

Coriolanus

1.11

Enter Aufidius, bloody, with two or three Soldiers

AUFIDIUS The town is ta'en.

A SOLDIER

'Twill be delivered back on good condition.

AUFIDIUS Condition?

I would I were a Roman, for I cannot,
Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition? 5
What good condition can a treaty find
I'th' part that is at mercy? Five times, Martius,
I have fought with thee; so often hast thou beat me,
And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter
As often as we eat. By th' elements, 10
If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,
He's mine, or I am his! Mine emulation
Hath not that honour in't it had, for where
I thought to crush him in an equal force,
True sword to sword, I'll potch at him some way 15
Or wrath or craft may get him.

A SOLDIER

He's the devil.

AUFIDIUS

Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour, poisoned
With only suff'ring stain by him, for him
Shall fly out of itself. Nor sleep nor sanctuary,
Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol, 20
The prayers of priests nor times of sacrifice±±
Embargements all of fury±±shall lift up
Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst
My hate to Martius. Where I find him, were it
At home upon my brother's guard, even there, 25
Against the hospitable canon, would I
Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to th' city.
Learn how 'tis held, and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.

A SOLDIER

Will not you go?

AUFIDIUS

I am attended at the cypress grove. I pray you±± 30

'Tis south the city mills±±bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.

A SOLDIER

I shall, sir.

*Exeunt [Aufidius at one door, Soldiers at
another door]*