

Coriolanus

4.2

Enter the two tribunes, Sicinius and Brutus, with the Aedile

SICINIUS *(to the Aedile)*

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

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

SICINIUS *(to the Aedile)* Bid them home. 5
Say their great enemy is gone, and they
Stand in their ancient strength.

BRUTUS Dismiss them home.

Exit Aedile

Enter Volumnia, Virgilia, [weeping,] and Menenius

Here comes his mother.

SICINIUS Let's not meet her.

BRUTUS Why? 10

SICINIUS They say she's mad.

BRUTUS

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

VOLUMNIA

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

MENENIUS Peace, peace, be not so loud.

VOLUMNIA *(to the tribunes)*

If that I could for weeping, you should hear±± 15
Nay, and you shall hear some. Will you be gone?

VIRGILIA *(to the tribunes)*

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

SICINIUS *(to Volumnia)* Are you mankind?

VOLUMNIA

Ay, fool. Is that a shame? Note but this, fool:
Was not a man my father? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome

Than thou hast spoken words?

SICINIUS

O blesseÁd heavens!

VOLUMNIA

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.

25

SICINIUS

What then?

VIRGILIA

What then?

He'd make an end of thy posterity.

VOLUMNIA Bastards and all.

Good man, the wounds that he does bear for Rome! 30

MENENIUS Come, come, peace.

SICINIUS

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

BRUTUS

I would he had.

VOLUMNIA

`I would he had!' 'Twas thou incensed the rabble±± 35
Cats that can judge as fitly of his worth
As I can of those mysteries which heaven
Will not have earth to know.

BRUTUS (to Sicinius) Pray, let's go.

VOLUMNIA Now pray, sir, get you gone. 40

You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this:
As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son±±
This lady's husband here, this, do you see?±±
Whom you have banished does exceed you all. 45

BRUTUS

Well, well, we'll leave you.

SICINIUS

Why stay we to be baited

With one that wants her wits?

Exeunt tribunes

VOLUMNIA

Take my prayers with you.

I would the gods had nothing else to do
But to confirm my curses. Could I meet 'em
But once a day, it would unclog my heart 50

Of what lies heavy to't.

MENENIUS

You have told them home

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

VOLUMNIA

Anger's my meat, I sup upon myself,

And so shall starve with feeding.

(To Virgilia)

Come, let's go.

Leave this faint puling and lament as I do,

55

In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

Exeunt Volumnia and Virgilia

MENENIUS

Fie, fie, fie.

Exit