

# УИЛЪЯМ ШЕКСПИР

MEASURE FOR  
MEASURE

**Уильям Шекспир**  
**Measure for Measure**

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*Measure for Measure:*

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# 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'ed, 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'ed, 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 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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