

Coriolanus abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 6

Chauvinism

Situation: Martius somehow escaped his captors, having been trapped inside the walls of the Volces' city of Corioles. Titus Lartius had said "Thou art lost, Martius. Thou wast a soldier." An injured Martius returns to Rome, while Lartius holds "Corioles in the name of Rome." Martius secures permission from Cominius to form a small group of soldiers and to re-attack the Volces.

MARTIUS: I do beseech you that you directly set me against Aufidius and his Antiates.

COMINIUS: Take your choice of those that best can aid your action.

Martius to Soldiers

I'll choose those most willing, if any such
Be here, though it a sin to doubt, who much
Love this blood you see here smeared; if any
Think brave death outweighs bad life; fear less for
His person than an ill report; thinks his country
Is dearer than himself, let him alone, or
Others so minded, if more than one sees
Fit to follow me against the Volces.
The hard shield of Aufidius is more
Than any soldier can bear. This is when
I must select, though my thanks to all. Four
Shall quickly draw out my command, those men
Best inclined. The rest shall serve requests made
By other men, orders to be obeyed.

COMINIUS: March on, my fellows, live up to these appearances, and you shall share in all with us.