

## Coriolanus, Friendship, and Politics

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*The Shakespearean play Coriolanus is based on the real-life Roman leader Caius Marcius, who leads his troops to victory against the Volscian city of Corioles. Using Shakespeare's tragedy as the primary source for my analysis, I argue that the poem recited by the Volcan general Tullus Aufidius (4.5. 1473-74), Coriolanus's rival, reflects the essential characteristics of friendship as defined in the classical world. In this text, friendship, a key element in politics, is connected to the theme of sponsorship. To analyze the theme of friendship in this play, I researched scholarly resources related to both classical and contemporary perspectives of friendship. I conclude that Aufidius's speech connotes friendship through flattery, frankness, and virtuous conduct.*