

Coriolanus abbreviated

Act 4, Scene 1

Honor

Situation: Having listened to his mother, Coriolanus says “Must I with my base tongue give to my noble heart a lie that it must hear? Well, I will do’t.” Cominius asks him to “arm yourself to answer mildly.” Brutus notes that “being once annoyed, he cannot be reined again to temperance.” Coriolanus faces the plebeians. Sicinius says “we charge you a traitor of the people.” Proud Coriolanus cries “you common cry of curs, I banish you! For you, the city, thus I turn my back.” He prepares to leave Rome.

CORIOLANUS: Come, leave your tears. A brief farewell. The beast with many heads butts me away. Nay, mother, where is your earlier courage?

VIRGILIA: O heavens! O heavens!

VOLUMNIA: Now the typhus strikes all trades in Rome.

CORIOLANUS: What! I shall be loved when I am missed.

Coriolanus leaving Rome

**Resume your spirit, all. Cominius,
My wife, mother, farewell; droop not nor fuss,
I'll do well yet. Menenius, thy tears
Are venomous to thine eyes. Tell these sad
Women 'tis foolish to wail or have fears
For inevitable strokes; 'tis not bad;
Just laugh at 'em. My mother, your first son
Will exceed your dreams or be caught. Each one,
Mother, wife, noble friends, come with me; quell
Your sighs; go with me to the gate; restrain
Your tears. When I am gone, bid me farewell,
And smile. I pray you, come. While I remain
Above the ground, you shall hear from me still,
And ne'er I to vary from my proud will.**

VIRGILIA: O the gods!

MENENIUS: That's worthily 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.

CORIOLANUS: Give me thy hand. Come.