

Coriolanus abbreviated

Act 5, Scene 3.2

Mother to Son

Situation: At the camp of the Volscians, on the outskirts of Rome, Volumnia humbles the proud, strong, quick-tempered, self-assured Caius Martius Coriolanus.

VIRGILIA: Ay, and mine, who 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, and then I'll fight.

CORIOLANUS: I have sat too long.

He rises.

VOLUMNIA: Nay, go not from us thus. If it were so that our request did tend to save the Romans, thereby to destroy the Volscies whom you serve, you might condemn us as poisonous of your honor. No.

Volumnia to Coriolanus, No. 3

Our suit is to reconcile, where you goad
The Volscies to say "This grace we have showed,"
The Romans, "This we received," and each side
Give the all-hail to thee and cry "Be blest
For making up this peace!" Son, do not hide
Your eyes from me; of this be certain: lest
Thou conquer Rome, the benefit thou'll reap
Is a lasting, curst image that will keep
Your name hated through ensuing ages.
Speak to me, son. Thou hast used thy good wit
To grace the gods; you've been one who gauges
Honors by refinements. Think'st thou it
Honorable for a noble man to
Vindictively right wrongs? Daughter, speak you.