The senate's courtesy? Let deeds express
What's like to be their words: — *We did request it;*
We are the greater poll, and in true fear
They gave us our demands: — Thus we debase
The nature of our seats, and make the rabble
Call our cares, fears: which will in time break ope
The locks o'the senate, and bring in the crows
To peck the eagles. —

Men. Come, 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 general ignorance, — it must omit
Real necessities, and give way the while
To 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 doubt the change of't;¹⁵⁾ that prefer
A noble life before a long, and wish
To jump a body¹⁶⁾ with a dangerous physic
That's sure of death without it, — at once pluck out
The multitudinous tongue, let them not lick
The sweet which is their poison: your dishonour
Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state
Of that integrity which should become it;
Not having the power to do the good it would,
For the ill which doth control it.

Bru. He has said enough.
Sic. He has 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 the greater bench; In a rebellion,
When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
Then were they chosen; in a better hour,
Let what is meet, be said, it must be meet,
And throw their power i'the dust.

Bru. Manifest treason.

Sic. This a consul? no.

Bru. The Ædiles, ho! — Let him be apprehended.

Sic. Go, call the people; [*Exit BRUTUS*] in whose
name, myself

Attach thee, as a traitorous innovator,
A foe to the public weal: Obey, I charge thee,
And follow to thine answer.

Cor. Hence, old goat!

Sen. & Pat. We'll surety him.

Com. Aged sir, hands off.

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

Sic. Help, ye citizens.

*Re-enter BRUTUS, with the Ædiles, and a
rabble of Citizens.*

Men. On both sides more respect.

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

Bru. Seize him, Ædiles.

Cit. Down with him, down with him! [*Several speak.*
2 *Sen.* Weapons, weapons, weapons!

[*They all bustle about CORIOLANUS.*

Tribunes, patricians, citizens! — what ho! —
Sicinius, Brutus, Coriolanus, citizens!

Cit. 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
To the people, — Coriolanus, patience: —
Speak, good Sicinius.

Sic. Hear me, people; — Peace.

Cit. Let's hear our tribune: — Peace. Speak,
speak, speak.

Sic. You are at point to lose your liberties:
Marcius would have all from you; Marcius,
Whom late you have named for consul.

Men. Fye, fye, fye!

This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

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

Sic. What is the city, but the people?

Cit. True,

The people are the city.

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

The people's magistrates.

Cit. 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'the people, in whose power

We were elected theirs, Marcius is worthy

Of present death.

Sic. Therefore, lay hold of him;

Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence

Into destruction cast him.

Bru. Ædiles, seize him.

Cit. Yield, Marcius, yield.

Men. Hear me one word.

Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word.

Ædi. Peace, peace.

Men. Be that you seem, truly your country's friend,
And temperately 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 upon 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, with-
draw a while.

Bru. Lay hands upon him.

Men. Help, help Marcius! help,

You that be noble: help him, young, and old!

Cit. Down with him, down with him!

[*In this Mutiny, the Tribunes, the Ædiles, and
the People, are all beat in.*

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

2 *Sen.* Get you gone.

Cor. Stand fast;

We have as many friends as enemies.

Men. Shall it be put to that?

1 *Sen.* The gods forbid!

I pry'thee, noble friend, home to thy house;

Leave us to cure this cause.

Men. For 'tis a sore upon us,

You cannot tent yourself: Begone, beseech you.

Com. Come, sir, along with us.

Cor. I would they were barbarians, (as they are,
Though in Rome litter'd,) not Romans, (as they are not,
Though car'd i'the porch o'the Capitol,) —

Men. Be gone;

Put not your worthy rage into your tongue;

One time will owe another.¹⁷⁾

Cor. On fair ground,

I could beat forty of them.

Men. I could myself

Take up a brace of the best of them; yea, the two

tribunes.

Com. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic;

And manhood is call'd foolery, when it stands

Against a falling fabric. — Will you hence,

Before the tag return?¹⁸⁾ whose rage doth rend

Like interrupted waters, and o'erbear

What they are used to bear.

Men. Pray you, begone:

I'll try whether my old wit be in request

With those that have but little; this must be patch'd

With cloth of any colour.

Com. Nay, come away.

[*Exit CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, and others.*

1 *Pat.* 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 his 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 *Pat.* I would they were a-bed!

Men. I would they were in Tyber! — What, the

vengeance,

Could he not speak them fair?

Re-enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, with the Rabble.

Sic. Where is this viper,

That would depopulate the city, and

Be every man himself?

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 the public power,

Which he so sets at nought.

1 *Cit.* He shall well know,

The noble tribunes are the people's mouths,

And we their hands.

Cit. He shall, sure on't.

[*Several speak together.*

Men. Sir, —

Sic. Peace.

Men. Do not cry, havoc, where you should but hunt

With modest warrant.

Sic. Sir, how comes it, that 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 a consul!

Cit. 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 one 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

Towards her deserved children²⁰⁾ is enroll'd

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's a limb, that has but a 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 dropp'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 the end o'the world.

Sic. This is clean kam.²¹⁾

Bru. Merely awry:²²⁾ When he did love his country,

It honour'd him.

Men. The service of the foot

Being once gangren'd, is not then respected

For what before it was?²³⁾

Bru. We'll hear no more: —
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence;

Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.

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

Bru. If it were 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 has been bred i'the wars
Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
In boulded 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 market-place: — We'll attend
you there:

Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed
In our first way.

Men. I'll bring him to you: —
Let me desire your company. [To the Senators.] He
must come,

Or what is worst will follow.

1 Sen. Pray you, let's to him. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

A Room in Coriolanus's House.

Enter CORIOLANUS, and Patricians.

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

Enter VOLUMNIA.

1 Pat. You do the nobler.
Cor. I muse, ²⁴⁾ my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats; to show bare heads
In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder,
When one but of my ordinance ²⁵⁾ stood up
To speak of peace, or war. I talk of you;

[To VOLUMNIA.]
Why did you wish me milder? Would you have me
False to my nature? Rather say, I play
The man I am.

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

Cor. Let go.
Vol. You might have been enough the man you are,
With striving less to be so: Lesser had been
The thwartings of your dispositions, 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, and Senators.

Men. Come, come, you have been too rough, some-
thing too rough;
You must return and mend it.

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

Vol. Pray, be counsel'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 the herd, but that
The violent fit o'the time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

Cor. What must I do?
Men. Return to the tribunes.

Cor. Well,
What then? what then?
Men. Repent what you have spoke.

Cor. For them? — I cannot do it to 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. ²⁶⁾ I have heard you say,
Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,
I'the war do grow together: Grant that, and tell me,
In peace, what each of them by th' other lose,
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 adopt your policy,) how is it 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 ²⁷⁾ this?
Vol. Because that now it lies on you to speak
To the people; not by your own instruction,
Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you to, ²⁸⁾
But with such words that are but rotes in
Your tongue, though but bastards, and syllables
Of no allowance, to your bosom's truth. ²⁹⁾
Now, this no more dishonours you at all,
Than to take in a town ³⁰⁾ 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 am in this,
Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles;
And you will rather show our general lowts ³¹⁾
How you can frown, than spend a fawn upon them,
For the inheritance of their loves, and safeguard
Of what that want ³²⁾ 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 the ignorant
More learned than the ears,) waving thy head,
Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
Now humble, as the ripest mulberry,
That will not hold the handling: Or, say to them,
Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils,
Hast not the soft way, which, thou dost confess,

Were fit for thee to use, as they 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,
Even as she speaks, why, all their hearts were
yours: ³³⁾

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 hadst rather
Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf,
Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

Enter COMINIUS.

Com. I have been i'the market-place: and, sir, 'tis fit
You make 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 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 unbarb'd scone? ³⁴⁾
Must I

With 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 plot ³⁵⁾ to lose,
This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it,
And throw it against the wind. — To the market-
place: —

You have put me now to such a part, which never
I shall discharge to the life.

Com. Come, come, we'll prompt you.
Vol. I 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, ³⁶⁾ into a pipe
Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep! The smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks; ³⁷⁾ and school-boys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight! A beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips; and my arm'd knees,
Who 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; ³⁸⁾ for I mock at death
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list.
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me:
But owe ³⁹⁾ thy pride thyself.

Cor. Pray be content;
Mother, I am 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'the way of flattery, further.

Vol. Do your will. [Exit.]
Com. Away, the tribunes do attend you: arm yourself
To answer mildly; for they are 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 III.

The same. The Forum.

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Bru. In this point charge him home, that he affects
Tyrannical power: If he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy ⁴⁰⁾ to the people;
And that the spoil, got on the Antiates,
Was ne'er distributed. —

Enter an Ædile.

What, will he come?

Æd. He's coming.
Bru. How accompanied?
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 the 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'the right and strength o'the 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'the truth o'the cause.

Æd. I shall 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 his worth
Of contradiction: ⁴¹⁾ Being once chaf'd, he cannot
Be rein'd again to temperance; then he speaks
What's in his heart: and that is there, which looks
With us to break his neck. ⁴²⁾

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS,
Senators, and Patricians.

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 the volume. — ⁴³⁾ The
honour'd gods

Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among us!
Through our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war!

1 Sen. Amen, amen!

Men. A noble wish.

Re-enter Ædile, with Citizens.

Sic. Draw near, ye people.
Æd. List 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'the 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.⁴¹⁾

Com. Well, well, no more.

Cor. What is the matter,
That being pass'd for consul with full voice,
I am 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,⁴⁵⁾ and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which, you are a traitor to the people.

Cor. How! Traitor?

Men. Nay; temperately: Your promise.

Cor. The fires i'the lowest hell fold in the people!
Call me their traitor! — Thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutch'd⁴⁶⁾ 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?

Cit. To the rock with him; to the rock with him!⁴⁷⁾

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 the 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 exile, flaying; Pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word;
Nor check my courage for what they can give,
To have't with saying, Good morrow.

Sic. For that he has
(As much as in him lies) from time to time
Envied against the people,⁴⁸⁾ seeking means
To pluck away their power; has now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it: In the name o'the people,

And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
Even from this instant, banish him our city;
In peril of precipitation
From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
To enter our Rome gates: I'the people's name,
I say, it shall be so.

Cit. It shall be so,
It shall be so; let him away: he's banish'd,
And so it shall be.⁴⁹⁾

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 from 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,⁵⁰⁾ 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.

Cit. It shall be so, it shall be so.

Cor. You common cry of curs!⁵¹⁾ whose breath
I hate

As reek o'the 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,)⁵²⁾
Making not reservation of yourselves,
(Still your own foes,) deliver you, as most
Abated captives,⁵³⁾ to some nation
That won you without blows! Despising,
For you, the city, thus I turn my back:
There is a world elsewhere.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, MENENIUS,
Senators, and Patricians.]

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

Cit. Our enemy's banish'd! he is gone! Hoo! hoo!
[*The People shout, and throw up their Caps.*]

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.

Cit. Come, come, let us see him out at gates; come: —
The gods preserve our noble tribunes! — Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. *The same. Before a Gate of the City.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS,
COMINIUS, and several young Patricians.

Cor. 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 was¹⁾ 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 gentle wounded, craves
A noble cunning; ²⁾ you were us'd to load me

RVIII.

With precepts, that would make invincible
The heart that conn'd them.

Vir. O heavens! O heavens!

Cor. Nay, I pr'y'thee, 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 have seen thee stern, and thou hast off beheld
Heart-hard'ning spectacles; tell these sad women,
'Tis fond³⁾ to wail inevitable strokes,
As 'tis to laugh at them. — My mother, you wot well,
My hazards still have been your solace: and
Believe'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 cautelous⁴⁾ baits and practice.

Vol. My first son,⁵⁾
Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
With thee a while: Determine on some course,
More than a wild exposure⁶⁾ to each chance
That starts i'the 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'the absence of the needer.

Cor. Fare ye well: —
Thou hast years upon thee; and thou art too full
Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one
That's yet unbruise'd: bring me but out at gate. —
Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
My friends of noble touch,⁷⁾ 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 worthy
As any ear can hear. — Come, let's not weep. —
If I could shake off but one seven years
From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,
I'd with thee every foot.

Cor. Give me thy hand:
Come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The same. A Street near the Gate.

Enter SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and an Ædile.

Sic. Bid them all home; he's gone, and we'll no
further. —
The nobility are vex'd, 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. [*Exit* Ædile.]

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and MENENIUS.

Here comes his mother.

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, you're well met: The hoarded plague
o'the 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?

Vir. You shall stay too: [*to* SICINIUS.] I would, I had
the power

To say so to my husband.

Sic. Are you man-kind?

Vol. Ay, fool; Is that a shame? — Note but this
fool. —

Was not a man my father? Had'st thou foxship⁸⁾
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome,
Than thou hast spoken words?

Sic. O blessed heavens!

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?

Vir. What then!

He'd make an end of thy posterity.

Vol. 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 heaven
Will not have earth to know.

Bru. Pray, let us go.

Vol. Now, pray, sir, get you gone:
You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear
this;

As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome: so far, my son,
(This lady's husband here, this, do you see,)
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.

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

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

Vol. Take my prayers with you. —
I would the gods had nothing else to do,

[*Exeunt* Tribunes.]

But to confirm my curses! Could I meet them
But once a day, it would unclug my heart
Of what lies heavy to't.

Men. You have told them home,
And, by my troth, you 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,
In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

Men. Fye, fye, fye!

[*Exeunt.*]

RVIII.

SCENE III.

A Highway between Rome and Antium.

Enter a Roman and a Volce, meeting.

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

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

Rom. I am a Roman; and my services are, as you are, against them: Know you me yet?

Vol. Nicanor? No.

Rom. The same, sir.

Vol. You had more beard, when I last saw you; but your favour is well appeared by your tongue. ⁹⁾ What's the news in Rome? I have a note from the Volsian state, to find you out there: You have well saved me a day's journey.

Rom. There hath been in Rome strange insurrection: 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 banished?

Rom. Banished, sir.

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 of 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, ¹⁰⁾ 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.*]

SCENE IV.

Antium. Before Aufidius's House.

Enter CORIOLANUS, in mean Apparel, disguised and muffled.

Cor. A goodly city is this Antium: City, 'Tis I that made thy widows: many an heir Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars Have I heard groan, and drop: then know me not; Lest that thy wives with spits, and boys with stones,

Enter a Citizen.

In puny battle slay me. — Save you, sir.

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. Which is his house, '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 twin, 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 birth-place hate I, and my love's upon This enemy town. — I'll enter: if he slay me, He does fair justice; if he give me way, I'll do his country service. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.

The same. A Hall in Aufidius's House.

Music within. Enter a Servant.

1 Serv. Wine, wine, wine! What service is here! I think our fellows are asleep. [*Exit.*]

Enter another Servant.

2 Serv. 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.

Re-enter the first Servant.

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

Cor. I have deserv'd no better entertainment, In being Coriolanus. ¹¹⁾

Re-enter second Servant.

2 Serv. Whence are you, sir? Has the porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such companions? ¹²⁾ Pray, get you out.

Cor. Away!

2 Serv. Away? Get you away.

Cor. Now thou art troublesome.

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

Enter a third Servant. The first meets him.

3 Serv. What fellow's this?

1 Serv. A strange one as ever I looked on: I cannot get him out o'the house: 'Pr'ythee, call my master to him.

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

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

3 Serv. What are you?

Cor. A gentleman.

3 Serv. A marvellous poor one.

Cor. True, so I am.

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

HKVIII.

Cor. Follow your function, go!

And batten on cold bits. [*Pushes him away.*]

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

2 Serv. And I shall. [*Exit.*]

3 Serv. Where dwellest thou?

Cor. Under the canopy.

3 Serv. Under the canopy?

Cor. Ay.

3 Serv. Where's that?

Cor. I' the city of kites and crows.

3 Serv. I' the city of kites and crows? — What an ass it is! — Then thou dwellest with daws too?

Cor. No, I serve not thy master.

3 Serv. How, sir! Do you meddle with my master?

Cor. Ay; 'tis an honest service, than to meddle with thy mistress:

Thou prat'st, and prat'st: serve with thy trencher, hence! [*Beats him away.*]

Enter AUFIDIUS and the second Servant.

Auf. Where is this fellow?

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

Auf. Whence comest thou? what wouldst thou? Thy name?

Why speak'st not? Speak, man: What's thy name?

Cor. If, Tullus, [*Unmuffling.*]

Not yet thou know'st me, and seeing me, dost not Think me for the man I am, necessity

Commands me name myself.

Auf. What is thy name? [*Servants retire.*]

Cor. A name unmusical to the Volsians' ears, And harsh in sound 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 Marcius, who hath done To thee particularly, and to all the Volces, 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 memory, ¹³⁾

And witness of the malice and displeasure

Which thou should'st 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 suffered me by the 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'the world

I would have 'voided thee: but in mere spite,

To be full quit of those my banishers,

Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast

A heart of wreak in thee, ¹⁴⁾ that will revenge

Thine own particular wrongs, and stop those mains

Of shame ¹⁵⁾ seen through thy country, speed thee

straight,

And make my misery serve thy turn; so use it,

That my revengful services may prove

As benefits to thee; for I will fight

Against my canker'd country with the spleen

Of all the under fiends. ¹⁶⁾ But if so be

Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes

Thou art 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 Marcius, Marcius,

Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart

A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter

Should from yon cloud speak divine things, and say,

'Tis true; I'd not believe them more than thee,

All noble Marcius. — O, let me twine

Mine arms about that body, where against

My grained ash an hundred splinters hath broke,

And scar'd the moon ¹⁷⁾ with splinters! Here I clip ¹⁸⁾

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 loved the maid I married; never man

Sighed truer breath; but that I see thee here,

Thou noble thing! more dances my rapt heart,

Than when I first my wedded mistress saw

Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars! I tell thee,

We have a power on foot; and I had purpose

Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,

Or lose mine arm for't: Thou hast beat me out

Twelve several times, ¹⁹⁾ and I have nightly since

Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me;

We have been down together in my sleep,

Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,

And wak'd half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,

Had we no quarrel ²⁰⁾ 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-beat. O, come, go in,

And take our friendly senators by the 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

The 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 fright them, ere destroy. But come in:

Let me commend thee first to those, that shall

Say, *yea*, to thy desires. A thousand welcomes!

And more a friend than e'er an enemy;

Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand! Most

welcome! [*Exeunt CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.*]

1 Serv. [*Advancing.*] Here's a strange alteration!

2 Serv. By my hand, I had thought to have strucken

him with a cudgel; and yet my mind gave me, his

clothes made a false report of him.

1 Serv. What an arm he has! He turned me about

with his finger and his thumb, as one would set up

a top.

2 Serv. Nay, I knew by his face that there was

something in him: He had, sir, a kind of face, me-

thought, — I cannot tell how to term it.

1 Serv. He had so; looking as it were, — 'Would

I were hanged, but I thought there was more in

him than I could think.

2 Serv. So did I, I'll be sworn: He is simply the

rarest man i'the world.

1 Serv. I think, he is: but a greater soldier than

he, you wot one.

HKVIII.

2 *Serv.* Who? my master?

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

2 *Serv.* Worth six of him.

1 *Serv.* Nay, not so neither; but I take him to be the greater soldier.

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

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

Re-enter third Servant.

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

1. 2. *Serv.* What, what, what? let's partake.

3 *Serv.* I would not be a Roman of all nations; I had as lieve be a condemned man.

1. 2. *Serv.* Wherefore? wherefore?

3 *Serv.* Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general, — Caius Marcius.

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

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

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

1 *Serv.* He was too hard for him directly, to say the truth on't: before Corioli, he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

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

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

3 *Serv.* Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars: set at upper end o'the table: no question asked him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him: Our general himself makes a mistress of him; sanctifies himself with's hand, ²¹⁾ and turns up the white o'the eye to his discourse. But the bottom of the news is, our general is cut i'the 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 sowle the porter of Rome gates by the ears: ²²⁾ He will mow down all before him, and leave his passage polled. ²³⁾

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

3 *Serv.* Do't? he will do't: For, look you, sir, he has as many friends as enemies: which friends, sir, (as it were,) durst not (look you, sir,) show themselves (as we term it,) his friends, whilst he's in directitude.

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

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

1 *Serv.* But when goes this forward?

3 *Serv.* To-morrow; to-day; presently. You shall have the drum struck up this afternoon: 'tis, as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere they wipe their lips.

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

1 *Serv.* Let me have war, say I; it exceeds peace, as far as day does night; it's sprightly, waking, audible, and full of vent. ²⁴⁾ Peace is a very apoplexy, lethargy; mull'd, ²⁵⁾ deaf, sleepy, insensible; a getter of more bastard children, than war's a destroyer of men.

2 *Serv.* 'Tis so: and as wars, in some sort, may be said to be a ravisher; so it cannot be denied, but peace is a great maker of cuckolds.

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

3 *Serv.* Reason; because they then less need one another. The wars, for my money. I hope to see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising, they are rising.

All. In, in, in, in.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VI.

Rome. *A public Place.*

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Sic. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him; His remedies are tame i'the present peace ²⁶⁾ And quietness o'the people, which before Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends Blush, that the world goes well; who rather had, Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold Dissentious numbers pestering the 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. 'Tis he, 'tis he: O, he is grown most kind Of late. — Hail, sir!

Men. Hail to you both!

Sic. Your Coriolanus, sir, is not ²⁷⁾ much miss'd, But with his friends; the common-wealth 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.

Cit. The gods preserve you both!

Sic. Good e'en, our 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. Farewell, kind neighbours: We wish'd Coriolanus Had lov'd you as we did.

Cit. Now the gods keep you!

Both Tri. Farewell, farewell. [*Exeunt Citizens.*]

Sic. This is a happier and more comely time, Then when these fellows ran about the streets, Crying, Confusion.

Bru. Caius Marcius was A worthy officer i'the war; but insolent, O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking, Self-loving, —

Sic. And affecting one sole throne, Without assistance. ²⁸⁾

Men. I think not so.

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

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 Volces with two several powers Are enter'd in the Roman territories; And with the deepest malice of the war Destroy what lies before them.

Men. 'Tis Aufidius,

Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment, Thrusts forth his horns again into the world;

RRVIII.

Which were inshell'd, when Marcius stood for Rome, ²⁹⁾ And durst not once peep out.

Sic. Come, what talk you Of Marcius?

Bru. Go see this rumourer whipp'd. — It cannot be, The Volces 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, ³⁰⁾ Before you punish him, where he heard this: Lest you shall chance to whip your information, And beat the messenger who bids beware Of what is to be dreaded.

Sic. Tell not me:

I know, this cannot be.

Bru. Not possible.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. The nobles, in great earnestness, are going All to the senate-house: some news is come, ³¹⁾ That turns their countenances. ³²⁾

Sic. 'Tis this slave; — Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes: — his raising! Nothing but his report!

Mess. Yes, worthy sir, The slave's report is seconded; and more, More fearful, is deliver'd.

Sic. What more fearful?

Mess. It is spoke freely out of many mouths, (How probable, I do not know,) that Marcius, 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 wish Good Marcius home again.

Sic. The very trick on't.

Men. This is unlikely: He and Aufidius can no more atone, ³³⁾ Than violentest contrariety.

Enter another Messenger.

Mess. You are sent for to the senate; A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius, Associated with Aufidius, rages Upon our territories; and have already, O'erborne 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 franchises, whereon you stood, confin'd Into an augre's bore.

Men. Pray now, your news? — You have made fair work, I fear me: — Pray, your news?

If Marcius should be join'd with 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 have made good work, You, and your apron men; you that stood so much

Upon the voice of occupation, ³⁴⁾ and The breath of garlick-eaters!

Com. He will shake Your Rome about your ears.

Men. As Hercules Did shake down mellow fruit: ³⁵⁾ 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; ³⁶⁾ 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 are 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: for his best friends, if they Should say, *Be good to Rome*, they charg'd him even As those should do that had deserv'd his hate, And therein show'd like enemies.

Men. 'Tis true: If he were putting to my house the brand That should consume it, I have not the face To say, *Beseech you, cease*. — You have made fair hands,

You, and your crafts! you have crafted fair!

Com. You have 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 cowardly nobles, gave way to your clusters, Who did hoot him out o'the 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.

Enter a Troop of Citizens.

Men. Here comes 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 could burn us all into one coal, We have deserv'd it.

Cit. 'Faith, we hear fearful news. 1 *Cit.* For mine own part, When I said, banish him, I said, 'twas pity.

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. You are goodly things, you voices! *Men.* You have made Good work, you and your cry! — ³⁷⁾ Shall us to the Capitol?

Com. O, aye; what else? [*Exeunt COMINIUS and MENENIUS.*]

Sic. Go, masters, get you home, be not disdain'd; These are a side, that would be glad to have

RRVIII.

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'the wrong, when
we banished 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.*]

SCENE VII.

A Camp; at a small distance from Rome.

Enter AUFIDIUS, and his Lieutenant.

Auf. Do they still fly to the 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 proudlier
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, sir,
(I mean, for your particular,) you had not
Join'd in commission with him: but either
Had borne 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. Although it seems,
And so he thinks, and is no less apparent
To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state;
Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
As draw his sword: yet he hath left undone
That, which shall break his neck, or hazard mine,
Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieu. Sir, I beseech you, 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 osprey³⁸⁾ 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 'twas pride,
Which out of daily fortune ever taints
The happy man; whether³⁹⁾ defect of judgment,
To fail in the disposing of those chances
Which he was lord of; or whether nature,
Not to be other than one thing, not moving
From the casque to the cushion, but commanding
peace

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,⁴⁰⁾
For I dare so far free him,) made him fear'd,
So hated, and so banish'd: But he has a merit,
To choke it in the utterance.⁴¹⁾ So our virtues
Lie in the interpretation of the time:
And power, unto itself most commendable,

Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
To extol what it hath done.

One fire drives out one fire; one nail, one nail;
Rights by rights fouler,⁴²⁾ strengths by strengths
do fail.

Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
Thou art poor'st of all; then shortly art thou mine.
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I. Rome. *A public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS,
and others.

Men. 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 kneel
The way into his mercy: Nay, if he coy'd¹⁾
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 would not answer to: forbad all names;
He was a king of nothing, titleless,
Till he had forg'd himself a name i'the fire
Of burning Rome.

Men. Why, so; you have made good work:
A pair of tribunes that have rack'd²⁾ for Rome,
To make coals cheap: A noble memory!³⁾

Com. I minded him, how royal 'twas to pardon
When it was less expected: He replied,
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 his 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 the offence.

Men. For one poor grain
Or two? I am one of those; his mother, wife,
His child, and this brave fellow too, we are the grains:
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-heeded help, yet do not
Upbraid us 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. I pray you, go to him.⁴⁾

Men. What should I do?
Bru. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Marcius.

Men. Well, and say that Marcius
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,
Unheard; what then? —

But as a discontented friend, grief-shot
With his unkindness? Say't be so?

Sic. Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from 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:⁵⁾
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then
We put upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive; but when we have stuff'd
These pipes, and these conveyances of our 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. I 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:⁶⁾ his eye
Red as 'twould burn Rome; and his injury
The gaoler 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 me; what he would not,
Bound with an oath, to yield to his conditions;⁷⁾
So, that all hope is vain,
Unless his noble mother, and his wife;
Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
For mercy to his country. Therefore, let's hence,
And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

*An advanced Post of the Volscian Camp before
Rome. The Guard at their Stations.*

Enter to them MENENIUS.

1 *G.* Stay: Whence are you?

2 *G.* 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 *G.* From whence?

Men. From Rome.

1 *G.* You may not pass, you must return: our
general

Will no more hear from thence.
2 *G.* 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,⁸⁾
My name hath touch'd your ears: it is Menenius.

1 *G.* 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 verified my friends,
(Of whom he's chief,) with all the size that verity⁹⁾
Would without lapsing suffer: nay, sometimes,
Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground,¹⁰⁾
I have tumbled past the throw; and in his praise
Have, almost, stamp'd the leasing:¹¹⁾ therefore,
fellow,

I must have leave to pass.

1 *G.* 'Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in
his behalf, as you have uttered words in your own,
you should not pass here: no, though it were as virtu-
ous to lie, as to live chastly. Therefore, go back.

Men. 'Pr'ythee, fellow, remember my name is Mene-
nius, always factionary on the party of your general.

2 *G.* 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 *G.* You are a Roman, are you?

Men. I am as thy general is.

1 *G.* Then you should hate Rome, as he does. Can
you, when you have pushed out your gates the
very defender of them, and, in a violent popular
ignorance, given your enemy your shield, think to
front his revenges with the easy groans¹²⁾ of old
women, the virginal palms of your daughters, or
with the palsied intercession of such a decayed dot-
tant¹³⁾ 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 de-
ceived: therefore, back to Rome, and prepare for
your execution: you are condemned, 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.

2 *G.* Come, my captain knows you not.

Men. I mean, thy general.

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

Men. Nay, but fellow, fellow, —

Enter CORIOLANUS and 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 guardant¹⁴⁾ cannot
office me from my son Coriolanus: guess, but by
my entertainment with him, if thou stand'st not i'the
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 moved to come
to thee; but being assured, none but myself could
move thee, I have been blown out of your 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 ac-
cess 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,¹⁵⁾ my remission lies
In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
In great forgetfulness shall poison, rather
Than pity note how much. — Therefore, be gone.
Mine ears against your suits are stronger, than
Your gates against my force. Yet, for I lov'd thee,¹⁶⁾
Take this along; I writ it for thy sake, [*Gives a Letter.*]
And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
I will not hear thee speak. — This man, Aufidius,
Was my beloved in Rome: yet thou behold'st — —
Auf. You keep a costant temper.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.]

1 *G.* Now, sir, is your name Menenius.

2 *G.* 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power: You
know the way home again.

1 *G.* Do you hear how we are shent¹⁷⁾ for keep-
ing your greatness back?

2 *G.* What cause, do you think, I have to swoon?

Men. I neither care for the world, nor your general: for such things as you, I can scarce think there's any, you are so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself,¹⁸) fears it not from another. Let your general do his worst. For you, be that you are, long; and your misery increase with your age! I say to you, as I was said to, Away! [*Exit.*]
 1 *G.* A noble fellow, I warrant him.
 2 *G.* The worthy fellow is our general: He is the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

The Tent of Coriolanus.

Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, and others.

Cor. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow Set down our host. — My partner in this action, You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly I have borne this business.¹⁹)

Auf. Only their ends You have respected; stopp'd your ears against The general suit of Rome; never admitted A 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, Loved me above the measure of a father; Nay, godded me, indeed. Their latest refuge Was to send him: for whose old love, I have (Though I 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 have yielded too: Fresh embassies, and suits, Nor from the state, nor private friends, hereafter Will I lend ear to. — Ha! what shout is this?

[*Shout within.*]
 Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow
 In the same time 'tis made? I will not. —

Enter, in Mourning Habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, leading young MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Attendants.

My wife comes foremost; then the honour'd mould Wherein this trunk was fram'd, and in her hand The grand-child to her blood. But, out, affection! All bond and privilege of nature, break! Let it be virtuous, to be obstinate. — What is that curt'sy worth? or those doves' 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 Volces 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.²⁰)

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 heaven,²¹) 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; [*Kneels.*]
 Of thy deep duty more impression show
 Than that of common sons.

Vol. O, stand up bless'd!
 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 beach²²)
 Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds
 Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun;
 Murd'ring impossibility, to make
 What cannot be, slight work.

Vol. Thou art my warrior;
 I help to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

Cor. The noble sister of Publicola,
 The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle,
 That's curd'd²³) by the frost from purest snow,
 And hangs on Dian's temple: Dear Valeria!

Vol. This is a poor epitome of yours,
 Which by the 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' the wars
 Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,²⁴)
 And saving those that eye thee!

Vol. Your knee, sirrah.
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 things, I have forsworn to grant, may never
 Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
 Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
 Again with Rome's mechanics: — Tell me not
 Wherein I seem unnatural: Desire not
 To allay my rages and revenges, with
 Your colder reasons.

Vol. O, no more, no more!
 You have 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 you fail in our request,²⁵) the blame
 May hang upon your hardness: therefore hear us.

Cor. Aufidius, and you Volces, 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 have led since thy exile. Think with thyself,
 How more unfortunate than all living women
 Are we come hither: since that thy sight, which should
 Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with
 comforts,

Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow;
 Making the mother, wife, and child, to see
 The son, the husband, and the father, tearing
 His country's bowels out. And to poor we,
 Thine enmity's most capital: thou barr'st us
 Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort
 That all but we enjoy: For how can we,
 Alas! how can we for our country pray,
 Whereto we are bound; together with thy victory,
 Whereto we are bound? Alack! or we must lose
 The country, our dear nurse; or else thy person,
 Our comfort in the country. We must find
 An evident calamity, though we had
 Our wish, which side should win: for either thou
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led

With manacles through our streets, or else
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin;
 And bear the palm, for having bravely shed
 Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
 I purpose not to wait on fortune, till
 These wars determine:²⁶) if I cannot persuade thee
 Rather to show a noble grace to both parts,
 Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
 March to assault thy country, than to tread
 (Trust to't, thou shalt not,) on thy mother's womb,
 That brought thee to this world.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
 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 am 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 have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour: No; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volces
 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 bless'd*
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 the ensuing age abhorr'd. Speak to me, son:
 Thou hast affected the fine strains²⁷) of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods;
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o'the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur²⁸) with a bolt
 That should 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 is no man in the world
 More bound to his mother; yet here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks.²⁹) Thou hast 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; An 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 petition³⁰) 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 his child
 Like him by chance: — Yet give us our despatch:
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
 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 am 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 have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour: No; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volces
 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 bless'd*
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 the ensuing age abhorr'd. Speak to me, son:
 Thou hast affected the fine strains²⁷) of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods;
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o'the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur²⁸) with a bolt
 That should 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 is no man in the world
 More bound to his mother; yet here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks.²⁹) Thou hast 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; An 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 petition³⁰) 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 his child
 Like him by chance: — Yet give us our despatch:
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
 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 am 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 have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour: No; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volces
 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 bless'd*
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 the ensuing age abhorr'd. Speak to me, son:
 Thou hast affected the fine strains²⁷) of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods;
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o'the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur²⁸) with a bolt
 That should 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 is no man in the world
 More bound to his mother; yet here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks.²⁹) Thou hast 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; An 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 petition³⁰) 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 his child
 Like him by chance: — Yet give us our despatch:
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
 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 am 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 have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour: No; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volces
 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 bless'd*
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 the ensuing age abhorr'd. Speak to me, son:
 Thou hast affected the fine strains²⁷) of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods;
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o'the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur²⁸) with a bolt
 That should 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 is no man in the world
 More bound to his mother; yet here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks.²⁹) Thou hast 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; An 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 petition³⁰) 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 his child
 Like him by chance: — Yet give us our despatch:
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
 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 am 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 have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour: No; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volces
 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 bless'd*
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 the ensuing age abhorr'd. Speak to me, son:
 Thou hast affected the fine strains²⁷) of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods;
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o'the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur²⁸) with a bolt
 That should 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 is no man in the world
 More bound to his mother; yet here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks.²⁹) Thou hast 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; An 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 petition³⁰) 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 his child
 Like him by chance: — Yet give us our despatch:
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

Vir. Ay, and on mine,
 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 am 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 have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

Vol. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volces whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour: No; our suit
 Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volces
 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 bless'd*
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 the ensuing age abhorr'd. Speak to me, son:
 Thou hast affected the fine strains²⁷) of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods;
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o'the air,
 And yet to charge thy sulphur²⁸) with a bolt
 That should 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 is no man in the world
 More bound to his mother; yet here he lets me prate,
 Like one i'the stocks.²⁹) Thou hast 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; An 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 petition³⁰) 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 his child
 Like him by chance: — Yet give us our despatch:
 I am hush'd until our city be afire,
 And then I'll speak a little.

What have you done? Behold, the heavens do ope,
 The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
 They laugh at. O my mother, mother! O!
 You have won a happy victory to Rome:
 But, for your son, — believe it, O, believe it,
 Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
 If not most mortal to him. But, let it come: —
 Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars,
 I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
 Were you in my stead, say,³¹) would you have heard
 A mother less? or granted less, Aufidius?

Auf. I was moved withal.

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 am glad, thou hast set thy mercy and thy
 honour

At difference in thee: out of that I'll work
 Myself a former fortune.³²) [*Aside.*]

[*The Ladies make signs to CORIOLANUS.*]
Cor. Ay, by and by;
 [*To VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, &c.*]

But we will drink together; and you shall bear
 A better witness back than words, which we,
 On like conditions, will have counter-seal'd.
 Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve
 To have a temple built you:³³) all the swords
 In Italy, and her confederate arms,
 Could not have made this peace. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Rome. A public Place.

Enter MENENIUS and SICINIUS.

Men. See you yond' coign o'the 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
 sentenced, and stay upon execution.³⁴)

Sic. Is't possible, that so short a time can alter
 the condition of a man?

Men. There is differency between a grub and a
 butterfly; yet your butterfly was a grub. This
 Marcus is grown from man to dragon: he has wings;
 he's more than a creeping thing.

Sic. He loved his mother dearly.

Men. So did he me: and he no more remembers
 his mother now, than an eight-year old horse. The
 tartness of his face sours ripe grapes. When he
 walks, he moves like an engine, and the ground
 shrinks before his treading. He is able to pierce
 a corslet with his eye; talks like a knell, and his
 hum is a battery. He sits in his state,³⁵) as a
 thing made for Alexander. What he bids be done,
 is finished with his bidding. He wants nothing of
 a god, but eternity, and a heaven to throne in.

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 banished him, we respected not
 them: and, he returning to break our necks, they
 respect not us.

Enter a Messenger.

Mess. 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?
Mess. Good news, good news; — The ladies have prevail'd,

The Voices are dislodg'd, and Marcius gone: A merrier day did never yet greet Rome, No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

Sic. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true? is it most certain?
Mess. 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 the gates. Why, hark you;
[Trumpets and Hautboys sounded, and Drums beaten, all together. Shouting also within.

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes, Tabors, and cymbals, and the shouting Romans, Make the sun dance. Hark you! [Shouting again.

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 have pray'd well to-day; This morning, for ten thousand of your throats I'd not had given a doit. Hark, how they joy!
[Shouting and Music.

Sic. First, the gods bless you for their tidings: next, Accept my thankfulness.

Mess. Sir, we have all Great cause to give great thanks.

Sic. They are near the city?
Mess. Almost at point to enter.

Sic. We will meet them, And help the joy. [Going.

Enter the Ladies, accompanied by Senators, Patricians, and People. They pass over the Stage.

1 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 Marcius, Repeat him with the welcome of his mother; Cry, — Welcome, ladies, welcome! —

All. Welcome, ladies!
Welcome! [A Flourish with Drums and Trumpets. [Exeunt.

SCENE V.

Antium. A public Place.

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, with Attendants.

Auf. Go tell the lords of the city, I am here: Deliver them this paper: having read it, Bid them repair to the market-place; where I, Even in theirs and in the commons' ears, Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse, The city ports by this hath enter'd, and Intends to appear before the people, hoping To purge himself with words: Despatch.
[Exeunt Attendants.

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 empoison'd, 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 I 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 free.

3 Con. Sir, his stoutness, 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 end 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, ³⁶⁾ as if I had been mercenary.

1 Con. So he did, my lord: The army marvell'd at it. And, in the 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 ³⁷⁾ 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, With 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.

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 to you?

Lords. 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 benefit of our levies, answering us With our own charge; ³⁸⁾ making a treaty, where There was a yielding; This admits no excuse.
Auf. He approaches, you shall hear him.

Enter CORIOLANUS, with Drums and Colours; a Crowd of Citizens with him.

Cor. Hail, lords! I am returned your soldier; No more infected with my country's love, Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting Under your great command. You are to know, That prosperously I have attempted, and With bloody passage, led your wars, even to The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home, Do more than counterpoise, a full third part, The charges of the action. We have made peace, With no less honour to the Antiates, Than shame to the Romans; and we here deliver, Subscrib'd by the consuls and patricians, Together with the seal o'the 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, Marcius.

Cor. Marcius!

Auf. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius; Dost thou think I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name Coriolanus in Corioli?

You lords and heads of the state, perfidiously He has betray'd your business, and given up, For certain drops of salt, ³⁹⁾ your city Rome (I say, your city,) to his wife and mother: Breaking his oath and resolution, like A twist of rotten silk; never admitting Counsel o'the 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 wondering each at other.

Cor. Hear'st thou, Mars?

Auf. Name not the god, thou boy of tears, —

Cor. Ha!

Auf. No more. ⁴⁰⁾

Cor. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart Too great for what contains it. Boy! O slave! — Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever I 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 on 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, Voices; men and lads, Stain all your edges on me. — Boy! False hound!

If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there, That like an eagle in a dove-cote, I Flutter'd your voices 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?

Con. Let him die for't. [Several speak at once.

Cit. [Speaking promiscuously.] Tear him to pieces, do it presently. He killed my son; — my daughter; — He killed my cousin Marcius; — He killed my father. —

2 Lord. Peace, ho; — no outrage; — peace. The man is noble, and his fame folds in This orb o'the earth. ⁴¹⁾ His last offence to us Shall have judicious hearing. — ⁴²⁾ Stand, Aufidius, And trouble not the peace.

Cor. O, that I had him, With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe, To use my lawful sword!

Auf. Insolent villain!

Con. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him.

[AUFIDIUS and the Conspirators draw, and kill CORIOLANUS, who falls, and AUFIDIUS stands on him.

Lords. Hold, hold, hold, hold.

Auf. My noble masters, 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 you shall know (as in this rage, Provok'd by him you cannot,) the great danger Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice, That he is thus cut off. Please it your 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. ⁴³⁾

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, And I am struck with sorrow. — Take him up: Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers; I'll be one. — Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully: Trail your steel pikes. — Though in this city he Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one, Which to this hour bewail the injury, Yet he shall have a noble memory. — ⁴⁴⁾

Assist.

[Exeunt, bearing the Body of CORIOLANUS. A Dead March sounded.