

Coriolanus

1.4

Enter Martius, Lartius with a drummer, [a trumpeter,] and colours, with captains and Soldiers [carrying scaling ladders], as before the city Corioles; to them a Messenger

MARTIUS

Yonder comes news. A wager they have met.

LARTIUS

My horse to yours, no.

MARTIUS

'Tis done.

LARTIUS

Agreed.

MARTIUS *(to the Messenger)*

Say, has our general met the enemy?

MESSENGER

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

LARTIUS

So, the good horse is mine.

MARTIUS

I'll buy him of you.

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LARTIUS

No, I'll nor sell nor give him. Lend you him I will,
For half a hundred years.

(To the trumpeter) Summon the town.

MARTIUS *(to the Messenger)*

How far off lie these armies?

MESSENGER

Within this mile and half.

MARTIUS

Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.

Now Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work, 10

That we with smoking swords may march from hence

To help our fielded friends.

(To the trumpeter) Come, blow thy blast.

They sound a parley. Enter two Senators, with others, on the walls of Corioles

(To the Senators) Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls?

FIRST SENATOR

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

That's lesser than a little.

Drum afar off

[To the Volscians] Hark, our drums 15
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 pinned with rushes.
They'll open of themselves.

Alarum far off

(To the Romans) Hark you, far off
There is Aufidius. List what work he makes 20
Amongst your cloven army.

[Exeunt Volscians from the walls]

MARTIUS O, they are at it!

LARTIUS

Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho!

[They prepare to assault the walls.]

Enter the army of the Volsces from the gates

MARTIUS

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. 25

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 Volsce,

And he shall feel mine edge.

*Alarum. The Romans are beat back [and exeunt] to
their trenches, [the Volsces following]*