

УИЛЪЯМ ШЕКСПИР

MEASURE FOR
MEASURE

Уильям Шекспир
Measure for Measure

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Содержание

SCENE: Vienna	6
ACT I. SCENE I. The DUKE'S palace	6
SCENE II. A street	8
SCENE III. A monastery	13
SCENE IV. A nunnery	14
ACT II. Scene I. A hall in ANGELO'S house	17
SCENE II. Another room in ANGELO'S house	20
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	21

William Shakespeare

Measure for Measure

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

VINCENTIO, the Duke
ANGELO, the Deputy
ESCALUS, an ancient Lord
CLAUDIO, a young gentleman
LUCIO, a fantastic
Two other like Gentlemen
VARRIUS, a gentleman, servant to the Duke
PROVOST
THOMAS, friar
PETER, friar
A JUSTICE
ELBOW, a simple constable
FROTH, a foolish gentleman
POMPEY, a clown and servant to Mistress Overdone
ABHORSON, an executioner
BARNARDINE, a dissolute prisoner
ISABELLA, sister to Claudio
MARIANA, betrothed to Angelo
JULIET, beloved of Claudio
FRANCISCA, a nun
MISTRESS OVERDONE, a bawd Lords, Officers, Citizens, Boy, and Attendants

SCENE: Vienna

ACT I. SCENE I. The DUKE'S palace

Enter DUKE, ESCALUS, LORDS, and ATTENDANTS

DUKE. Escalus!

ESCALUS. My lord.

DUKE. Of government the properties to unfold
Would seem in me t' affect speech and discourse,
Since I am put to know that your own science
Exceeds, in that, the lists of all advice
My strength can give you; then no more remains
But that to your sufficiency- as your worth is able-
And let them work. The nature of our people,
Our city's institutions, and the terms
For common justice, y'are as pregnant in
As art and practice hath enriched any
That we remember. There is our commission,
From which we would not have you warp. Call hither,
I say, bid come before us, Angelo. Exit an ATTENDANT
What figure of us think you he will bear?
For you must know we have with special soul
Elected him our absence to supply;
Lent him our terror, dress'd him with our love,
And given his deputation all the organs
Of our own power. What think you of it?
ESCALUS. If any in Vienna be of worth
To undergo such ample grace and honour,
It is Lord Angelo.

Enter ANGELO

DUKE. Look where he comes.

ANGELO. Always obedient to your Grace's will,
I come to know your pleasure.

DUKE. Angelo,
There is a kind of character in thy life
That to th' observer doth thy history
Fully unfold. Thyself and thy belongings
Are not thine own so proper as to waste
Thyself upon thy virtues, they on thee.
Heaven doth with us as we with torches do,
Not light them for themselves; for if our virtues
Did not go forth of us, 'twere all alike
As if we had them not. Spirits are not finely touch'd
But to fine issues; nor Nature never lends

The smallest scruple of her excellence
But, like a thrifty goddess, she determines
Herself the glory of a creditor,
Both thanks and use. But I do bend my speech
To one that can my part in him advertise.
Hold, therefore, Angelo-
In our remove be thou at full ourself;
Mortality and mercy in Vienna
Live in thy tongue and heart. Old Escalus,
Though first in question, is thy secondary.
Take thy commission.

ANGELO. Now, good my lord,
Let there be some more test made of my metal,
Before so noble and so great a figure
Be stamp'd upon it.

DUKE. No more evasion!
We have with a leaven'd and prepared choice
Proceeded to you; therefore take your honours.
Our haste from hence is of so quick condition
That it prefers itself, and leaves unquestion'd
Matters of needful value. We shall write to you,
As time and our concernings shall importune,
How it goes with us, and do look to know
What doth befall you here. So, fare you well.
To th' hopeful execution do I leave you
Of your commissions.

ANGELO. Yet give leave, my lord,
That we may bring you something on the way.

DUKE. My haste may not admit it;
Nor need you, on mine honour, have to do
With any scruple: your scope is as mine own,
So to enforce or qualify the laws
As to your soul seems good. Give me your hand;
I'll privily away. I love the people,
But do not like to stage me to their eyes;
Though it do well, I do not relish well
Their loud applause and Aves vehement;
Nor do I think the man of safe discretion
That does affect it. Once more, fare you well.

ANGELO. The heavens give safety to your purposes!

ESCALUS. Lead forth and bring you back in happiness!

DUKE. I thank you. Fare you well. Exit

ESCALUS. I shall desire you, sir, to give me leave
To have free speech with you; and it concerns me
To look into the bottom of my place:
A pow'r I have, but of what strength and nature
I am not yet instructed.

ANGELO. 'Tis so with me. Let us withdraw together,
And we may soon our satisfaction have

Touching that point.
ESCALUS. I'll wait upon your honour. Exeunt

SCENE II. A street

Enter Lucio and two other GENTLEMEN

LUCIO. If the Duke, with the other dukes, come not to
composition
with the King of Hungary, why then all the dukes fall upon
the
King.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of
Hungary's!

SECOND GENTLEMAN. Amen.

LUCIO. Thou conclud'st like the sanctimonious pirate that went
to
sea with the Ten Commandments, but scrap'd one out of the
table.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. 'Thou shalt not steal'?

LUCIO. Ay, that he raz'd.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. Why, 'twas a commandment to command the
captain
and all the rest from their functions: they put forth to
steal.

There's not a soldier of us all that, in the thanksgiving
before
meat, do relish the petition well that prays for peace.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. I never heard any soldier dislike it.

LUCIO. I believe thee; for I think thou never wast where grace
was
said.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. No? A dozen times at least.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. What, in metre?

LUCIO. In any proportion or in any language.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. I think, or in any religion.

LUCIO. Ay, why not? Grace is grace, despite of all controversy;
as,
for example, thou thyself art a wicked villain, despite of
all
grace.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. Well, there went but a pair of shears between
us.

LUCIO. I grant; as there may between the lists and the velvet.
Thou art the list.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. And thou the velvet; thou art good velvet;
thou'rt
a three-pil'd piece, I warrant thee. I had as lief be a list

of
an English kersey as be pil'd, as thou art pil'd, for a
French
velvet. Do I speak feelingly now?
LUCIO. I think thou dost; and, indeed, with most painful
feeling of
thy speech. I will, out of thine own confession, learn to
begin
thy health; but, whilst I live, forget to drink after thee.
FIRST GENTLEMAN. I think I have done myself wrong, have I not?
SECOND GENTLEMAN. Yes, that thou hast, whether thou art
tainted
or
free.

Enter MISTRESS OVERDONE

LUCIO. Behold, behold, where Madam Mitigation comes! I have
purchas'd as many diseases under her roof as come to-
SECOND GENTLEMAN. To what, I pray?
FIRST GENTLEMAN. Judge.
SECOND GENTLEMAN. To three thousand dolours a year.
FIRST GENTLEMAN. Ay, and more.
LUCIO. A French crown more.
FIRST GENTLEMAN. Thou art always figuring diseases in me, but
thou
art full of error; I am sound.
LUCIO. Nay, not, as one would say, healthy; but so sound as
things
that are hollow: thy bones are hollow; impiety has made a
feast
of thee.
FIRST GENTLEMAN. How now! which of your hips has the most
profound
sciatica?
MRS. OVERDONE. Well, well! there's one yonder arrested and
carried
to prison was worth five thousand of you all.
FIRST GENTLEMAN. Who's that, I pray thee?
MRS. OVERDONE. Marry, sir, that's Claudio, Signior Claudio.
FIRST GENTLEMAN. Claudio to prison? 'Tis not so.
MRS. OVERDONE. Nay, but I know 'tis so: I saw him arrested; saw
him
carried away; and, which is more, within these three days his
head to be chopp'd off.
LUCIO. But, after all this fooling, I would not have it so. Art
thou sure of this?
MRS. OVERDONE. I am too sure of it; and it is for getting Madam
Julietta with child.

LUCIO. Believe me, this may be; he promis'd to meet me two hours

since, and he was ever precise in promise-keeping.

SECOND GENTLEMAN. Besides, you know, it draws something near to the

speech we had to such a purpose.

FIRST GENTLEMAN. But most of all agreeing with the proclamation.

LUCIO. Away; let's go learn the truth of it.

Exeunt Lucio and GENTLEMEN

MRS. OVERDONE. Thus, what with the war, what with the sweat, what

with the gallows, and what with poverty, I am custom-shrunk.

Enter POMPEY

How now! what's the news with you?

POMPEY. Yonder man is carried to prison.

MRS. OVERDONE. Well, what has he done?

POMPEY. A woman.

MRS. OVERDONE. But what's his offence?

POMPEY. Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.

MRS. OVERDONE. What! is there a maid with child by him?

POMPEY. No; but there's a woman with maid by him. You have not heard of the proclamation, have you?

MRS. OVERDONE. What proclamation, man?

POMPEY. All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be pluck'd down.

MRS. OVERDONE. And what shall become of those in the city?

POMPEY. They shall stand for seed; they had gone down too, but that

a wise burgher put in for them.

MRS. OVERDONE. But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be

pull'd down?

POMPEY. To the ground, mistress.

MRS. OVERDONE. Why, here's a change indeed in the commonwealth!

What shall become of me?

POMPEY. Come, fear not you: good counsellors lack no clients.

Though you change your place you need not change your trade; I'll

be your tapster still. Courage, there will be pity taken on you;

you that have worn your eyes almost out in the service, you will

be considered.

MRS. OVERDONE. What's to do here, Thomas Tapster? Let's withdraw.

POMPEY. Here comes Signior Claudio, led by the provost to prison;

and there's Madam Juliet. Exeunt

Enter PROVOST, CLAUDIO, JULIET, and OFFICERS; LUCIO following

CLAUDIO. Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to th' world?

Bear me to prison, where I am committed.

PROVOST. I do it not in evil disposition,

But from Lord Angelo by special charge.

CLAUDIO. Thus can the demigod Authority

Make us pay down for our offence by weight

The words of heaven: on whom it will, it will;

On whom it will not, so; yet still 'tis just.

LUCIO. Why, how now, Claudio, whence comes this restraint?

CLAUDIO. From too much liberty, my Lucio, liberty;

As surfeit is the father of much fast,

So every scope by the immoderate use

Turns to restraint. Our natures do pursue,

Like rats that ravin down their proper bane,

A thirsty evil; and when we drink we die.

LUCIO. If I could speak so wisely under an arrest, I would send for

certain of my creditors; and yet, to say the truth, I had as lief

have the foppery of freedom as the morality of imprisonment.

What's thy offence, Claudio?

CLAUDIO. What but to speak of would offend again.

LUCIO. What, is't murder?

CLAUDIO. No.

LUCIO. Lechery?

CLAUDIO. Call it so.

PROVOST. Away, sir; you must go.

CLAUDIO. One word, good friend. Lucio, a word with you.

LUCIO. A hundred, if they'll do you any good. Is lechery so look'd

after?

CLAUDIO. Thus stands it with me: upon a true contract

I got possession of Julietta's bed.

You know the lady; she is fast my wife,

Save that we do the denunciation lack

Of outward order; this we came not to,

Only for propagation of a dow'r
Remaining in the coffer of her friends.
From whom we thought it meet to hide our love
Till time had made them for us. But it chances
The stealth of our most mutual entertainment,
With character too gross, is writ on Juliet.

LUCIO. With child, perhaps?

CLAUDIO. Unhappily, even so.

And the new deputy now for the Duke-
Whether it be the fault and glimpse of newness,
Or whether that the body public be
A horse whereon the governor doth ride,
Who, newly in the seat, that it may know
He can command, lets it straight feel the spur;
Whether the tyranny be in his place,
Or in his eminence that fills it up,
I stagger in. But this new governor
Awakes me all the enrolled penalties
Which have, like unscour'd armour, hung by th' wall
So long that nineteen zodiacs have gone round
And none of them been worn; and, for a name,
Now puts the drowsy and neglected act
Freshly on me. 'Tis surely for a name.

LUCIO. I warrant it is; and thy head stands so tickle on thy
shoulders that a milkmaid, if she be in love, may sigh it
off.

Send after the Duke, and appeal to him.

CLAUDIO. I have done so, but he's not to be found.

I prithee, Lucio, do me this kind service:
This day my sister should the cloister enter,
And there receive her approbation;
Acquaint her with the danger of my state;
Implore her, in my voice, that she make friends
To the strict deputy; bid herself assay him.
I have great hope in that; for in her youth
There is a prone and speechless dialect
Such as move men; beside, she hath prosperous art
When she will play with reason and discourse,
And well she can persuade.

LUCIO. I pray she may; as well for the encouragement of the
like,

which else would stand under grievous imposition, as for the
enjoying of thy life, who I would be sorry should be thus
foolishly lost at a game of tick-tack. I'll to her.

CLAUDIO. I thank you, good friend Lucio.

LUCIO. Within two hours.

CLAUDIO. Come, officer, away. Exeunt

SCENE III. A monastery

Enter DUKE and FRIAR THOMAS

DUKE. No, holy father; throw away that thought;
Believe not that the dribbling dart of love
Can pierce a complete bosom. Why I desire thee
To give me secret harbour hath a purpose
More grave and wrinkled than the aims and ends
Of burning youth.

FRIAR. May your Grace speak of it?

DUKE. My holy sir, none better knows than you
How I have ever lov'd the life removed,
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies
Where youth, and cost, a witless bravery keeps.
I have deliver'd to Lord Angelo,
A man of stricture and firm abstinence,
My absolute power and place here in Vienna,
And he supposes me travell'd to Poland;
For so I have strew'd it in the common ear,
And so it is received. Now, pious sir,
You will demand of me why I do this.

FRIAR. Gladly, my lord.

DUKE. We have strict statutes and most biting laws,
The needful bits and curbs to headstrong steeds,
Which for this fourteen years we have let slip;
Even like an o'ergrown lion in a cave,
That goes not out to prey. Now, as fond fathers,
Having bound up the threat'ning twigs of birch,
Only to stick it in their children's sight
For terror, not to use, in time the rod
Becomes more mock'd than fear'd; so our decrees,
Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead;
And liberty plucks justice by the nose;
The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
Goes all decorum.

FRIAR. It rested in your Grace
To unloose this tied-up justice when you pleas'd;
And it in you more dreadful would have seem'd
Than in Lord Angelo.

DUKE. I do fear, too dreadful.
Sith 'twas my fault to give the people scope,
'Twould be my tyranny to strike and gall them
For what I bid them do; for we bid this be done,
When evil deeds have their permissive pass
And not the punishment. Therefore, indeed, my father,
I have on Angelo impos'd the office;
Who may, in th' ambush of my name, strike home,

And yet my nature never in the fight
To do in slander. And to behold his sway,
I will, as 'twere a brother of your order,
Visit both prince and people. Therefore, I prithee,
Supply me with the habit, and instruct me
How I may formally in person bear me
Like a true friar. Moe reasons for this action
At our more leisure shall I render you.
Only, this one: Lord Angelo is precise;
Stands at a guard with envy; scarce confesses
That his blood flows, or that his appetite
Is more to bread than stone. Hence shall we see,
If power change purpose, what our seemers be. Exeunt

SCENE IV. A nunnery

Enter ISABELLA and FRANCISCA

ISABELLA. And have you nuns no farther privileges?
FRANCISCA. Are not these large enough?
ISABELLA. Yes, truly; I speak not as desiring more,
But rather wishing a more strict restraint
Upon the sisterhood, the votarists of Saint Clare.
LUCIO. [Within] Ho! Peace be in this place!
ISABELLA. Who's that which calls?
FRANCISCA. It is a man's voice. Gentle Isabella,
Turn you the key, and know his business of him:
You may, I may not; you are yet unsworn;
When you have vow'd, you must not speak with men
But in the presence of the prioress;
Then, if you speak, you must not show your face,
Or, if you show your face, you must not speak.
He calls again; I pray you answer him. Exit FRANCISCA
ISABELLA. Peace and prosperity! Who is't that calls?

Enter LUCIO

LUCIO. Hail, virgin, if you be, as those cheek-roses
Proclaim you are no less. Can you so stead me
As bring me to the sight of Isabella,
A novice of this place, and the fair sister
To her unhappy brother Claudio?
ISABELLA. Why her 'unhappy brother'? Let me ask
The rather, for I now must make you know
I am that Isabella, and his sister.
LUCIO. Gentle and fair, your brother kindly greets you.
Not to be weary with you, he's in prison.
ISABELLA. Woe me! For what?

LUCIO. For that which, if myself might be his judge,
He should receive his punishment in thanks:
He hath got his friend with child.

ISABELLA. Sir, make me not your story.

LUCIO. It is true.

I would not- though 'tis my familiar sin
With maids to seem the lapwing, and to jest,
Tongue far from heart- play with all virgins so:
I hold you as a thing enskied and sainted,
By your renouncement an immortal spirit,
And to be talk'd with in sincerity,
As with a saint.

ISABELLA. You do blaspheme the good in mocking me.

LUCIO. Do not believe it. Fewness and truth, 'tis thus:

Your brother and his lover have embrac'd.
As those that feed grow full, as blossoming time
That from the seedness the bare fallow brings
To teeming foison, even so her plenteous womb
Expresseth his full tilth and husbandry.

ISABELLA. Some one with child by him? My cousin Juliet?

LUCIO. Is she your cousin?

ISABELLA. Adoptedly, as school-maids change their names
By vain though apt affection.

LUCIO. She it is.

ISABELLA. O, let him marry her!

LUCIO. This is the point.

The Duke is very strangely gone from hence;
Bore many gentlemen, myself being one,
In hand, and hope of action; but we do learn,
By those that know the very nerves of state,
His givings-out were of an infinite distance
From his true-meant design. Upon his place,
And with full line of his authority,
Governs Lord Angelo, a man whose blood
Is very snow-broth, one who never feels
The wanton stings and motions of the sense,
But doth rebate and blunt his natural edge
With profits of the mind, study and fast.
He- to give fear to use and liberty,
Which have for long run by the hideous law,
As mice by lions- hath pick'd out an act
Under whose heavy sense your brother's life
Falls into forfeit; he arrests him on it,
And follows close the rigour of the statute
To make him an example. All hope is gone,
Unless you have the grace by your fair prayer
To soften Angelo. And that's my pith of business
'Twixt you and your poor brother.

ISABELLA. Doth he so seek his life?

LUCIO. Has censur'd him

Already, and, as I hear, the Provost hath
A warrant for his execution.

ISABELLA. Alas! what poor ability's in me
To do him good?

LUCIO. Assay the pow'r you have.

ISABELLA. My power, alas, I doubt!

LUCIO. Our doubts are traitors,
And make us lose the good we oft might win
By fearing to attempt. Go to Lord Angelo,
And let him learn to know, when maidens sue,
Men give like gods; but when they weep and kneel,
All their petitions are as freely theirs
As they themselves would owe them.

ISABELLA. I'll see what I can do.

LUCIO. But speedily.

ISABELLA. I will about it straight;
No longer staying but to give the Mother
Notice of my affair. I humbly thank you.
Commend me to my brother; soon at night
I'll send him certain word of my success.

LUCIO. I take my leave of you.

ISABELLA. Good sir, adieu. Exeunt

ACT II. Scene I. A hall in ANGELO'S house

Enter ANGELO, ESCALUS, a JUSTICE, PROVOST, OFFICERS, and other

ATTENDANTS

ANGELO. We must not make a scarecrow of the law,
Setting it up to fear the birds of prey,
And let it keep one shape till custom make it
Their perch, and not their terror.

ESCALUS. Ay, but yet
Let us be keen, and rather cut a little
Than fall and bruise to death. Alas! this gentleman,
Whom I would save, had a most noble father.
Let but your honour know,
Whom I believe to be most strait in virtue,
That, in the working of your own affections,
Had time coher'd with place, or place with wishing,
Or that the resolute acting of our blood
Could have attain'd th' effect of your own purpose
Whether you had not sometime in your life
Err'd in this point which now you censure him,
And pull'd the law upon you.

ANGELO. 'Tis one thing to be tempted, Escalus,
Another thing to fall. I not deny
The jury, passing on the prisoner's life,
May in the sworn twelve have a thief or two
Guiltier than him they try. What's open made to justice,
That justice seizes. What knows the laws
That thieves do pass on thieves? 'Tis very pregnant,
The jewel that we find, we stoop and take't,
Because we see it; but what we do not see
We tread upon, and never think of it.
You may not so extenuate his offence
For I have had such faults; but rather tell me,
When I, that censure him, do so offend,
Let mine own judgment pattern out my death,
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

ESCALUS. Be it as your wisdom will.

ANGELO. Where is the Provost?

PROVOST. Here, if it like your honour.

ANGELO. See that Claudio

Be executed by nine to-morrow morning;
Bring him his confessor; let him be prepar'd;
For that's the utmost of his pilgrimage. Exit PROVOST

ESCALUS. [Aside] Well, heaven forgive him! and forgive us all!
Some rise by sin, and some by virtue fall;
Some run from breaks of ice, and answer none,
And some condemned for a fault alone.

Enter ELBOW and OFFICERS with FROTH and POMPEY

ELBOW. Come, bring them away; if these be good people in a commonweal that do nothing but use their abuses in common houses, I know no law; bring them away. ANGELO. How now, sir! What's your name, and what's the matter? ELBOW. If it please your honour, I am the poor Duke's constable, and my name is Elbow; I do lean upon justice, sir, and do bring in here before your good honour two notorious benefactors. ANGELO. Benefactors! Well- what benefactors are they? Are they not malefactors? ELBOW. If it please your honour, I know not well what they are; but precise villains they are, that I am sure of, and void of all profanation in the world that good Christians ought to have. ESCALUS. This comes off well; here's a wise officer. ANGELO. Go to; what quality are they of? Elbow is your name? Why dost thou not speak, Elbow? POMPEY. He cannot, sir; he's out at elbow. ANGELO. What are you, sir? ELBOW. He, sir? A tapster, sir; parcel-bawd; one that serves a bad woman; whose house, sir, was, as they say, pluck'd down in the suburbs; and now she professes a hot-house, which, I think, is a very ill house too. ESCALUS. How know you that? ELBOW. My Wife, sir, whom I detest before heaven and your honour- ESCALUS. How! thy wife! ELBOW. Ay, sir; whom I thank heaven, is an honest woman- ESCALUS. Dost thou detest her therefore? ELBOW. I say, sir, I will detest myself also, as well as she, that this house, if it be not a bawd's house, it is pity of her life, for it is a naughty house. ESCALUS. How dost thou know that, constable? ELBOW. Marry, sir, by my wife; who, if she had been a woman cardinally given, might have been accus'd in fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness there. ESCALUS. By the woman's means? ELBOW. Ay, sir, by Mistress Overdone's means; but as she spit in his face, so she defied him. POMPEY. Sir, if it please your honour, this is not so. ELBOW. Prove it before these varlets here, thou honourable man, prove it. ESCALUS. Do you hear how he misplaces? POMPEY. Sir, she came in great with child; and longing, saving your honour's reverence, for stew'd prunes. Sir, we had but two in the house, which at that very distant time stood, as it were, in a fruit dish, a dish of some three pence; your honours have seen such dishes; they are not China dishes, but very good dishes. ESCALUS. Go to, go to; no matter for the dish, sir. POMPEY. No, indeed, sir, not of a pin; you are therein in the right; but to the point. As I say, this Mistress Elbow, being, as I say, with child, and being great-bellied, and longing, as I said, for prunes; and having but two in the dish, as I said, Master Froth here, this very man, having eaten the rest, as I said, and, as I say, paying for them very honestly; for, as you know, Master Froth, I could not give you three pence again- FROTH. No, indeed. POMPEY. Very well; you being then, if you be rememb'red, cracking the stones of the foresaid prunes- FROTH. Ay, so I did indeed. POMPEY. Why, very well; I telling you then, if you be rememb'red, that such a one and such a one were past cure of the thing you wot of, unless they kept very good diet, as I told you- FROTH. All this is true. POMPEY. Why, very well then- ESCALUS. Come, you are a tedious fool. To the purpose: what was done to Elbow's wife that he hath cause to complain of? Come me to what was done to her. POMPEY. Sir, your honour cannot come to that yet. ESCALUS. No, sir, nor I mean it not. POMPEY. Sir, but you shall come to it, by your honour's leave. And, I beseech you, look into Master Froth here, sir, a man of fourscore pound a year; whose father died at Hallowmas- was't not at Hallowmas, Master Froth? FROTH. All-hallond eve. POMPEY. Why, very well; I hope here be truths. He, sir, sitting, as I say, in a lower chair, sir; 'twas in the Bunch of Grapes, where, indeed, you have a delight to sit, have you not? FROTH. I have so; because it is an open room, and good for winter. POMPEY. Why, very well then; I hope here be truths. ANGELO. This will last out a night in Russia, When nights are longest there; I'll take my leave, And leave you to the hearing of the cause, Hoping you'll find good cause to whip them all. ESCALUS. I think no less. Good morrow to your lordship. [Exit ANGELO] Now, sir, come on; what was done to Elbow's wife, once more? POMPEY. Once? – sir. There was nothing done to her once. ELBOW. I beseech you, sir, ask him what this man did to my wife. POMPEY. I beseech your honour, ask me. ESCALUS. Well, sir, what did this gentleman do to her? POMPEY. I beseech you, sir, look in this gentleman's face. Good Master Froth, look upon

his honour; 'tis for a good purpose. Doth your honour mark his face? ESCALUS. Ay, sir, very well. POMPEY. Nay, I beseech you, mark it well. ESCALUS. Well, I do so. POMPEY. Doth your honour see any harm in his face? ESCALUS. Why, no. POMPEY. I'll be suppos'd upon a book his face is the worst thing about him. Good then; if his face be the worst thing about him, how could Master Froth do the constable's wife any harm? I would know that of your honour. ESCALUS. He's in the right, constable; what say you to it? ELBOW. First, an it like you, the house is a respected house; next, this is a respected fellow; and his mistress is a respected woman. POMPEY. By this hand, sir, his wife is a more respected person than any of us all. ELBOW. Varlet, thou liest; thou liest, wicket varlet; the time is yet to come that she was ever respected with man, woman, or child. POMPEY. Sir, she was respected with him before he married with her. ESCALUS. Which is the wiser here, Justice or Iniquity? Is this true? ELBOW. O thou caitiff! O thou varlet! O thou wicked Hannibal! I respected with her before I was married to her! If ever I was respected with her, or she with me, let not your worship think me the poor Duke's officer. Prove this, thou wicked Hannibal, or I'll have mine action of batt'ry on thee. ESCALUS. If he took you a box o' th' ear, you might have your action of slander too. ELBOW. Marry, I thank your good worship for it. What is't your worship's pleasure I shall do with this wicked caitiff? ESCALUS. Truly, officer, because he hath some offences in him that thou wouldst discover if thou couldst, let him continue in his courses till thou know'st what they are. ELBOW. Marry, I thank your worship for it. Thou seest, thou wicked varlet, now, what's come upon thee: thou art to continue now, thou varlet; thou art to continue. ESCALUS. Where were you born, friend? FROTH. Here in Vienna, sir. ESCALUS. Are you of fourscore pounds a year? FROTH. Yes, an't please you, sir. ESCALUS. So. What trade are you of, sir? POMPEY. A tapster, a poor widow's tapster. ESCALUS. Your mistress' name? POMPEY. Mistress Overdone. ESCALUS. Hath she had any more than one husband? POMPEY. Nine, sir; Overdone by the last. ESCALUS. Nine! Come hither to me, Master Froth. Master Froth, I would not have you acquainted with tapsters: they will draw you, Master Froth, and you will hang them. Get you gone, and let me hear no more of you. FROTH. I thank your worship. For mine own part, I never come into any room in a taphouse but I am drawn in. ESCALUS. Well, no more of it, Master Froth; farewell. [Exit FROTH] Come you hither to me, Master Tapster; what's your name, Master Tapster? POMPEY. Pompey. ESCALUS. What else? POMPEY. Bum, sir. ESCALUS. Troth, and your bum is the greatest thing about you; so that, in the beastliest sense, you are Pompey the Great. Pompey, you are partly a bawd, Pompey, howsoever you colour it in being a tapster. Are you not? Come, tell me true; it shall be the better for you. POMPEY. Truly, sir, I am a poor fellow that would live. ESCALUS. How would you live, Pompey- by being a bawd? What do you think of the trade, Pompey? Is it a lawful trade? POMPEY. If the law would allow it, sir. ESCALUS. But the law will not allow it, Pompey; nor it shall not be allowed in Vienna. POMPEY. Does your worship mean to geld and splay all the youth of the city? ESCALUS. No, Pompey. POMPEY. Truly, sir, in my poor opinion, they will to't then. If your worship will take order for the drabs and the knaves, you need not to fear the bawds. ESCALUS. There is pretty orders beginning, I can tell you: but it is but heading and hanging. POMPEY. If you head and hang all that offend that way but for ten year together, you'll be glad to give out a commission for more heads; if this law hold in Vienna ten year, I'll rent the fairest house in it, after threepence a bay. If you live to see this come to pass, say Pompey told you so. ESCALUS. Thank you, good Pompey; and, in requital of your prophecy, hark you: I advise you, let me not find you before me again upon any complaint whatsoever- no, not for dwelling where you do; if I do, Pompey, I shall beat you to your tent, and prove a shrewd Caesar to you; in plain dealing, Pompey, I shall have you whipt. So for this time, Pompey, fare you well. POMPEY. I thank your worship for your good counsel; [Aside] but I shall follow it as the flesh and fortune shall better determine. Whip me? No, no; let carman whip his jade; The valiant heart's not whipt out of his trade. Exit ESCALUS. Come hither to me, Master Elbow; come hither, Master Constable. How long have you been in this place of constable? ELBOW. Seven year and a half, sir. ESCALUS. I thought, by the readiness in the office, you had continued in it some

time. You say seven years together? ELBOW. And a half, sir. ESCALUS. Alas, it hath been great pains to you! They do you wrong to put you so oft upon't. Are there not men in your ward sufficient to serve it? ELBOW. Faith, sir, few of any wit in such matters; as they are chosen, they are glad to choose me for them; I do it for some piece of money, and go through with all. ESCALUS. Look you, bring me in the names of some six or seven, the most sufficient of your parish. ELBOW. To your worship's house, sir? ESCALUS. To my house. Fare you well. [Exit ELBOW] What's o'clock, think you? JUSTICE. Eleven, sir. ESCALUS. I pray you home to dinner with me. JUSTICE. I humbly thank you. ESCALUS. It grieves me for the death of Claudio; But there's no remedy. JUSTICE. Lord Angelo is severe. ESCALUS. It is but needful: Mercy is not itself that oft looks so; Pardon is still the nurse of second woe. But yet, poor Claudio! There is no remedy. Come, sir. Exeunt

SCENE II. Another room in ANGELO'S house

Enter PROVOST and a SERVANT

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