



# Project Madurai

மதுரை தமிழ் இலக்கிய  
மின்தொகுப்புத் திட்டம்



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"தன்னுயிரைப்போல மன்னுயிரை நினை"  
தமிழாக்கம்: பண்டித நடேச சாஸ்திரியார்

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Measure for Measure (a tale from Shakespeare)  
Tamil Prose Translation by Pandit Natesa Sastry  
(in Tamil, TSCII format)

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Etext in Tamil Script - TSCII format (v. 1.7)

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## "தன்னுயிரைப்போல மன்னுயிரை நினை" தமிழாக்கம்: பண்டித நடேச சாஸ்திரியார்

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in Tamil by Pandit S.M. Natesa Sastri, B.A.,  
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தன்னுயிரைப்போல மன்னுயிரை நினை.  
இஃது லண்டன் கதாசபை மெம்பர்,  
பண்டித நடேச சாஸ்திரியாரால் இயற்றப்பட்டது.

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## "தன்னுயிரைப்போல மன்னுயிரை நினை"

வியன்னா (Vienna) நகரத்தில் நற்குணமுள்ள அரசனொரு வனிருந்தான். சட்டம் ஒருவாறாயிருக்க, தன்னுயிரைப்போல மன்னுயிரைக் காக்கும் குணத்தை மேற்கொண்டு ஜனங்களுக்கு ஒருவித வருத்தமும் உண்டாகாதபடி செங்கோல் செலுத்தி வந்தான். ஆனது பற்றிப் பிரஜைகள் ஒவ்வொரு சமயத்தில் சட்டத்தை மீறும்படியாகவும் நேரிட்டுக்கொண்டிருந்தது. அதேசத்தில் கிரமமாய்க் கலியாணம் பண்ணிக்கொள்ளாமல் ஒரு பெண்ணுடன் ஒருவன் வாழ்வானேயானால் அவன் கொலை செய்யப்படுவான் என்ற ஓர் சட்டமிருந்தது; ஆயினும் அது எழுத்திலும்மட்டும் இருந்ததேயன்றி வழக்கத்தின்கீழ் வரவேயில்லை. அதனால் சில சமயங்களில் அக்கிரமமான கலியாணங்கள் நடந்ததையும், தான் நல்லவனாகவே யிருந்தும் ஜனங்கள் கெட்ட நடக்கை உடையவர்களாவதையும் அரசன் கண்டு, தான் கொஞ்ச காலம் தனது ராச்சியத்தை யாரிடமாவது ஒப்புவித்துத் தேசாந்தரம் போனால் தான் திரும்பிவருவதற்குள் எல்லாம் சீராக நடக்குமென்றெண்ணி அவ்விதமே செய்யத் தீர்மானித்தான்.

வியன்னா நகரத்தில் அஞ்சீலோ (Angelo) என்றொரு ஞானி இருந்தான். அவன் நற்குண நற்செய்கை யுள்ளவனென்றும் பரோபகாரியென்றும் பெயர் பெற்றிருந்தான். அரசன் அவனைத் தனக்குப் பதிலாக நியமித்துத் தான் போலாண்டு (Poland) தேசத்திற்குப் போவதாகச் சொல்லி ஊரைவிட்டுச்சென்றான். ஆனால் அவன் ஜனங்களுக்குச் சொன்னபடி தேசாந்தரம் போகவில்லை; பட்டணத்திற்கு வெளியே சென்று சந்நியாசி வேஷம் தரித்து, அன்றைய தினமே அதேசத்திற்குள் வந்து அஞ்சீலோ செலுத்தும் செங்கோலைத் தூர இருந்துகொண்டே கவனித்து வந்தான். இப்படி அவன் அஞ்சீலோவினிடம் அதிகாரம் ஒப்புவித்த சமயத்தில் கிளாடியோ (Claudio) என்னும் ஒரு வாலிபன் ஜூலியத் (Juliet) என்னும் ஒருபெண்ணை நியாயமாய்க் கலியாணம் செய்துகொள்ளாமல் தகப்பன் வீட்டிலிருந்தவளைச் சொல்லாமல் அழைத்து வந்துவிட்டான். அந்தப் பிசுக்குக்காக அவன் தலையை வாங்கிவிடும்படி அஞ்சீலோ என்னும் இராஜப்பிரதிநிதி தண்டனை விதித்துவிட்டான். எஸ்கேலஸ் (Escalus) என்றொரு

சீமான் எவ்வளவுதூரம் அந்த கிளாடியோவுக்காக வருத்தமெடுத்துக்கொண்டு பேசியும் அந்த இராஜப்பிரதிநிதி கேட்கவேயில்லை; இவ்விதமாய் ஒவ்வொருவரையும் விட்டுவந்தால் சட்டம் என்னத்திற்கென்றும், இந்த கிளாடியோவை அவசியம் சிரச்சேதம் பண்ணிவிட வேண்டுமென்றும் சிபார்சு செய்யவந்த ஒவ்வொருவரிடமும் அவன் சொல்லி மறுத்தான்.

அந்த கிளாடியோ என்னும் வாலிபனுக்கு லூஷியோ (Lucio) என்றொரு சிநேகிதன் இருந்தான். அவன் தன் சிநேகிதனைச் சிறைச்சாலையில் போய்ப் பார்த்தபொழுது கிளாடியோ அவனை நோக்கி, "அப்பா லூஷியோ! என் தங்கையாகிய இஸபெல்லாவை (Isabella) நீ அறிவாயா? அவள் காவித்துணி கட்டிக்கொண்டு மடத்திற்குத் தவசிப்பெண்ணாய்ப் போக உத்தேசித்திருக்கிறாள். அவள் நன்றாய்ப் பேசுவதில் வெகு கெட்டிக்காரி; நான் சொன்னதாய்ச் சொல்லி அஞ்சீலோவினிடம் சென்று என் விஷயமாய்ப் பேசச்சொல்லு. அவள் பேச்சின் அழகைக்கண்டு அரசன் ஒருகால் என்னை மன்னிப்பான்" என்றான்.

லூஷியோவும் தன் சிநேகிதன் தங்கையாகிய இஸபெல்லாவைத் தேடிக்கொண்டு மேற்சொன்ன மடத்திற்கு வந்து சேர்ந்தான். அப்பொழுது அவளும் தவசிப்பெண்ணாய் மாறுவதற்கு முன் தான் தெரிந்துகொள்ளவேண்டிய விஷயங்களை ஒரு முதிர்ந்த தவசியினிடமிருந்து கற்றுக்கொண்டிருந்தான். அம்மடத்தின் வாசலில் லூஷியோ என்பவன் வந்து நின்று "இந்த இடத்தில் எப்பொழுதும் சாந்தமூர்த்திகளே தங்கியிருப்பார்களாக" என்று உரத்துக்கூவினான். அதை உள்ளேயிருந்த விருத்தவசி கேட்டு என்னவென்று அறிந்துவரும்படி இஸபெல்லாவை யனுப்பினான். இஸபெல்லாவும் தான் இன்னும் காவித்துணி உடுக்காதபடியால் வெளியில் கூச்சமின்றி வந்தாள்.

அவள் வரவைக் கண்டதும் லூஷியோ மிகவும் மரியாதையுடன், "அம்மணி! இஸபெல்லா என்னும் ஒரு பெண்மணி இவ்விடத்திலிருக்கிறாளாமே. அந்த அம்மாளை நான் பார்த்துத் துரதிர்ஷ்டனான அவள் தமையனைப் பற்றிக் கொஞ்சம் பேசவேண்டும்" என, அதைக்கேட்டு இஸபெல்லா திடுக்கிட்டு, "நான் தான் அந்தப்பெண்; என் தமையனுக்கு என்ன துரதிர்ஷ்டம் நேர்ந்திருக்கிறது" என்றுகேட்டாள். அதற்கு லூஷியோ, "அவன் இப்பொழுது சிறைச்சாலைக் காவலிலிருக்கிறான்; அவன் செய்த குற்றம் ஒருபெண்ணைக் கலியாணம் செய்யாமல் தனித்து அழைத்துவந்து விட்டதேயாம்" என்றான். அதற்கு இஸபெல்லா முன்னமேதானே தன் தமையனுக்கும் ஜூலியத்துக்குமிருந்த அன்னியோன்னியத்தை அறிந்தவளாகையால், "அதில் என்ன பிசகு; கிளாடியோ ஜூலியத்தைக் கலியாணம் பண்ணிக்கொள்ள ஒருநாளும் ஆக்ஷேபம் செய்யமாட்டானே" என்றாள்.

அதற்கு லூஷியோ "அதெல்லாம் நமது பழைய அரசன் நாளில் குற்றமாகமாட்டாது; இப்பொழுது அவர் ஸ்தானத்தில் வந்திருக்கும் அஞ்சீலோ என்னும் ஞானி இரக்கமற்றவராக இருக்கிறார். கிளாடியோ ஜூலியத்தைக் கலியாணஞ் செய்துகொள்வதாக வெகுவாய்ச் சொல்லியும் அவன் முதலில் செய்த குற்றத்திற்காக அவனைக் கொல்ல நிச்சயித்திருக்கிறார். எங்களால் கூடியமட்டும் இப்புது அரசனுக்குச் சொல்லியாய்விட்டது. இனி நீ தான் அரசனிடம் போய்ப்பேசி உன் தமையனை விடுவிக்கவேண்டும். இதற்காகவே என்னை கிளாடியோ உன்னிடம் அனுப்பினான்" என்றான். அதற்கு இஸபெல்லா முதலில் கொஞ்சம் அதைரியப்பட்டு, பிறகு அகத்தியம்போய்ப் பேசுவதாக ஒப்புக் கொண்டு, பேசிமுடியும் சமாசாரத்தையும் பொழுது போகுமுன்னம் சொல்லியனுப்புவதாக லூஷியோவுக்குச் சொல்லி அனுப்பி விட்டாள்.

தான் சொன்ன சொற்படியே இஸபெல்லாவும் உடனே அரசனிடம் சென்று அவன் காலில் விழுந்து தன் தமையனுடைய உயிர்ப்பிச்சை கேட்டாள். அரசன் சட்டத்தையெடுத்துக் காட்டி, சட்டப்படி நான் நடக்கிறவனேயன்றிச் சிபார்சுக்கு இடங்கொடுக்கிறவனல்லென்று,

கொஞ்சமேனும் இடங்கொடுக்காமல் பேசினான். அதற்கு இஸபெல்லா, "சட்டங்கள் எப்படியிருந்தபோதிலும் தமையென்பது மனிதனுக்கு வேண்டும். அது இல்லாவிடில் எவ்வளவுதான் சரியாக நடந்தபோதிலும் அரசர்கள் பாவத்தைக் கட்டிக் கொள்வார்களேயன்றிப் புண்ணியம் பெறவேமாட்டார்கள்" என்று சொல்ல, அதற்கு அரசன் கொஞ்சமேனும் காது கொடாமல் "நாளை சாயந்தரத்திற்குள் உன் தமையன் தலையை வாங்கிவிட உத்தரவு கொடுக்கப்போகிறேன்" என்றான். அதற்கு இஸபெல்லா நடுநடுங்கி, "ஐயோ ஆடுகோழிகளைக்கூட இரண்டொருநாள் வைத்திருந்து கொல்லுகிறோமே; அவ்வளவு தாமதங்கூட இல்லாமல் என் தமையனைக் கொல்லவேண்டுமா?" என்று கண்ணும் கண்ணீருமாய் நிற்க, அதைக்கண்டு அஞ்சீலோ கொஞ்சம் மனதிரங்கினவனாய்க் காட்டி, "நாளையதினம் வா, யோசிப்போம்" என்றான். அதைக்கேட்டு இஸபெல்லா களித்துத் தன் தமையன் யமன் வாயிலிருந்து விடுபட்டாற்போல எண்ணி, மறுநாள் அரசனைப்போய்க் காணத் தீர்மானித்துக்கொண்டு வீடு வந்துசேர்ந்தாள்.

இப்படி இவளை வரச்சொன்னதில் அஞ்சீலோ கொண்டகருத்து நல்ல கருத்தல்ல; அவருடைய திடசித்தமும் ஞானமும் இவள் அழகாகிய சூரியன்முன் பனிபோல உருகிவிட்டன. இவளைத் தனது கொடிய காமத்திற்குள்ளாக்கி அதற்குப் பதிலாக இவள் தமையனை விடுவிக்க நினைத்து விட்டான். இவள் மறுநாள் காலையில் தன் தமையனை விடுவிக்கக் கேட்பதற்காக அரண்மனை போய்ச்சேர, அஞ்சீலோ இவளுக்கு ஏகாந்தத்தில் தரிசனம் கொடுத்து, அன்றிரவில் தனிமையாகத் தன் தோட்டத்தில் தன்னுடன்வந்து இருப்பாளேயானால் கிளாடியோவை விடுவிப்பதாகச் சொன்னான். அதைக் கேட்டு இஸபெல்லா மயிர்க்குச்செறிந்து "இதை உண்மையாகப் பேசினீர்களா, அல்லது வேடிக்கையாகவா?" என்று கேட்க, அரசன் "உண்மையாகத்தான் பேசினேன்" என்றான். அதற்கு இஸபெல்லா "நல்லது இப்பொழுது என் தமையனை விடுவிக்காத பக்ஷத்தில் நீர் என்னைக் கேட்ட சங்கதியை ஊர் முடியச் சொல்லி உமது வஞ்சனை குணத்தை வெளிப்படுத்திவிடுகிறேன்" என, "நீ என்ன சொன்னாலும் உன் பேச்சை யார் நம்பப் போகிறார்கள். நான் இதுவரையில் தோஷமற்றவனாயிருந்தது எல்லாருக்கும் தெரியுமாகையால் நீ சொல்வதை யாரும் நம்பார்கள். நான் கேட்டுக்கொண்டதற்கு உடன்படுவாயாகில் உன் தமையன் பிழைப்பான்; இல்லையெனிலோ அவன் மாண்டுபோவான். இதற்கு விடை நாளைக்குள் நீ சொல்லவேண்டும்" என்று அஞ்சீலோ சொன்னான்.

இஸபெல்லா இந்த அநியாயங்களைத் தான் யாரிடம் சொல்லித் துக்கப்படுகிறதென்றெண்ணிக்கொண்டு தன் தமையன் இருக்கும் சிறைச்சாலையை நோக்கிச் செல்ல, அங்கே அவனிடம் ஒரு சன்னியாசி வந்து பேசிக்கொண்டிருப்பதைக் கண்டாள். இப்படிப் பேசிக்கொண்டிருந்த சன்னியாசி நிஜமான சன்னியாசியல்ல; சன்னியாசிவேஷம் பூண்டுவந்த பெரிய அரசன். இவன் இந்த வேஷத்துடனே தனித்தனியே கிளாடியோவையும் ஜூலியத்தையும் அவரவர் சிறைச்சாலையில் கண்டுபேசி, அவர்கள் செய்த காரியம் குற்றமென்பதை உணரும்படிச் செய்தான். கிளாடியோ இருந்த சிறைச்சாலைக்குச் சமீபத்தில் இஸபெல்லா வந்து "இவ்விடத்தில் நல்ல ஸத்புருஷரும் சாந்தமூர்த்திகளும் இருக்கட்டும்" என்று ஆசிர்வதித்தாள். அதைச் சன்னியாசி வேஷம்பூண்ட அரசன் கேட்டுச் சந்தோஷித்து, நீ யார், இவ்விடம் ஏன் வந்தாய்? என்று கேட்க, இஸபெல்லா என் தமையன் கிளாடியோவினிடம் இரண்டொரு பேச்சுப் பேசுவந்தேனென்றாள். அரசனாகிய சன்னியாசி, அப்படியே செய்யென்று சொல்லி, தான் உத்தரவு பெற்றுக் கொண்டு வெளியில் போவதுபோல மறைந்து, இவர்கள் பேசும் பேச்சைக் கேட்க இவர்களுக்குத் தெரியாத ஒரு அறையில் மறைந்து நின்றான்.

இஸபெல்லா, தான் அஞ்சீலோ ராஜனிடம்போய்ப் பேசினதையும், அவன் கிளாடியோவை விடுவிப்பதற்காகத் தன்னைத் தனிமையில் அன்றிரவு அரண்மனையில் வந்துசேரக் கேட்டுக்

கொண்டதையும் சொல்லி, "அண்ணா இம்மாதிரி அவமானம் நமது குலத்திற்கு வருவதைக் காட்டிலும் நீ நாளைக்கு பிராணனை விடுவது நலமென்று தோன்றுகிறது" என்றாள். அதற்கு கிளாடியோ "என் பிராணனைவிட உன் மானம் பெரிதா?" என, இஸபெல்லாவுக்குத் தன்னையறியாத கோபமும் துக்கமும் வந்து விட்டது. "மானத்தைவிட நீ பிராணன் பெரிதென்று நினைக்கிறாயே; எவ்வளவு அற்புத்தி! இவ்வளவு அற்புத்தி உன்னிடம் இருக்குமென்று நான் எண்ணவேயில்லை. நான் சந்தோஷத்துடன் பிராணனை விடுவேனெயல்லாது மானத்தை விடமாட்டேன். நன்றியற்றவனே! நீ கெட்டாய், உன் பிராணனைவிட உன் தங்கையின் மானத்தைக் குறைவாக எண்ணினாயே! உனக்கு இராவணனைப் போலப் பத்துத்தலையிருந்த போதிலும் அவைகளையெல்லாம் ஒவ்வொன்றாக வெட்டுப்படப் பார்ப்பேனெயல்லாமல், அவைகளில் ஒன்றையேனும் காப்பாற்ற என் மானத்தை இழக்கமாட்டேன்" என்று இவ்வாறு பேசினாள்.

அப்பொழுது இவர்களின் பதுங்கி நின்ற சன்னியாசியோ! ராஜப்பிரதிநிதியானவன் இவளைக் கெடுக்கவேண்டுமென்று ஒருநாளும் எண்ணங் கொண்டிருக்கமாட்டான். அவன் சொன்ன பேச்சு இவளைப் பரிசோதிப்பதற்காகவேயன்று வேறல்ல. இவள் மரியாதையாய் மறுதலித்து வந்து விட்டாள். இனி நீயும் நாளையதினம் உன் பிராணனை இழக்கவேண்டியதுதான். அதற்குள் தெய்வத்திற்குச் செய்யவேண்டிய பிரார்த்தனைகளை நீ மனதிற்குள் செய்துகொள்" என்றான். இப்படி இவர் சொன்னதை கிளாடியோ கேட்டுத் தான் கூச்சமின்றித் தன் தங்கையுடன் பேசினதற்காகத் தன்னையே நொந்துகொண்டு துக்கத்தாலும் வெட்கத்தாலும் ஒன்றும் சொல்ல நாவெழாமல் திகைத்து நின்றான்.

உடனே இஸபெல்லா வெளியில் வந்துவிடவே சன்னியாசியும் அவள் பின்சென்று "உன்னை அழகாய்ச்செய்த ஈசன் உன் குணத்தையும் அழகாய்ச் செய்தானே" என, அதற்கு அவள், நமது அரசன், அஞ்சீலோ நல்லவரென்று நினைத்து மோசம் போய்விட்டாரே; அவர் எப்பொழுது நமது நாட்டிற்குத் திரும்பிவருவாரோ அறியேனே. நான் அவரைக் காண்பேனெயானால் இந்தப் பாவியின் நடத்தையை அவரிடம் வெளிப்படுத்தி விடுவேன்" என்றாள். தான் பேசுவது அரசனோடென்றும், அப்பொழுதே அஞ்சீலோவின் நடத்தையை அரசனிடம் வெளிப்படுத்திவிட்டாளென்றும் அவள் எண்ணவேயில்லை. அவள் சொன்னதைக்கேட்டுச் சன்னியாசி வேஷம்தரித்த அரசன் "அதில் ஒன்றும் பிசுவரமாட்டாது; பழய ராஜன் தான் திரும்பிவரும்பொழுது எல்லாவற்றையும் தப்பாமல் விசாரித்துக்கொள்வார். நான் ஒன்று சொல்லுகிறேன், நீ அதைக் காதுகொடுத்துக் கேட்பாயானால் உன் மானமும் கெடாது, உன் தமையனும் பிழைப்பான். இன்னும் ஒருவருக்கு உபகாரமும் செய்ததாகும்" என்றான்.

இஸபெல்லா அதைக்கேட்டதும், மானம்மட்டும் கெடாதபக்கஷத்தில் நீங்கள் என்ன சொன்னாலும் கேட்கிறேன். என்னை என்ன செய்யச்சொல்லுகிறீர்களென, அதற்குச் சன்னியாசி வேஷம்பூண்ட பெரிய அரசன் பின்வருமாறு சொல்லலானான். "முன்னே ப்ரடரிக் (Frederick) என்றொரு போர்வீரன் இருந்தான். அவனுக்கு மரியானா (Mariana) என்றொரு தங்கையிருக்கிறாள். அவளை அஞ்சீலோவுக்கு அவள் தமையனானவன் கலியாணஞ்செய்து கொடுத்து அவளுக்கு கொடுக்கவேண்டிய சீதனத்தையெல்லாம் ஒரு கப்பலில் ஏற்றி இந்த ஊருக்குக் கொண்டுவந்துக் கொண்டிருந்தார்; நடுச்சமுத்திரத்தில் கப்பல் ஒருபாறையில் மோதி உடையவே, அந்தச் சீதனங்களுடன் அந்த வீரன் கடலில்மாண்டான். தன் பெண்சாதிக்குச் சேரவேண்டிய ஆஸ்தி சேராததினால் அஞ்சீலோ அவளை ஒரு குற்றத்தைச்சாட்டித் தள்ளிவைத்திருக்கிறார். அந்தப்பெண் தனது தமையனையும் ஆஸ்தியையும் நீரில் இழந்ததுபோல நிலத்தில் புருஷனையும் இழந்து துக்கப்பட்டுக்கொண்டிருக்கிறாள். ஆகையினால் இஸபெல்லாவே! நாம் இருவருமாய்ச் சேர்ந்து ஓர் தந்திரம் செய்ய வேண்டும்: நீ அஞ்சீலோவினிடம் சென்று அவர் குறிக்குமிடத்திற்கு இன்று இரவு தனிமையாய் வருவதாக ஒப்புக்கொண்டு வந்துவிடு; உனக்குப்பதிலாக

மரியானாவை நாம் அவள் புருஷனிடம் அனுப்பிவிடுவோம். இப்படி நாம் செய்வது ஒரு பாவத்திலும் சேர்ந்ததாகாது. அஞ்சீலோ அவளைக் கலியாணம்செய்த புருஷனல்லவா. ஒரு புருஷனுடன் அவன் நற்குணமுள்ள பெண்சாதியைச் சேர்த்துவைப்பது நமக்கு எவ்வளவோ புண்ணியம்" என்றிவ்வாறு சன்னியாசி சொல்ல, இஸபெல்லா அதைக்கேட்டுச் சந்தோஷமடைந்து சன்னியாசியின் நற்குணத்தை மெச்சி, அப்பொழுதே அவன் சொன்ன ஏற்பாட்டை முடித்துவைக்க அஞ்சீலோவினிடம் சென்றாள். அரசனும் தான் செய்த ஏற்பாட்டை மரியானாவினிடம் சொல்ல அவள் வீடு சென்றாள். இதற்கு முன்னமேதானே தன் சன்னியாசி வேஷத்துடன் அவளைக்கண்டு அவள் துக்கத்தைக் கேட்டிருந் தவனாகையால் பெரிய அரசன் இவ்விஷயத்தில் இவ்வளவு சிரமப்படும்படியாயிற்று.

இஸபெல்லாவானவள் அஞ்சீலோவைக்கண்டு சொல்லிவிட்டுச் சன்னியாசி சொல்லியிருந்தபடி மரியானா வீட்டிற்கு வந்துசேர்ந்தாள். அங்கு இவள் வரவை எதிர்பார்த்திருந்த சன்னியாசியும் ராஜப்பிரதிநிதி என்ன சொன்னாரென்று கேட்க, அதற்கு இஸபெல்லா, தான் காரியத்தைச் சரிவர முடித்து வந்துவிட்டதாகச் சொல்லி, அரண்மனைக்கருகில் செங்கற்சுவரால் மதிள் எடுத்த ஒரு தோட்டமிருக்கிறதென்றும், அதன் மேற்புறத்தில் திராக்கைக்கொடியால் போடப்பட்ட ஒரு பந்தலிருக்கிறதென்றும், அவ்விடத்தில் தான் இராத்திரிக்கு வந்து சேரவேண்டுமென்றும் இவைமுதலாய் அஞ்சீலோ சொன்ன செய்திகளைச் சொல்லி, அவன் கொடுத்த தோட்டக் கதவுகளின் இரண்டு திறவு கோல்களையும் காண்பித்தாள். அதைச் சன்னியாசி வாங்கி மரியானாவினிடத்திற் கொடுத்து " நீ இவள் சொன்னதை மனதில் வைத்துக்கொண்டு செய்வாயேயானால் உன் புருஷனை அடைவாய்" என்றான். மரியானா அதுகேட்டு மிகச் சந்தோஷமடைந்து இன்னும் வேறு ஏதாவது சங்கேத முண்டோவென்று கேட்க, அதற்கு இஸபெல்லா, ஒன்றுமில்லை, ஆனால் நீ அவரைவிட்டுத் திரும்பிவரும்பொழுது மெதுவாய், என் தமையனைமாத்திரம் மறக்கக்கூடாதென்று சொல்லி வரவேண்டியதென்றாள்.

அரசனுடைய சங்கேதப்படியே இஸபெல்லாவுக்குப் பதிலாக மரியானா அஞ்சீலோ குறிப்பிட்ட இடத்திற்குச் சென்றாள். நாம் இவ்வளவு செய்தும் கிளாடியோவுக்கு உயிர்தங்குமோ தங்காதோவென்று பயந்து சன்னியாசி சிறைச்சாலைக்குச் சென்றான். இவன் அவரிடம் சென்றது அந்த கிளாடியோவினுடைய பாக்கியமென்றே சொல்லவேண்டும். ஏனெனில் அஞ்சீலோ தன் காரியத்தைமட்டும் சரிவர நடத்திக்கொண்டு கிளாடியோவைத் தான் முதலில் உத்தரவு செய்திருந்தபடியே கொலை செய்துவிடச் சிறைச்சாலைச் சேவகனுக்குக் கட்டளை அனுப்பி விட்டான். வந்த உத்தரவை அரசன் கண்டு திகைத்துச் சிறைச்சாலைச் சேவகனைப்பார்த்து, இந்த கிளாடியோவைக் கொலை செய்யக்கூடாதென்றும், அன்றுகாலையில் சுரத்தால் இறந்து போன ஒரு வியாதிக்காரன் தலையை கிளாடியோ தலையென்று அஞ்சீலோவினிடம் வெட்டியனுப்ப வேண்டுமென்றும் கேட்டுக்கொண்டான். இதற்குச் சிறைச்சாலைச்சேவகன் கொஞ்சமேனும் சம்மதிக்கவில்லை. ஏனெனில் அவன் சன்னியாசியைச் சன்னியாசியாகவே எண்ணினானேயல்லது அரசனாகவாவது அல்லது அரசனிடத்திலிருந்து உத்தரவுபெற்று வந்தவனாகவாவது எண்ணவில்லை. இப்படி இவன் தான் சொன்ன பேச்சைக்கேட்காமல் போகவே சன்னியாசி, கிளாடியோ உயிரை ஒரு நாளும் வாங்கக்கூடாதென்று பெரிய அரசன் செய்த உத்தரவு அவர் முகருடன் தன்னிடம் இருப்பதாகவும், அதற்குப் பயந்து சேவகன் நடவாதபக்கஷத்தில் அச்சேவகன் உயிரைத் தான் வாங்கிவிடக்கூடுமென்றும் சொன்னான். அதைச் சிறைச்சாலை மனிதன் கேட்டுப்பயந்து நீர் அந்த உத்தரவைக் காட்டுவீரேயானால் நான் இந்த கிளாடியோவை அவர் திரும்பி வருகிறவரையில் காப்பாற்றிவைப்பேன் என்றான். உடனே சன்னியாசி சிறிதுதூரம் சென்று ஒரு காகிதத்தில் எழுதவேண்டிய உத்தரவை எழுதி, தானே அரசனாகையால் தான் மறைவாய் வைத்திருந்த முகரை அதில் பதித்து அதை ஒரு உறையில் போட்டுச் சிறைச்சாலைச் சேவகனிடம் கொண்டுவந்து கொடுத்தான். அப்பத்திரிகையைக்

கண்டதும் சேவகன் நடுங்கி, இவனை அரசனுடைய தூதனாக எண்ணிச் செத்தவன் தலையை வெட்டி அஞ்சீலோவுக்கு அனுப்பிவிட்டு கிளாடியோவைக் காப்பாற்றி வைத்தான்.

இவ்விதமாகச் சிறைச்சாலையில் ஒரு உயிரைக்காப்பாற்றின பிறகு அரசன், தான் தேசாந்தரம் போகச் சில சங்கடங்களால் சரிப்படவில்லையென்றும், மறுநாள் காலையில் வியன்னா நகரத்துக்கு வந்து சேருவென்றும், அஞ்சீலோ அப்பட்டணத்து முதல் வாசற்படியிலே தன்னைவந்து பார்க்கவேண்டுமென்றும், அந்த ஊரார்கள் தங்களுக்கு ஏதாவது குறைகள் உண்டானால் வந்து சொல்லிக்கொள்ளவேண்டுமென்றும் ஒரு கடிதத்தைத் தன் பிரதிநிதிக்கு எழுதினான்.

பொழுது விடியமுன்னமே இஸபெல்லா சிறைச்சாலைக்குச் சென்று தன் தமையன் கிளாடியோ பிழைத்திருக்கிறானாவென்று விசாரிக்க, அங்கு இவளுக்காகவே தனது சன்னியாசி வேஷத்தைக் கலைக்காமல் நின்ற அரசன், கிளாடியோ சுவர்க்கத்திலிருக்கிறான், அவன் தலையை நடுராத்திரியிலேயே வெட்டி அஞ்சீலோவினிடம் அனுப்பிவிட்டார்கள் என்றான். பெண்கள் சிகாமணியாகிய இஸபெல்லா அதுகேட்டுக் கீழே விழுந்து தன் தமையனுக்காகத் தான் செய்த உபாயம் ஒன்றும் பலிக்காமல் போனதைப்பற்றியும், சன்னியாசி சொன்ன சொல்லும் பொய்யாய்ப் போனதைப்பற்றியும் புலம்பினாள். அதற்கு அரசன், அவளுக்குத் தைரியம் சொல்லிப் பொழுது விடிந்தவுடன் அரசன் வரப்போகிறார், அவரிடம் உன் பிரியாதைச் சொல்லிக் கொள்ளுவாயேயானால் உனக்கு நியாயம் கிடைக்குமென்று உபதேசித்து, மரியானா வீட்டிற்குச் சென்றான். அவளுக்கும் நடந்துகொள்ளவேண்டிய விஷயத்திற்கு ஏற்பாடு செய்துவிட்டுப் பட்டணத்திற்கு வெளியே போய்விட்டான். ஊரைவிட்டு வெளியே போனதும் தன் சன்னியாசி வேஷத்தை மாற்றி அவ்வுடைகளைத் தன் வேலைக்காரனிடம் ஒப்புவித்துத் தனது உண்மையான இராஜவேஷம்பூண்டு பட்டணத்தை நோக்கி வந்துகொண்டிருந்தான். இவன் வரப்போகிற சமாசாரத்தைக் கேட்டுக் களித்து அந்த ஊர் ஜனங்களெல்லாம் அவனை எதிர்கொண்டு அழைக்க அப்பட்டணத்து முதல்வாசற்படியிலேயே வந்து காத்துக் கொண்டிருந்தார்கள். தங்கள் பழைய அரசனைக் காணவே அவர்களுக்குண்டான சந்தோஷத்திற்கு அளவேயில்லை. அஞ்சீலோவும் அவ்விடம் வந்து தனது அதிகாரத்தை அரசனிடம் ஒப்புவித்தான். இப்படி இருக்கையில் இஸபெல்லாயென்னும் பெண்பிள்ளை தனக்கு ஓர் பிரியாது இருக்கிறதென்று அரசன்முன் வந்து நின்று, நியாயத்தின் அவதாரமே! என் அரசே! நான் சொல்வதைச் சற்றுக் காதுகொடுத்துக் கேட்கவேண்டும். நான் கிளாடியோவென்னும் ஒரு பாவியின் தங்கை. அவன் தான்செய்த குற்றத்திற்காகக் கொடிய தண்டனைக்கு உள்ளாக்கப்பட்டான். அவனை விடுவிக்கும்பொருட்டு நான் எவ்வளவு வேண்டியும் அஞ்சீலோ அரசன் கேட்காமல், நான் அவனது காமவேட்கைக்கு உட்பட்டால் என் தமையனைக் காப்பாற்றிக் கொடுப்பதாகச் சொன்னான்.

அதன்பேரில் என் தமையனுக்காக நான் என் மானத்தை இழந்தேன். ஐயோ! இந்தப்பாவி என் மானத்தை மாத்திரங் கெடுத்துவிட்டானேயன்றித் தான் சொன்ன வாக்கைக் காப்பாற்றவில்லை; என் தமையனைக் கொன்றுவிட்டான் என்று கண்ணும் கண்ணீருமாய்ப் புலம்பிக்கொண்டு நின்றாள். அதை அரசன் கொஞ்சமேனும் நம்பாதவன்போல இவள் சொல்வது என்னவென்று அஞ்சீலோவை கேட்க, அதற்கு அந்த மகாபிரபு, தமையன் இறந்ததனால் இவளுக்குப் பித்தம் மேலிட்டிருக்கிறது போலத் தோன்றுகிறதென்றான். இதற்குள் மரியானா என்பவள் ஓடிவந்து பெருமைதங்கிய மகாபிரபுவே! ஆகாயத்தில் சூரியன் உதித்தாற்போலும், சுபாவத்தில் உண்மையுதித்தாற் போலும், உண்மையிற் புத்தி யுதித்தாற்போலும் விளங்கும் என் அரசே! இவள் சொல்வது பொய். இவள் மானத்தை என்றைய தினம் அஞ்சீலோ அழித்ததாகச் சொல்லுகிறானோ, அன்றைய தினம் நான் அவருடன் இருந்தேன். இவைகளுக்கெல்லாம் சாக்ஷி பரமயோகி (Lodowick) என்னும் ஒரு சன்னியாசி என்றான். இந்தப்பேர் அரசன் தான் சன்னியாசிவேஷம் பூண்டபொழுது வைத்துக்கொண்டது. இப்படி இவர்கள் கூறினதும் அவன்

சொல்லிப் போனபடியேயன்றிவேறல்ல. இவைகளைக்கொண்டு இஸபெல்லாவின் நடத்தையின் சுத்தமும் நற்குணமும் அரசன் ஜனங்களுக்குக் காட்ட நினைத்தான்.

ஆனால் இவ்விதமாகத் தன் துர்நடத்தையை வெளிப்படுத்த இம்மூவர்களும் ஒன்று சேர்ந்திருக்கிறார்கள் என்பது அஞ்சீலோவுக்குச் சிறிதும் தெரியாது. இவ்விருவர்களும் சொல்வதில் இருந்த வித்தியாசத்தைக்கண்டு அஞ்சீலோ தான்தப்பித்துக்கொள்ள வழிபார்த்தான். "நான் இதுவரையில் சிரிப்பாய்ப்பொறுத்துக் கொண்டிருந்தேன், இனிச்சம்மா இருப்பது சரியல்ல; இவர்களை யாரோ என் பெயரைக் கெடுக்கும்படி ஏவிவிட்டிருக்கிறார்கள்" என்று அஞ்சீலோ சொல்லவே, அதற்கு அரசன் எஸ்கேலஸ் என்னும் பிரபுவைப்பார்த்து, ஐயா, நீங்கள் அஞ்சீலோ என்பவனுடன் கூட உட்கார்ந்து இவர்மேல் வந்திருக்கும் குற்றத்தை விசாரியுங்கள். நான் வெளியேபோய் அந்த சன்னியாசியைக் கண்டுபிடித்து வருகிறேனென்று சொல்லி வெளியே சென்றான்.

அதுகேட்டு அஞ்சீலோ தன்மேல்வந்த குற்றத்தைத் தானே விசாரிக்கவந்ததே என்று மிகவும் மனமகிழ்ந்து, அரசன் திரும்பிவருமுன் விசாரித்துமுடிக்க அவ்விரண்டு பெண்களையும் தன்முன் வரவழைத்து, அவர்களைச் சில கேள்விகள்கேட்க ஆரம்பித்தான். எஸ்கேலஸ் அஞ்சீலோ குற்றமற்றவனென்றும், சன்னியாசி யொருவன் பேச்சைக்கேட்டு இந்தப் பெண்கள் இப்படி நிந்திக்கிறார்களென்றும் எண்ணிக்கொண்டிருக்கையிலேயே சன்னியாசியும் அங்குவந்து தோன்றினார். அவரைக் கண்டதும் எஸ்கேலஸ் "நீங்களா அஞ்சீலோ பிரபுவைத் தூஷிக்கும்படி இவ்விரண்டு பெண்களையும் ஏவிவிட்டது என்று கேட்க, அதற்கு அவன், அரசனெங்கே? அவருடன் பேசவேண்டுமேயல்லாது உம்முடன் நான்பேசுவரவில்லை" என்றான். அதற்கு எஸ்கேலஸ், இந்தச் சங்கதியை விசாரிக்க அரசன் எங்களுக்கு உத்தரவு செய்து போயிருக்கிறார், சொல்லும் என, அதற்குச் சன்னியாசி, இந்தக் குற்றத்தை உங்களிடம் விசாரிக்கும்படி அரசன் எப்படி விட்டார்? நான் இந்த ஊரிலே கொஞ்சநாளிலேயே எவ்வளவோ குற்றங்கள் கண்டுபிடித்து அவைகளை வாய்விட்டுப் பேசினேன். அதற்கு எஸ்கேலஸ் என்பவர் என்னைச் சிறைச்சாலைக்கு அனுப்புவதாகச்சொன்னார் என்று சொல்லித் தன் சன்னியாசி வேஷத்தைக் கலைத்து அரசனாகத் தோன்றினான். இப்படி இவன் ஆனறு கண்டு முதலில் நடுங்கினது அஞ்சீலோவே. அச்சபையிலிருந்த மற்றவர்கள் அனைவரும் என்ன நடக்குமோவென்று பிரமித்து நின்றார்கள்.

அரசன் குணவதியாகிய இஸபெல்லாவைப் பார்த்து, "என் பெண்ரத்தமே, உன் சன்னியாசி இப்பொழுது உன் அரசனாக மாறிவிட்டான். ஆனால் இன்னும் உனக்கு உபகாரம் செய்யவிரும்புகிறான். உன்குறை என்னவென்று கேட்க, அதற்கு அவன், நான் என் தாழ்ந்த நிலைமையிலிருந்துகொண்டு தங்களை இன்னாரென்று அறியாமல் செய்துவந்த பிழைகளைப் பொறுப்பீர்களாக" என்று கேட்டுக்கொண்டான். அதற்கு அவன், கிளாடியோ இன்னும் பிழைத்திருக்கிறான் என்பதைக் காட்டிக்கொள்ளாமால், என்னசெய்தும் உன் தமையனைக் காப்பாற்றக்கூடாமற் போய்விட்டதே என்று வருத்தப்பட்டான். இதற்குள் அஞ்சீலோவுக்குத் தான்செய்த ஒவ்வொரு சங்கதியையும் அரசன் மறைவிலிருந்து அறிந்துகொண்டதாகத் தெரியவே, அவன் அவர் காலில்விழுந்து நான்செய்த குற்றங்களைப்பற்றி இங்கு விசாரித்து என் கெட்டுப்போன மானத்தை இன்னும் கெடுப்பானேன். இந்தக்ஷணமே எனக்குக் கொலையை விதித்து என்னைத் தண்டியுங்கள். நான்செய்த பாவத்தை ஒருவரும் பார்க்கமாட்டார்கள் என்றிருந்தேன். ஈசுவரருபமாய் நீங்கள் பார்த்துவிட்டீர்களே என்றான். அதற்கு அரசன் "உன் குற்றங்களெல்லாம் நன்றாய்த்தெரிந்துவிட்டது. கிளாடியோவுக்கு நீ விதித்த தண்டனையை நான் இப்பொழுது உனக்கு விதிக்கும்படியாயிற்று என்கூறி, மரியானாவை நோக்கி, இவனைவிட நல்ல புருஷன் உனக்கு வேறொருவன் கிடைக்கமாட்டானா என்றான். அதற்கு

மரியானா, "எனக்கு இவர் கிடைத்தால்போதும், எனக்கு மங்கலியப்பிச்சை கொடுங்கள்" என்று அரசன் காலில்விழுந்து அஞ்சீலோவின் உயிரைப் பிச்சைகேட்டாள்.

அஞ்சீலோ காலில் இஸபெல்லா விழுந்து கிளாடியோ உயிரைக் கேட்பதற்குப் பதிலாக அந்தக் கொடும்பாவியான அஞ்சீலோவின் உயிரையே அவன் பெண்சாதி பிச்சை கேட்கும்படியாய் முடிந்தது. பின்பு தான் செய்வதுமாத்திரம் போதாதென்று மரியானா இஸபெல்லாவைப் பார்த்து "தாயே நீயும் அரசன் காலில் விழுந்து என் புருஷன் பிராணனை இரக்ஷித்துக்கொடுப்பாயாக" என்று கேட்டுக்கொள்ள, அவளும் தன் மானத்தைக் கெடுக்க முதலில் நினைத்த கொடும்பாவியாகிய அஞ்சீலோவுக்கிரங்கி அரசன் காலில் விழுந்து அஞ்சீலோவை விடுவிக்கக் கேட்டுக்கொண்டாள். இதற்குத் தகுந்த உத்தரம் சொல்லுமுன் சிறைச்சாலையிலிருந்த கிளாடியோவை அரசன் வரவழைத்து இஸபெல்லாவை நோக்கி, என் பெண்மணியே, உன் கையை நீட்டு; உன் நற்குணங்களுக்கு நான் தாஸனாய்விட்டேன்; இதோ உன் தமையனைக் கொலைசெய்யாமல் காப்பாற்றி வைத்திருந்தேன். இன்றுமுதல் நீ எனக்கு ராணியாகி உன் தமையனையும் என் தமையனாய்ப்பண்ணு என்று சொல்லி அவளைத் தன் சிங்காதனத்தில் தூக்கிவைத்துக்கொண்டான்.

உடனே அஞ்சீலோவைப்பார்த்து, நீ கொண்ட எண்ணங்கள் கெட்டவைகளாயிருந்தபோதிலும் உன்னை மரியானா என்னும் பெண்மணி நிமித்தம் மன்னிக்கிறேன். அவளுக்காக உன் உயிரை நான் இப்பொழுது திருப்பிக்கொடுக்கிறேன். நீ கொஞ்சகாலம் அதிகாரத்திலிருக்கும்போது உன்னுடைய இருதயம் எவ்வளவு கடினமாயிருந்தது! இனிமேலாவது தயை தாக்க்ஷணியம் என்பதை நீ அறிஎன்று சொல்லி அவனை விடுதலை பண்ணினான். அதே நிமிஷத்தில் அரண்மனையில் மூன்று கலியாணங்கள் நடந்தன. கிளாடியோ என்பவன் ஜூலியெத்தையும், அரசன் இஸபெல்லாவையும், அஞ்சீலோ மரியானாவையும் கலியாணம் செய்துக்கொண்டார்கள். இஸபெல்லா காவித்துணியைக் கட்டிக்கொள்ளாமலிருந்தபடியால் அரசனைக் கலியாணம்செய்துகொள்ள யாதொரு தடையுமில்லாமல் இருந்தது.

தனது நற்குண நற்செய்கைகளினால் அந்நாட்டிலுள்ள பெண்டுகளையெல்லாம் அவள் சீர்திருத்திவைத்தாள். ஜூலியத்தைப்போலப் பெண்கள் தங்கள் பிறந்த வீட்டைவிட்டு ஓடிப்போய்விடவாவது, கிளாடியோவைப்போலப் புருஷர்கள் சிறையில் அகப்பட்டுக்கொண்டு விழிக்கவாவது சிறிதும் இடமில்லாமற்போயிற்று. தயாநிதியான அந்த அரசனும், நற்குணமுள்ள இஸபெல்லா என்னும் பெண்ணைத் தன் பெண்சாதியாகப்பெற்று நீடுழிகாலம் சுகித்து வாழ்ந்திருந்தான்.

"நாம் பிறருக்களப்பதுதான் நமக்கும் அளக்கப்படும்."

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## Measure for Measure

### by William Shakespeare

#### Synopsis

At Duke Vincentio's Palace in Vienna, the Duke transfers his powers and duties to Angelo since the Duke is leaving town for a while. The Duke makes Escalus Angelo's assistant. At a tower, Lucio tells his friends he hopes the Duke comes to agreement with the King of Hungary, lest the king take over the town. Mistress Overdone (a prostitute) informs them that Claudio is arrested and sentenced to death for impregnating Madam Julietta (his fiancée). Furthermore, Pompey informs Overdone that Angelo plans to tear down London's brothels. Lucio promises Claudio that he'll ask Isabella (Claudio's sister) to convince the deputy to free him out of kindness. At a monastery, the Duke informs Friar Thomas that he appointed Angelo knowing full well he would clean up the town's prostitution. He wishes Angelo to do it so the people will fear and detest him rather than the Duke. The Duke plans to watch the proceedings by posing as a monk. Lucio comes to Isabella at a nunnery and convinces her to beg Angelo for mercy on her brother. Escalus too tries to dissuade Angelo from his harsh judgement, but Angelo insists that Claudio be executed.

Constable brings Pompey (Overdone's pimp) and Froth to Angelo and Escalus accusing them of illegal doings. Angelo leaves, then Escalus warns Froth and Pompey of new enforcement of the laws, then lets them go. Constable Elbow continually uses the wrong words in sentences (eg. detest for protest, cardinally for carnally, etc.) and repeats to a Justice that it is sad that Claudio is to die. Even the Provost (executioner) questions Angelo's decision to execute Claudio. Isabella arrives and begs Angelo to spare her brother. Her grace and virtue seems to dissuade his strictness and it seems he'll spare Claudio. The Duke (as the Friar) comes to the prison to bless those condemned. He blesses Juliet and learns of Claudio's predicament. Isabella comes back to Angelo to discover her decision. Angelo tells her he will free Claudio if she sleeps with him. As a good nun would, she denies him for the sake of her chastity. He tells her she has one day to change her mind, then leaves. She decides to tell her brother of Angelo's ultimatum and her decision, to give her brother a sense of peace.

At the prison, the Duke (as the Friar) comforts Claudio. Isabella arrives and tells Claudio of Angelo's ultimatum. Claudio asks Isabella to honor Angelo's request since he is so afraid of death, but she refuses. The Duke, who was eavesdropping, keeps the ruse by telling Claudio to prepare for death. But to Isabella, the Duke reveals a plan to save Claudio, appease Angelo, spare Isabella's chastity, and reunite Angelo's long lost lover/fiancée, Mariana with him. At the prison, Elbow brings Pompey in for being a bawd (pimp). Lucio talks with the Duke (as the Friar) and hypothesizes that the Duke would be more lenient with Claudio since he (the Duke) doesn't follow the law. Privately, this enrages the Duke, who outwardly vows to expose Lucio's view "to the Duke" when he returns. Escalus and officers bring Mistress Overdone and other prostitutes to the prison. She tells Escalus that Lucio himself has had child with Mistress Keepdown and should also be arrested. The Duke (as the Friar) speaks to Escalus and learns that Escalus truly respects the Duke and disagrees with Angelo's strictness.

The Duke (as the Friar) introduces Isabella to Mariana, who agrees to pretend to be Isabella and sleep with Angelo in order to consummate their marriage. At the prison the Provost asks Pompey to help the executioner, Abhorson, execute Claudio and another prisoner, Barnardine, in exchange for Pompey's freedom, to which Pompey agrees. The Provost receives a letter confirming Claudio's death warrant, to the dismay of the Duke. The Duke, then, convinces the Provost to delay Claudio's execution for four days, but execute Barnardine and deliver his head to Angelo, making it look like Claudio's (per Angelo's request to see Claudio's head). The Duke (as the Friar) convinces the Provost by showing him a letter from the actual Duke. Since Barnardine isn't prepared to die at 4 am, the Duke and Provost bring Angelo the head of a man who died of a fever. To hold the ruse, the Duke tells Isabella that Claudio was beheaded, but

reassures her that she will be able to speak to the actual Duke. Lucio appears again, and upon prodding admits to the Duke (as the Friar) that he did indeed impregnate a whore. Angelo, upon learning of the actual Duke's return, regrets that Claudio was executed.

The Duke "returns" to the city, upon which Isabella comes to him and tells her story, the whole city listening. The Duke pretends to doubt her story, and declares her imprisoned. Friar Peter then comes forward and vouches for Isabella's story, then brings forth Mariana who tells all she slept with Angelo. The Duke then appears as the Friar and repeats the accusations. In a scuffle, the Friar is revealed as the Duke. As the Duke, he has Friar Peter marry Angelo and Mariana, then sentences Angelo to death. Mariana and Isabel beg the Duke to spare Angelo to which, finally, the Duke agrees. The Duke then has the Provost bring Barnardine and Claudio to him. The Duke frees Barnardine and reunites Claudio with Isabella. As for Lucio, he has Friar Peter marry him to the whore, then orders him whipped AND hanged, such that the whore will inherit Lucio's fortune.

## Measure for Measure

### Act 1, Scene 1

SCENE I. An apartment in the DUKE'S palace.

Enter DUKE VINCENTIO, ESCALUS, Lords and Attendants

DUKE VINCENTIO

Escalus.

ESCALUS

My lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Of government the properties to unfold,  
Would seem in me to 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, you're as pregnant in  
As art and practise 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.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Look where he comes.

Enter ANGELO

ANGELO

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

DUKE VINCENTIO

Angelo,  
 There is a kind of character in thy life,  
 That to the 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 VINCENTIO

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 the 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 VINCENTIO

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:  
 Through 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 power 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

-----

## Act 1, Scene 2

SCENE II. A Street.

Enter LUCIO and two 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 concludest like the sanctimonious pirate, that  
went to sea with the Ten Commandments, but scraped  
one out of the table.

Second Gentleman

'Thou shalt not steal'?

LUCIO

Ay, that he razed.

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-piled piece, I warrant thee: I had as lief be a list of an English kersey as be piled, as thou art piled, 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.

LUCIO

Behold, behold. where Madam Mitigation comes! I have purchased as many diseases under her roof as come to--

Second Gentleman

To what, I pray?

LUCIO

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.

Enter MISTRESS OVERDONE

First Gentleman

How now! which of your hips has the most profound sciatica?

MISTRESS OVERDONE

Well, well; there's one yonder arrested and carried to prison was worth five thousand of you all.

Second Gentleman

Who's that, I pray thee?

MISTRESS OVERDONE

Marry, sir, that's Claudio, Signior Claudio.

First Gentleman

Claudio to prison? 'tis not so.

MISTRESS 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 chopped off.

LUCIO

But, after all this fooling, I would not have it so. Art thou sure of this?

MISTRESS OVERDONE

I am too sure of it: and it is for getting Madam Julietta with child.

LUCIO

Believe me, this may be: he promised 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

MISTRESS 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.

MISTRESS OVERDONE

Well; what has he done?

POMPEY

A woman.

MISTRESS OVERDONE

But what's his offence?

POMPEY

Groping for trouts in a peculiar river.

MISTRESS 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?

MISTRESS OVERDONE

What proclamation, man?

POMPEY

All houses in the suburbs of Vienna must be plucked down.

MISTRESS 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.

MISTRESS OVERDONE

But shall all our houses of resort in the suburbs be  
pulled down?

POMPEY

To the ground, mistress.

MISTRESS OVERDONE

Why, here's a change indeed in the commonwealth!  
What shall become of me?

POMPEY

Come; fear you not: 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.

MISTRESS 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

CLAUDIO

Fellow, why dost thou show me thus to the 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.

Re-enter LUCIO and two Gentlemen

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 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 dower  
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 emmence 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 the 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

---

### Act 1, Scene 3

SCENE III. A monastery.

Enter DUKE VINCENTIO and FRIAR THOMAS

DUKE VINCENTIO

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 THOMAS

May your grace speak of it?

DUKE VINCENTIO

My holy sir, none better knows than you  
How I have ever loved the life removed  
And held in idle price to haunt assemblies  
Where youth, and cost, and 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 THOMAS

Gladly, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

We have strict statutes and most biting laws,  
 The needful bits and curbs to headstrong weeds,  
 Which for this nineteen 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 threatening 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 THOMAS

It rested in your grace  
 To unloose this tied-up justice when you pleased:  
 And it in you more dreadful would have seem'd  
 Than in Lord Angelo.

DUKE VINCENTIO

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 imposed the office;  
 Who may, in the 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. More 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

----

## Act 1, Scene 4

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

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 ensky'd 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 embraced:  
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 censured 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 power 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 2, Scene 1

SCENE I. A hall In ANGELO's house.

Enter ANGELO, ESCALUS, and a Justice, Provost, Officers, and other Attendants, behind

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 cohered with place or place with wishing,  
 Or that the resolute acting of your blood  
 Could have attain'd the 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 know 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 prepared;  
 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 brakes 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, plucked 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 accused 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 stewed 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 remembered,  
 cracking the stones of the foresaid prunes,--

FROTH

Ay, so I did indeed.

POMPEY

Why, very well; I telling you then, if you be  
 remembered, 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 four-score 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 supposed 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, wicked varlet! the time has 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 battery on thee.

ESCALUS

If he took you a box o' the 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 knowest 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?

POMPHEY

Tapster; a poor widow's tapster.

ESCALUS

Your mistress' name?

POMPHEY

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 tap-house, 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 are pretty orders beginning, I can tell you: 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 three-pence 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 is 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 your 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

----

## Act 2, Scene 2

SCENE II. Another room in the same.

Enter Provost and a Servant

Servant

He's hearing of a cause; he will come straight  
I'll tell him of you.

Provost

Pray you, do.

Exit Servant

I'll know

His pleasure; may be he will relent. Alas,

He hath but as offended in a dream!

All sects, all ages smack of this vice; and he

To die for't!

Enter ANGELO

ANGELO

Now, what's the matter. Provost?

Provost

Is it your will Claudio shall die tomorrow?

ANGELO

Did not I tell thee yea? hadst thou not order?

Why dost thou ask again?

Provost

Lest I might be too rash:

Under your good correction, I have seen,

When, after execution, judgment hath

Repented o'er his doom.

ANGELO

Go to; let that be mine:

Do you your office, or give up your place,

And you shall well be spared.

Provost

I crave your honour's pardon.

What shall be done, sir, with the groaning Juliet?

She's very near her hour.

ANGELO

Dispose of her

To some more fitter place, and that with speed.

Re-enter Servant

Servant

Here is the sister of the man condemn'd

Desires access to you.

ANGELO

Hath he a sister?

Provost

Ay, my good lord; a very virtuous maid,  
And to be shortly of a sisterhood,  
If not already.

ANGELO

Well, let her be admitted.

Exit Servant  
See you the fornicatress be removed:  
Let have needful, but not lavish, means;  
There shall be order for't.

Enter ISABELLA and LUCIO

Provost

God save your honour!

ANGELO

Stay a little while.

To ISABELLA  
You're welcome: what's your will?

ISABELLA

I am a woeful suitor to your honour,  
Please but your honour hear me.

ANGELO

Well; what's your suit?

ISABELLA

There is a vice that most I do abhor,  
And most desire should meet the blow of justice;  
For which I would not plead, but that I must;  
For which I must not plead, but that I am  
At war 'twixt will and will not.

ANGELO

Well; the matter?

ISABELLA

I have a brother is condemn'd to die:  
I do beseech you, let it be his fault,  
And not my brother.

Provost

[Aside] Heaven give thee moving graces!

ANGELO

Condemn the fault and not the actor of it?  
 Why, every fault's condemn'd ere it be done:  
 Mine were the very cipher of a function,  
 To fine the faults whose fine stands in record,  
 And let go by the actor.

ISABELLA

O just but severe law!  
 I had a brother, then. Heaven keep your honour!

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] Give't not o'er so: to him  
 again, entreat him;  
 Kneel down before him, hang upon his gown:  
 You are too cold; if you should need a pin,  
 You could not with more tame a tongue desire it:  
 To him, I say!

ISABELLA

Must he needs die?

ANGELO

Maiden, no remedy.

ISABELLA

Yes; I do think that you might pardon him,  
 And neither heaven nor man grieve at the mercy.

ANGELO

I will not do't.

ISABELLA

But can you, if you would?

ANGELO

Look, what I will not, that I cannot do.

ISABELLA

But might you do't, and do the world no wrong,  
 If so your heart were touch'd with that remorse  
 As mine is to him?

ANGELO

He's sentenced; 'tis too late.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] You are too cold.

ISABELLA

Too late? why, no; I, that do speak a word.  
 May call it back again. Well, believe this,  
 No ceremony that to great ones 'longs,  
 Not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword,  
 The marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe,  
 Become them with one half so good a grace  
 As mercy does.  
 If he had been as you and you as he,  
 You would have slipt like him; but he, like you,  
 Would not have been so stern.

ANGELO

Pray you, be gone.

ISABELLA

I would to heaven I had your potency,  
 And you were Isabel! should it then be thus?  
 No; I would tell what 'twere to be a judge,  
 And what a prisoner.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA]  
 Ay, touch him; there's the vein.

ANGELO

Your brother is a forfeit of the law,  
 And you but waste your words.

ISABELLA

Alas, alas!  
 Why, all the souls that were were forfeit once;  
 And He that might the vantage best have took  
 Found out the remedy. How would you be,  
 If He, which is the top of judgment, should  
 But judge you as you are? O, think on that;  
 And mercy then will breathe within your lips,  
 Like man new made.

ANGELO

Be you content, fair maid;  
 It is the law, not I condemn your brother:  
 Were he my kinsman, brother, or my son,  
 It should be thus with him: he must die tomorrow.

ISABELLA

To-morrow! O, that's sudden! Spare him, spare him!  
 He's not prepared for death. Even for our kitchens  
 We kill the fowl of season: shall we serve heaven  
 With less respect than we do minister  
 To our gross selves? Good, good my lord, bethink you;  
 Who is it that hath died for this offence?  
 There's many have committed it.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] Ay, well said.

ANGELO

The law hath not been dead, though it hath slept:  
 Those many had not dared to do that evil,  
 If the first that did the edict infringe  
 Had answer'd for his deed: now 'tis awake  
 Takes note of what is done; and, like a prophet,  
 Looks in a glass, that shows what future evils,  
 Either new, or by remissness new-conceived,  
 And so in progress to be hatch'd and born,  
 Are now to have no successive degrees,  
 But, ere they live, to end.

ISABELLA

Yet show some pity.

ANGELO

I show it most of all when I show justice;  
 For then I pity those I do not know,  
 Which a dismiss'd offence would after gall;  
 And do him right that, answering one foul wrong,  
 Lives not to act another. Be satisfied;  
 Your brother dies to-morrow; be content.

ISABELLA

So you must be the first that gives this sentence,  
 And he, that suffer's. O, it is excellent  
 To have a giant's strength; but it is tyrannous  
 To use it like a giant.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] That's well said.

ISABELLA

Could great men thunder  
 As Jove himself does, Jove would ne'er be quiet,  
 For every pelting, petty officer  
 Would use his heaven for thunder;  
 Nothing but thunder! Merciful Heaven,  
 Thou rather with thy sharp and sulphurous bolt

Split't the unwedgeable and gnarled oak  
 Than the soft myrtle: but man, proud man,  
 Drest in a little brief authority,  
 Most ignorant of what he's most assured,  
 His glassy essence, like an angry ape,  
 Plays such fantastic tricks before high heaven  
 As make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,  
 Would all themselves laugh mortal.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] O, to him, to him, wench! he  
 will relent;  
 He's coming; I perceive 't.

Provost

[Aside] Pray heaven she win him!

ISABELLA

We cannot weigh our brother with ourself:  
 Great men may jest with saints; 'tis wit in them,  
 But in the less foul profanation.

LUCIO

Thou'rt i' the right, girl; more o, that.

ISABELLA

That in the captain's but a choleric word,  
 Which in the soldier is flat blasphemy.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] Art avised o' that? more on 't.

ANGELO

Why do you put these sayings upon me?

ISABELLA

Because authority, though it err like others,  
 Hath yet a kind of medicine in itself,  
 That skins the vice o' the top. Go to your bosom;  
 Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth know  
 That's like my brother's fault: if it confess  
 A natural guiltiness such as is his,  
 Let it not sound a thought upon your tongue  
 Against my brother's life.

ANGELO

[Aside] She speaks, and 'tis  
 Such sense, that my sense breeds with it. Fare you well.

ISABELLA

Gentle my lord, turn back.

ANGELO

I will bethink me: come again tomorrow.

ISABELLA

Hark how I'll bribe you: good my lord, turn back.

ANGELO

How! bribe me?

ISABELLA

Ay, with such gifts that heaven shall share with you.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] You had marr'd all else.

ISABELLA

Not with fond shekels of the tested gold,  
Or stones whose rates are either rich or poor  
As fancy values them; but with true prayers  
That shall be up at heaven and enter there  
Ere sun-rise, prayers from preserved souls,  
From fasting maids whose minds are dedicate  
To nothing temporal.

ANGELO

Well; come to me to-morrow.

LUCIO

[Aside to ISABELLA] Go to; 'tis well; away!

ISABELLA

Heaven keep your honour safe!

ANGELO

[Aside] Amen:  
For I am that way going to temptation,  
Where prayers cross.

ISABELLA

At what hour to-morrow  
Shall I attend your lordship?

ANGELO

At any time 'fore noon.

ISABELLA

'Save your honour!

Exeunt ISABELLA, LUCIO, and Provost

ANGELO

From thee, even from thy virtue!  
 What's this, what's this? Is this her fault or mine?  
 The tempter or the tempted, who sins most?  
 Ha!  
 Not she: nor doth she tempt: but it is I  
 That, lying by the violet in the sun,  
 Do as the carrion does, not as the flower,  
 Corrupt with virtuous season. Can it be  
 That modesty may more betray our sense  
 Than woman's lightness? Having waste ground enough,  
 Shall we desire to raze the sanctuary  
 And pitch our evils there? O, fie, fie, fie!  
 What dost thou, or what art thou, Angelo?  
 Dost thou desire her foully for those things  
 That make her good? O, let her brother live!  
 Thieves for their robbery have authority  
 When judges steal themselves. What, do I love her,  
 That I desire to hear her speak again,  
 And feast upon her eyes? What is't I dream on?  
 O cunning enemy, that, to catch a saint,  
 With saints dost bait thy hook! Most dangerous  
 Is that temptation that doth goad us on  
 To sin in loving virtue: never could the strumpet,  
 With all her double vigour, art and nature,  
 Once stir my temper; but this virtuous maid  
 Subdues me quite. Even till now,  
 When men were fond, I smiled and wonder'd how.

Exit

----

### Act 2, Scene 3

SCENE III. A room in a prison.

Enter, severally, DUKE VINCENTIO disguised as a friar, and Provost

DUKE VINCENTIO

Hail to you, provost! so I think you are.

Provost

I am the provost. What's your will, good friar?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Bound by my charity and my blest order,  
 I come to visit the afflicted spirits  
 Here in the prison. Do me the common right  
 To let me see them and to make me know  
 The nature of their crimes, that I may minister  
 To them accordingly.

Provost

I would do more than that, if more were needful.

Enter JULIET  
 Look, here comes one: a gentlewoman of mine,  
 Who, falling in the flaws of her own youth,  
 Hath blister'd her report: she is with child;  
 And he that got it, sentenced; a young man  
 More fit to do another such offence  
 Than die for this.

DUKE VINCENTIO

When must he die?

Provost

As I do think, to-morrow.  
 I have provided for you: stay awhile,

To JULIET  
 And you shall be conducted.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Repent you, fair one, of the sin you carry?

JULIET

I do; and bear the shame most patiently.

DUKE VINCENTIO

I'll teach you how you shall arraign your conscience,  
 And try your penitence, if it be sound,  
 Or hollowly put on.

JULIET

I'll gladly learn.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Love you the man that wrong'd you?

JULIET

Yes, as I love the woman that wrong'd him.

DUKE VINCENTIO

So then it seems your most offenceful act  
Was mutually committed?

JULIET

Mutually.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Then was your sin of heavier kind than his.

JULIET

I do confess it, and repent it, father.

DUKE VINCENTIO

'Tis meet so, daughter: but lest you do repent,  
As that the sin hath brought you to this shame,  
Which sorrow is always towards ourselves, not heaven,  
Showing we would not spare heaven as we love it,  
But as we stand in fear,--

JULIET

I do repent me, as it is an evil,  
And take the shame with joy.

DUKE VINCENTIO

There rest.  
Your partner, as I hear, must die to-morrow,  
And I am going with instruction to him.  
Grace go with you, Benedicite!

Exit

JULIET

Must die to-morrow! O injurious love,  
That respites me a life, whose very comfort  
Is still a dying horror!

Provost

'Tis pity of him.

Exeunt

---

## Act 2, Scene 4

SCENE IV. A room in ANGELO's house.

Enter ANGELO

ANGELO

When I would pray and think, I think and pray  
 To several subjects. Heaven hath my empty words;  
 Whilst my invention, hearing not my tongue,  
 Anchors on Isabel: Heaven in my mouth,  
 As if I did but only chew his name;  
 And in my heart the strong and swelling evil  
 Of my conception. The state, whereon I studied  
 Is like a good thing, being often read,  
 Grown fear'd and tedious; yea, my gravity,  
 Wherein--let no man hear me--I take pride,  
 Could I with boot change for an idle plume,  
 Which the air beats for vain. O place, O form,  
 How often dost thou with thy case, thy habit,  
 Wrench awe from fools and tie the wiser souls  
 To thy false seeming! Blood, thou art blood:  
 Let's write good angel on the devil's horn:  
 'Tis not the devil's crest.

Enter a Servant  
 How now! who's there?

Servant

One Isabel, a sister, desires access to you.

ANGELO

Teach her the way.

Exit Servant  
 O heavens!  
 Why does my blood thus muster to my heart,  
 Making both it unable for itself,  
 And dispossessing all my other parts  
 Of necessary fitness?  
 So play the foolish throngs with one that swoons;  
 Come all to help him, and so stop the air  
 By which he should revive: and even so  
 The general, subject to a well-wish'd king,  
 Quit their own part, and in obsequious fondness  
 Crowd to his presence, where their untaught love  
 Must needs appear offence.

Enter ISABELLA  
 How now, fair maid?

ISABELLA

I am come to know your pleasure.

ANGELO

That you might know it, would much better please me  
 Than to demand what 'tis. Your brother cannot live.

ISABELLA

Even so. Heaven keep your honour!

ANGELO

Yet may he live awhile; and, it may be,  
As long as you or I  
yet he must die.

ISABELLA

Under your sentence?

ANGELO

Yea.

ISABELLA

When, I beseech you? that in his reprieve,  
Longer or shorter, he may be so fitted  
That his soul sicken not.

ANGELO

Ha! fie, these filthy vices! It were as good  
To pardon him that hath from nature stolen  
A man already made, as to remit  
Their saucy sweetness that do coin heaven's image  
In stamps that are forbid: 'tis all as easy  
Falsely to take away a life true made  
As to put metal in restrained means  
To make a false one.

ISABELLA

'Tis set down so in heaven, but not in earth.

ANGELO

Say you so? then I shall pose you quickly.  
Which had you rather, that the most just law  
Now took your brother's life; or, to redeem him,  
Give up your body to such sweet uncleanness  
As she that he hath stain'd?

ISABELLA

Sir, believe this,  
I had rather give my body than my soul.

ANGELO

I talk not of your soul: our compell'd sins  
Stand more for number than for accompt.

ISABELLA

How say you?

ANGELO

Nay, I'll not warrant that; for I can speak  
Against the thing I say. Answer to this:  
I, now the voice of the recorded law,  
Pronounce a sentence on your brother's life:  
Might there not be a charity in sin  
To save this brother's life?

ISABELLA

Please you to do't,  
I'll take it as a peril to my soul,  
It is no sin at all, but charity.

ANGELO

Pleased you to do't at peril of your soul,  
Were equal poise of sin and charity.

ISABELLA

That I do beg his life, if it be sin,  
Heaven let me bear it! you granting of my suit,  
If that be sin, I'll make it my morn prayer  
To have it added to the faults of mine,  
And nothing of your answer.

ANGELO

Nay, but hear me.  
Your sense pursues not mine: either you are ignorant,  
Or seem so craftily; and that's not good.

ISABELLA

Let me be ignorant, and in nothing good,  
But graciously to know I am no better.

ANGELO

Thus wisdom wishes to appear most bright  
When it doth tax itself; as these black masks  
Proclaim an enshield beauty ten times louder  
Than beauty could, display'd. But mark me;  
To be received plain, I'll speak more gross:  
Your brother is to die.

ISABELLA

So.

ANGELO

And his offence is so, as it appears,  
Accountant to the law upon that pain.

ISABELLA

True.

ANGELO

Admit no other way to save his life,--  
As I subscribe not that, nor any other,  
But in the loss of question,--that you, his sister,  
Finding yourself desired of such a person,  
Whose credit with the judge, or own great place,  
Could fetch your brother from the manacles  
Of the all-building law; and that there were  
No earthly mean to save him, but that either  
You must lay down the treasures of your body  
To this supposed, or else to let him suffer;  
What would you do?

ISABELLA

As much for my poor brother as myself:  
That is, were I under the terms of death,  
The impression of keen whips I'd wear as rubies,  
And strip myself to death, as to a bed  
That longing have been sick for, ere I'd yield  
My body up to shame.

ANGELO

Then must your brother die.

ISABELLA

And 'twere the cheaper way:  
Better it were a brother died at once,  
Than that a sister, by redeeming him,  
Should die for ever.

ANGELO

Were not you then as cruel as the sentence  
That you have slander'd so?

ISABELLA

Ignomy in ransom and free pardon  
Are of two houses: lawful mercy  
Is nothing kin to foul redemption.

ANGELO

You seem'd of late to make the law a tyrant;  
And rather proved the sliding of your brother  
A merriment than a vice.

ISABELLA

O, pardon me, my lord; it oft falls out,  
To have what we would have, we speak not what we mean:  
I something do excuse the thing I hate,  
For his advantage that I dearly love.

ANGELO

We are all frail.

ISABELLA

Else let my brother die,  
If not a feodary, but only he  
Owe and succeed thy weakness.

ANGELO

Nay, women are frail too.

ISABELLA

Ay, as the glasses where they view themselves;  
Which are as easy broke as they make forms.  
Women! Help Heaven! men their creation mar  
In profiting by them. Nay, call us ten times frail;  
For we are soft as our complexions are,  
And credulous to false prints.

ANGELO

I think it well:  
And from this testimony of your own sex,--  
Since I suppose we are made to be no stronger  
Than faults may shake our frames,--let me be bold;  
I do arrest your words. Be that you are,  
That is, a woman; if you be more, you're none;  
If you be one, as you are well express'd  
By all external warrants, show it now,  
By putting on the destined livery.

ISABELLA

I have no tongue but one: gentle my lord,  
Let me entreat you speak the former language.

ANGELO

Plainly conceive, I love you.

ISABELLA

My brother did love Juliet,  
And you tell me that he shall die for it.

ANGELO

He shall not, Isabel, if you give me love.

ISABELLA

I know your virtue hath a licence in't,  
Which seems a little fouler than it is,  
To pluck on others.

ANGELO

Believe me, on mine honour,  
My words express my purpose.

ISABELLA

Ha! little honour to be much believed,  
And most pernicious purpose! Seeming, seeming!  
I will proclaim thee, Angelo; look for't:  
Sign me a present pardon for my brother,  
Or with an outstretch'd throat I'll tell the world aloud  
What man thou art.

ANGELO

Who will believe thee, Isabel?  
My unsoil'd name, the austereness of my life,  
My vouch against you, and my place i' the state,  
Will so your accusation outweigh,  
That you shall stifle in your own report  
And smell of calumny. I have begun,  
And now I give my sensual race the rein:  
Fit thy consent to my sharp appetite;  
Lay by all nicety and prolixious blushes,  
That banish what they sue for; redeem thy brother  
By yielding up thy body to my will;  
Or else he must not only die the death,  
But thy unkindness shall his death draw out  
To lingering sufferance. Answer me to-morrow,  
Or, by the affection that now guides me most,  
I'll prove a tyrant to him. As for you,  
Say what you can, my false o'erweighs your true.

Exit

ISABELLA

To whom should I complain? Did I tell this,  
Who would believe me? O perilous mouths,  
That bear in them one and the self-same tongue,  
Either of condemnation or approval;  
Bidding the law make court'sy to their will:  
Hooking both right and wrong to the appetite,  
To follow as it draws! I'll to my brother:  
Though he hath fallen by prompture of the blood,  
Yet hath he in him such a mind of honour.  
That, had he twenty heads to tender down  
On twenty bloody blocks, he'd yield them up,

Before his sister should her body stoop  
 To such abhorr'd pollution.  
 Then, Isabel, live chaste, and, brother, die:  
 More than our brother is our chastity.  
 I'll tell him yet of Angelo's request,  
 And fit his mind to death, for his soul's rest.

Exit

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### Act 3, Scene 1

SCENE I. A room in the prison.

Enter DUKE VINCENTIO disguised as before, CLAUDIO, and Provost

DUKE VINCENTIO

So then you hope of pardon from Lord Angelo?

CLAUDIO

The miserable have no other medicine  
 But only hope:  
 I've hope to live, and am prepared to die.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Be absolute for death; either death or life  
 Shall thereby be the sweeter. Reason thus with life:  
 If I do lose thee, I do lose a thing  
 That none but fools would keep: a breath thou art,  
 Servile to all the skyey influences,  
 That dost this habitation, where thou keep'st,  
 Hourly afflict: merely, thou art death's fool;  
 For him thou labour'st by thy flight to shun  
 And yet runn'st toward him still. Thou art not noble;  
 For all the accommodations that thou bear'st  
 Are nursed by baseness. Thou'rt by no means valiant;  
 For thou dost fear the soft and tender fork  
 Of a poor worm. Thy best of rest is sleep,  
 And that thou oft provokest; yet grossly fear'st  
 Thy death, which is no more. Thou art not thyself;  
 For thou exist'st on many a thousand grains  
 That issue out of dust. Happy thou art not;  
 For what thou hast not, still thou strivest to get,  
 And what thou hast, forget'st. Thou art not certain;  
 For thy complexion shifts to strange effects,  
 After the moon. If thou art rich, thou'rt poor;  
 For, like an ass whose back with ingots bows,  
 Thou bear'st thy heavy riches but a journey,  
 And death unloads thee. Friend hast thou none;  
 For thine own bowels, which do call thee sire,  
 The mere effusion of thy proper loins,  
 Do curse the gout, serpigo, and the rheum,  
 For ending thee no sooner. Thou hast nor youth nor age,  
 But, as it were, an after-dinner's sleep,

Dreaming on both; for all thy blessed youth  
 Becomes as aged, and doth beg the alms  
 Of palsied eld; and when thou art old and rich,  
 Thou hast neither heat, affection, limb, nor beauty,  
 To make thy riches pleasant. What's yet in this  
 That bears the name of life? Yet in this life  
 Lie hid moe thousand deaths: yet death we fear,  
 That makes these odds all even.

CLAUDIO

I humbly thank you.  
 To sue to live, I find I seek to die;  
 And, seeking death, find life: let it come on.

ISABELLA

[Within] What, ho! Peace here; grace and good company!

Provost

Who's there? come in: the wish deserves a welcome.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Dear sir, ere long I'll visit you again.

CLAUDIO

Most holy sir, I thank you.

Enter ISABELLA

ISABELLA

My business is a word or two with Claudio.

Provost

And very welcome. Look, signior, here's your sister.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Provost, a word with you.

Provost

As many as you please.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Bring me to hear them speak, where I may be concealed.

Exeunt DUKE VINCENTIO and Provost

CLAUDIO

Now, sister, what's the comfort?

ISABELLA

Why,  
As all comforts are; most good, most good indeed.  
Lord Angelo, having affairs to heaven,  
Intends you for his swift ambassador,  
Where you shall be an everlasting leiger:  
Therefore your best appointment make with speed;  
To-morrow you set on.

CLAUDIO

Is there no remedy?

ISABELLA

None, but such remedy as, to save a head,  
To cleave a heart in twain.

CLAUDIO

But is there any?

ISABELLA

Yes, brother, you may live:  
There is a devilish mercy in the judge,  
If you'll implore it, that will free your life,  
But fetter you till death.

CLAUDIO

Perpetual durance?

ISABELLA

Ay, just; perpetual durance, a restraint,  
Though all the world's vastidity you had,  
To a determined scope.

CLAUDIO

But in what nature?

ISABELLA

In such a one as, you consenting to't,  
Would bark your honour from that trunk you bear,  
And leave you naked.

CLAUDIO

Let me know the point.

ISABELLA

O, I do fear thee, Claudio; and I quake,

Lest thou a feverous life shouldst entertain,  
 And six or seven winters more respect  
 Than a perpetual honour. Darest thou die?  
 The sense of death is most in apprehension;  
 And the poor beetle, that we tread upon,  
 In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great  
 As when a giant dies.

CLAUDIO

Why give you me this shame?  
 Think you I can a resolution fetch  
 From flowery tenderness? If I must die,  
 I will encounter darkness as a bride,  
 And hug it in mine arms.

ISABELLA

There spake my brother; there my father's grave  
 Did utter forth a voice. Yes, thou must die:  
 Thou art too noble to conserve a life  
 In base appliances. This outward-sainted deputy,  
 Whose settled visage and deliberate word  
 Nips youth i' the head and follies doth emmew  
 As falcon doth the fowl, is yet a devil  
 His filth within being cast, he would appear  
 A pond as deep as hell.

CLAUDIO

The prenzie Angelo!

ISABELLA

O, 'tis the cunning livery of hell,  
 The damned'st body to invest and cover  
 In prenzie guards! Dost thou think, Claudio?  
 If I would yield him my virginity,  
 Thou mightst be freed.

CLAUDIO

O heavens! it cannot be.

ISABELLA

Yes, he would give't thee, from this rank offence,  
 So to offend him still. This night's the time  
 That I should do what I abhor to name,  
 Or else thou diest to-morrow.

CLAUDIO

Thou shalt not do't.

ISABELLA

O, were it but my life,

I'd throw it down for your deliverance  
As frankly as a pin.

CLAUDIO

Thanks, dear Isabel.

ISABELLA

Be ready, Claudio, for your death tomorrow.

CLAUDIO

Yes. Has he affections in him,  
That thus can make him bite the law by the nose,  
When he would force it? Sure, it is no sin,  
Or of the deadly seven, it is the least.

ISABELLA

Which is the least?

CLAUDIO

If it were damnable, he being so wise,  
Why would he for the momentary trick  
Be perdurably fined? O Isabel!

ISABELLA

What says my brother?

CLAUDIO

Death is a fearful thing.

ISABELLA

And shamed life a hateful.

CLAUDIO

Ay, but to die, and go we know not where;  
To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;  
This sensible warm motion to become  
A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit  
To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
In thrilling region of thick-ribbed ice;  
To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,  
And blown with restless violence round about  
The pendent world; or to be worse than worst  
Of those that lawless and incertain thought  
Imagine howling: 'tis too horrible!  
The weariest and most loathed worldly life  
That age, ache, penury and imprisonment  
Can lay on nature is a paradise  
To what we fear of death.

ISABELLA

Alas, alas!

CLAUDIO

Sweet sister, let me live:  
 What sin you do to save a brother's life,  
 Nature dispenses with the deed so far  
 That it becomes a virtue.

ISABELLA

O you beast!  
 O faithless coward! O dishonest wretch!  
 Wilt thou be made a man out of my vice?  
 Is't not a kind of incest, to take life  
 From thine own sister's shame? What should I think?  
 Heaven shield my mother play'd my father fair!  
 For such a warped slip of wilderness  
 Ne'er issued from his blood. Take my defiance!  
 Die, perish! Might but my bending down  
 Reprieve thee from thy fate, it should proceed:  
 I'll pray a thousand prayers for thy death,  
 No word to save thee.

CLAUDIO

Nay, hear me, Isabel.

ISABELLA

O, fie, fie, fie!  
 Thy sin's not accidental, but a trade.  
 Mercy to thee would prove itself a bawd:  
 'Tis best thou diest quickly.

CLAUDIO

O hear me, Isabella!

Re-enter DUKE VINCENTIO

DUKE VINCENTIO

Vouchsafe a word, young sister, but one word.

ISABELLA

What is your will?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Might you dispense with your leisure, I would by and  
 by have some speech with you: the satisfaction I  
 would require is likewise your own benefit.

ISABELLA

I have no superfluous leisure; my stay must be stolen out of other affairs; but I will attend you awhile.

Walks apart

DUKE VINCENTIO

Son, I have overheard what hath passed between you and your sister. Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; only he hath made an essay of her virtue to practise his judgment with the disposition of natures: she, having the truth of honour in her, hath made him that gracious denial which he is most glad to receive. I am confessor to Angelo, and I know this to be true; therefore prepare yourself to death: do not satisfy your resolution with hopes that are fallible: tomorrow you must die; go to your knees and make ready.

CLAUDIO

Let me ask my sister pardon. I am so out of love with life that I will sue to be rid of it.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Hold you there: farewell.

Exit CLAUDIO  
Provost, a word with you!

Re-enter Provost

Provost

What's your will, father

DUKE VINCENTIO

That now you are come, you will be gone. Leave me awhile with the maid: my mind promises with my habit no loss shall touch her by my company.

Provost

In good time.

Exit Provost. ISABELLA comes forward

DUKE VINCENTIO

The hand that hath made you fair hath made you good: the goodness that is cheap in beauty makes beauty brief in goodness; but grace, being the soul of your complexion, shall keep the body of it ever fair. The assault that Angelo hath made to you, fortune hath conveyed to my understanding; and, but

that frailty hath examples for his falling, I should wonder at Angelo. How will you do to content this substitute, and to save your brother?

ISABELLA

I am now going to resolve him: I had rather my brother die by the law than my son should be unlawfully born. But, O, how much is the good duke deceived in Angelo! If ever he return and I can speak to him, I will open my lips in vain, or discover his government.

DUKE VINCENTIO

That shall not be much amiss: Yet, as the matter now stands, he will avoid your accusation; he made trial of you only. Therefore fasten your ear on my advisings: to the love I have in doing good a remedy presents itself. I do make myself believe that you may most uprightously do a poor wronged lady a merited benefit; redeem your brother from the angry law; do no stain to your own gracious person; and much please the absent duke, if peradventure he shall ever return to have hearing of this business.

ISABELLA

Let me hear you speak farther. I have spirit to do anything that appears not foul in the truth of my spirit.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Virtue is bold, and goodness never fearful. Have you not heard speak of Mariana, the sister of Frederick the great soldier who miscarried at sea?

ISABELLA

I have heard of the lady, and good words went with her name.

DUKE VINCENTIO

She should this Angelo have married; was affianced to her by oath, and the nuptial appointed: between which time of the contract and limit of the solemnity, her brother Frederick was wrecked at sea, having in that perished vessel the dowry of his sister. But mark how heavily this befell to the poor gentlewoman: there she lost a noble and renowned brother, in his love toward her ever most kind and natural; with him, the portion and sinew of her fortune, her marriage-dowry; with both, her combinate husband, this well-seeming Angelo.

ISABELLA

Can this be so? did Angelo so leave her?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Left her in her tears, and dried not one of them  
with his comfort; swallowed his vows whole,  
pretending in her discoveries of dishonour: in few,  
bestowed her on her own lamentation, which she yet  
wears for his sake; and he, a marble to her tears,  
is washed with them, but relents not.

ISABELLA

What a merit were it in death to take this poor maid  
from the world! What corruption in this life, that  
it will let this man live! But how out of this can she avail?

DUKE VINCENTIO

It is a rupture that you may easily heal: and the  
cure of it not only saves your brother, but keeps  
you from dishonour in doing it.

ISABELLA

Show me how, good father.

DUKE VINCENTIO

This forenamed maid hath yet in her the continuance  
of her first affection: his unjust unkindness, that  
in all reason should have quenched her love, hath,  
like an impediment in the current, made it more  
violent and unruly. Go you to Angelo; answer his  
requiring with a plausible obedience; agree with  
his demands to the point; only refer yourself to  
this advantage, first, that your stay with him may  
not be long; that the time may have all shadow and  
silence in it; and the place answer to convenience.  
This being granted in course,--and now follows  
all,--we shall advise this wronged maid to stand up  
your appointment, go in your place; if the encounter  
acknowledge itself hereafter, it may compel him to  
her recompense: and here, by this, is your brother  
saved, your honour untainted, the poor Mariana  
advantaged, and the corrupt deputy scaled. The maid  
will I frame and make fit for his attempt. If you  
think well to carry this as you may, the doubleness  
of the benefit defends the deceit from reproof.  
What think you of it?

ISABELLA

The image of it gives me content already; and I  
trust it will grow to a most prosperous perfection.

DUKE VINCENTIO

It lies much in your holding up. Haste you speedily to Angelo: if for this night he entreat you to his bed, give him promise of satisfaction. I will presently to Saint Luke's: there, at the moated grange, resides this dejected Mariana. At that place call upon me; and dispatch with Angelo, that it may be quickly.

ISABELLA

I thank you for this comfort. Fare you well, good father.

Exeunt severally

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### Act 3, Scene 2

SCENE II. The street before the prison.

Enter, on one side, DUKE VINCENTIO disguised as before; on the other, ELBOW, and Officers with POMPEY

ELBOW

Nay, if there be no remedy for it, but that you will needs buy and sell men and women like beasts, we shall have all the world drink brown and white bastard.

DUKE VINCENTIO

O heavens! what stuff is here

POMPEY

'Twas never merry world since, of two usuries, the merriest was put down, and the worser allowed by order of law a furred gown to keep him warm; and furred with fox and lamb-skins too, to signify, that craft, being richer than innocency, stands for the facing.

ELBOW

Come your way, sir. 'Bless you, good father friar.

DUKE VINCENTIO

And you, good brother father. What offence hath this man made you, sir?

ELBOW

Marry, sir, he hath offended the law: and, sir, we take him to be a thief too, sir; for we have found upon him, sir, a strange picklock, which we have sent to the deputy.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Fie, sirrah! a bawd, a wicked bawd!  
 The evil that thou causest to be done,  
 That is thy means to live. Do thou but think  
 What 'tis to cram a maw or clothe a back  
 From such a filthy vice: say to thyself,  
 From their abominable and beastly touches  
 I drink, I eat, array myself, and live.  
 Canst thou believe thy living is a life,  
 So stinkingly depending? Go mend, go mend.

POMPEY

Indeed, it does stink in some sort, sir; but yet,  
 sir, I would prove--

DUKE VINCENTIO

Nay, if the devil have given thee proofs for sin,  
 Thou wilt prove his. Take him to prison, officer:  
 Correction and instruction must both work  
 Ere this rude beast will profit.

ELBOW

He must before the deputy, sir; he has given him  
 warning: the deputy cannot abide a whoremaster: if  
 he be a whoremonger, and comes before him, he were  
 as good go a mile on his errand.

DUKE VINCENTIO

That we were all, as some would seem to be,  
 From our faults, as faults from seeming, free!

ELBOW

His neck will come to your waist,--a cord, sir.

POMPEY

I spy comfort; I cry bail. Here's a gentleman and a  
 friend of mine.

Enter LUCIO

LUCIO

How now, noble Pompey! What, at the wheels of  
 Caesar? art thou led in triumph? What, is there  
 none of Pygmalion's images, newly made woman, to be  
 had now, for putting the hand in the pocket and  
 extracting it clutch'd? What reply, ha? What  
 sayest thou to this tune, matter and method? Is't  
 not drowned i' the last rain, ha? What sayest  
 thou, Trot? Is the world as it was, man? Which is

the way? Is it sad, and few words? or how? The  
trick of it?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Still thus, and thus; still worse!

LUCIO

How doth my dear morsel, thy mistress? Procures she  
still, ha?

POMPEY

Troth, sir, she hath eaten up all her beef, and she  
is herself in the tub.

LUCIO

Why, 'tis good; it is the right of it; it must be  
so: ever your fresh whore and your powdered bawd:  
an unshunned consequence; it must be so. Art going  
to prison, Pompey?

POMPEY

Yes, faith, sir.

LUCIO

Why, 'tis not amiss, Pompey. Farewell: go, say I  
sent thee thither. For debt, Pompey? or how?

ELBOW

For being a bawd, for being a bawd.

LUCIO

Well, then, imprison him: if imprisonment be the  
due of a bawd, why, 'tis his right: bawd is he  
doubtless, and of antiquity too; bawd-born.  
Farewell, good Pompey. Commend me to the prison,  
Pompey: you will turn good husband now, Pompey; you  
will keep the house.

POMPEY

I hope, sir, your good worship will be my bail.

LUCIO

No, indeed, will I not, Pompey; it is not the wear.  
I will pray, Pompey, to increase your bondage: If  
you take it not patiently, why, your mettle is the  
more. Adieu, trusty Pompey. 'Bless you, friar.

DUKE VINCENTIO

And you.

LUCIO

Does Bridget paint still, Pompey, ha?

ELBOW

Come your ways, sir; come.

POMPEY

You will not bail me, then, sir?

LUCIO

Then, Pompey, nor now. What news abroad, friar?  
what news?

ELBOW

Come your ways, sir; come.

LUCIO

Go to kennel, Pompey; go.

Exeunt ELBOW, POMPEY and Officers  
What news, friar, of the duke?

DUKE VINCENTIO

I know none. Can you tell me of any?

LUCIO

Some say he is with the Emperor of Russia; other  
some, he is in Rome: but where is he, think you?

DUKE VINCENTIO

I know not where; but wheresoever, I wish him well.

LUCIO

It was a mad fantastical trick of him to steal from  
the state, and usurp the beggary he was never born  
to. Lord Angelo dukes it well in his absence; he  
puts transgression to 't.

DUKE VINCENTIO

He does well in 't.

LUCIO

A little more lenity to lechery would do no harm in

him: something too crabbed that way, friar.

DUKE VINCENTIO

It is too general a vice, and severity must cure it.

LUCIO

Yes, in good sooth, the vice is of a great kindred; it is well allied: but it is impossible to extirp it quite, friar, till eating and drinking be put down. They say this Angelo was not made by man and woman after this downright way of creation: is it true, think you?

DUKE VINCENTIO

How should he be made, then?

LUCIO

Some report a sea-maid spawned him; some, that he was begot between two stock-fishes. But it is certain that when he makes water his urine is congealed ice; that I know to be true: and he is a motion generative; that's infallible.

DUKE VINCENTIO

You are pleasant, sir, and speak apace.

LUCIO

Why, what a ruthless thing is this in him, for the rebellion of a codpiece to take away the life of a man! Would the duke that is absent have done this? Ere he would have hanged a man for the getting a hundred bastards, he would have paid for the nursing a thousand: he had some feeling of the sport: he knew the service, and that instructed him to mercy.

DUKE VINCENTIO

I never heard the absent duke much detected for women; he was not inclined that way.

LUCIO

O, sir, you are deceived.

DUKE VINCENTIO

'Tis not possible.

LUCIO

Who, not the duke? yes, your beggar of fifty; and his use was to put a ducat in her clack-dish: the

duke had crotchets in him. He would be drunk too;  
that let me inform you.

DUKE VINCENTIO

You do him wrong, surely.

LUCIO

Sir, I was an inward of his. A shy fellow was the  
duke: and I believe I know the cause of his  
withdrawing.

DUKE VINCENTIO

What, I prithee, might be the cause?

LUCIO

No, pardon; 'tis a secret must be locked within the  
teeth and the lips: but this I can let you  
understand, the greater file of the subject held the  
duke to be wise.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Wise! why, no question but he was.

LUCIO

A very superficial, ignorant, unweighing fellow.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Either this is the envy in you, folly, or mistaking:  
the very stream of his life and the business he hath  
helmed must upon a warranted need give him a better  
proclamation. Let him be but testimonied in his own  
bringings-forth, and he shall appear to the  
envious a scholar, a statesman and a soldier.  
Therefore you speak unskilfully: or if your  
knowledge be more it is much darkened in your malice.

LUCIO

Sir, I know him, and I love him.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Love talks with better knowledge, and knowledge with  
dearer love.

LUCIO

Come, sir, I know what I know.

DUKE VINCENTIO

I can hardly believe that, since you know not what you speak. But, if ever the duke return, as our prayers are he may, let me desire you to make your answer before him. If it be honest you have spoke, you have courage to maintain it: I am bound to call upon you; and, I pray you, your name?

LUCIO

Sir, my name is Lucio; well known to the duke.

DUKE VINCENTIO

He shall know you better, sir, if I may live to report you.

LUCIO

I fear you not.

DUKE VINCENTIO

O, you hope the duke will return no more; or you imagine me too unhurtful an opposite. But indeed I can do you little harm; you'll forswear this again.

LUCIO

I'll be hanged first: thou art deceived in me, friar. But no more of this. Canst thou tell if Claudio die to-morrow or no?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Why should he die, sir?

LUCIO

Why? For filling a bottle with a tundish. I would the duke we talk of were returned again: the ungenitured agent will unpeople the province with continency; sparrows must not build in his house-eaves, because they are lecherous. The duke yet would have dark deeds darkly answered; he would never bring them to light: would he were returned! Marry, this Claudio is condemned for untrussing. Farewell, good friar: I prithee, pray for me. The duke, I say to thee again, would eat mutton on Fridays. He's not past it yet, and I say to thee, he would mouth with a beggar, though she smelt brown bread and garlic: say that I said so. Farewell.

Exit

DUKE VINCENTIO

No might nor greatness in mortality  
Can censure 'scape; back-wounding calumny

The whitest virtue strikes. What king so strong  
 Can tie the gall up in the slanderous tongue?  
 But who comes here?

Enter ESCALUS, Provost, and Officers with MISTRESS OVERDONE

ESCALUS

Go; away with her to prison!

MISTRESS OVERDONE

Good my lord, be good to me; your honour is accounted  
 a merciful man; good my lord.

ESCALUS

Double and treble admonition, and still forfeit in  
 the same kind! This would make mercy swear and play  
 the tyrant.

Provost

A bawd of eleven years' continuance, may it please  
 your honour.

MISTRESS OVERDONE

My lord, this is one Lucio's information against me.  
 Mistress Kate Keepdown was with child by him in the  
 duke's time; he promised her marriage: his child  
 is a year and a quarter old, come Philip and Jacob:  
 I have kept it myself; and see how he goes about to abuse me!

ESCALUS

That fellow is a fellow of much licence: let him be  
 called before us. Away with her to prison! Go to;  
 no more words.

Exeunt Officers with MISTRESS OVERDONE  
 Provost, my brother Angelo will not be altered;  
 Claudio must die to-morrow: let him be furnished  
 with divines, and have all charitable preparation.  
 if my brother wrought by my pity, it should not be  
 so with him.

Provost

So please you, this friar hath been with him, and  
 advised him for the entertainment of death.

ESCALUS

Good even, good father.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Bliss and goodness on you!

ESCALUS

Of whence are you?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Not of this country, though my chance is now  
To use it for my time: I am a brother  
Of gracious order, late come from the See  
In special business from his holiness.

ESCALUS

What news abroad i' the world?

DUKE VINCENTIO

None, but that there is so great a fever on  
goodness, that the dissolution of it must cure it:  
novelty is only in request; and it is as dangerous  
to be aged in any kind of course, as it is virtuous  
to be constant in any undertaking. There is scarce  
truth enough alive to make societies secure; but  
security enough to make fellowships accurst: much  
upon this riddle runs the wisdom of the world. This  
news is old enough, yet it is every day's news. I  
pray you, sir, of what disposition was the duke?

ESCALUS

One that, above all other strifes, contended  
especially to know himself.

DUKE VINCENTIO

What pleasure was he given to?

ESCALUS

Rather rejoicing to see another merry, than merry at  
any thing which professed to make him rejoice: a  
gentleman of all temperance. But leave we him to  
his events, with a prayer they may prove prosperous;  
and let me desire to know how you find Claudio  
prepared. I am made to understand that you have  
lent him visitation.

DUKE VINCENTIO

He professes to have received no sinister measure  
from his judge, but most willingly humbles himself  
to the determination of justice: yet had he framed  
to himself, by the instruction of his frailty, many  
deceiving promises of life; which I by my good  
leisure have discredited to him, and now is he  
resolved to die.

ESCALUS

You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling. I have laboured for the poor gentleman to the extremest shore of my modesty: but my brother justice have I found so severe, that he hath forced me to tell him he is indeed Justice.

DUKE VINCENTIO

If his own life answer the straitness of his proceeding, it shall become him well; wherein if he chance to fail, he hath sentenced himself.

ESCALUS

I am going to visit the prisoner. Fare you well.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Peace be with you!

Exeunt ESCALUS and Provost  
 He who the sword of heaven will bear  
 Should be as holy as severe;  
 Pattern in himself to know,  
 Grace to stand, and virtue go;  
 More nor less to others paying  
 Than by self-offences weighing.  
 Shame to him whose cruel striking  
 Kills for faults of his own liking!  
 Twice treble shame on Angelo,  
 To weed my vice and let his grow!  
 O, what may man within him hide,  
 Though angel on the outward side!  
 How may likeness made in crimes,  
 Making practise on the times,  
 To draw with idle spiders' strings  
 Most ponderous and substantial things!  
 Craft against vice I must apply:  
 With Angelo to-night shall lie  
 His old betrothed but despised;  
 So disguise shall, by the disguised,  
 Pay with falsehood false exacting,  
 And perform an old contracting.

Exit

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## Act 4, Scene 1

SCENE I. The moated grange at ST. LUKE'S.

Enter MARIANA and a Boy

Boy sings

Take, O, take those lips away,  
That so sweetly were forsworn;  
And those eyes, the break of day,  
Lights that do mislead the morn:  
But my kisses bring again, bring again;  
Seals of love, but sealed in vain, sealed in vain.

MARIANA

Break off thy song, and haste thee quick away:  
Here comes a man of comfort, whose advice  
Hath often still'd my brawling discontent.

Exit Boy

Enter DUKE VINCENTIO disguised as before  
I cry you mercy, sir; and well could wish  
You had not found me here so musical:  
Let me excuse me, and believe me so,  
My mirth it much displeas'd, but pleas'd my woe.

DUKE VINCENTIO

'Tis good; though music oft hath such a charm  
To make bad good, and good provoke to harm.  
I pray, you, tell me, hath any body inquired  
for me here to-day? much upon this time have  
I promised here to meet.

MARIANA

You have not been inquired after:  
I have sat here all day.

Enter ISABELLA

DUKE VINCENTIO

I do constantly believe you. The time is come even  
now. I shall crave your forbearance a little: may  
be I will call upon you anon, for some advantage to yourself.

MARIANA

I am always bound to you.

Exit

DUKE VINCENTIO

Very well met, and well come.  
What is the news from this good deputy?

ISABELLA

He hath a garden circummured with brick,  
 Whose western side is with a vineyard back'd;  
 And to that vineyard is a planched gate,  
 That makes his opening with this bigger key:  
 This other doth command a little door  
 Which from the vineyard to the garden leads;  
 There have I made my promise  
 Upon the heavy middle of the night  
 To call upon him.

DUKE VINCENTIO

But shall you on your knowledge find this way?

ISABELLA

I have ta'en a due and wary note upon't:  
 With whispering and most guilty diligence,  
 In action all of precept, he did show me  
 The way twice o'er.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Are there no other tokens  
 Between you 'greed concerning her observance?

ISABELLA

No, none, but only a repair i' the dark;  
 And that I have possess'd him my most stay  
 Can be but brief; for I have made him know  
 I have a servant comes with me along,  
 That stays upon me, whose persuasion is  
 I come about my brother.

DUKE VINCENTIO

'Tis well borne up.  
 I have not yet made known to Mariana  
 A word of this. What, ho! within! come forth!

Re-enter MARIANA  
 I pray you, be acquainted with this maid;  
 She comes to do you good.

ISABELLA

I do desire the like.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Do you persuade yourself that I respect you?

MARIANA

Good friar, I know you do, and have found it.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Take, then, this your companion by the hand,  
 Who hath a story ready for your ear.  
 I shall attend your leisure: but make haste;  
 The vaporous night approaches.

MARIANA

Will't please you walk aside?

Exeunt MARIANA and ISABELLA

DUKE VINCENTIO

O place and greatness! millions of false eyes  
 Are stuck upon thee: volumes of report  
 Run with these false and most contrarious quests  
 Upon thy doings: thousand escapes of wit  
 Make thee the father of their idle dreams  
 And rack thee in their fancies.

Re-enter MARIANA and ISABELLA  
 Welcome, how agreed?

ISABELLA

She'll take the enterprise upon her, father,  
 If you advise it.

DUKE VINCENTIO

It is not my consent,  
 But my entreaty too.

ISABELLA

Little have you to say  
 When you depart from him, but, soft and low,  
 'Remember now my brother.'

MARIANA

Fear me not.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Nor, gentle daughter, fear you not at all.  
 He is your husband on a pre-contract:  
 To bring you thus together, 'tis no sin,  
 Sith that the justice of your title to him  
 Doth flourish the deceit. Come, let us go:  
 Our corn's to reap, for yet our tithe's to sow.

Exeunt

----

Act 4, Scene 2

SCENE II. A room in the prison.

Enter Provost and POMPEY

Provost

Come hither, sirrah. Can you cut off a man's head?

POMPEY

If the man be a bachelor, sir, I can; but if he be a married man, he's his wife's head, and I can never cut off a woman's head.

Provost

Come, sir, leave me your snatches, and yield me a direct answer. To-morrow morning are to die Claudio and Barnardine. Here is in our prison a common executioner, who in his office lacks a helper: if you will take it on you to assist him, it shall redeem you from your gyves; if not, you shall have your full time of imprisonment and your deliverance with an unpitied whipping, for you have been a notorious bawd.

POMPEY

Sir, I have been an unlawful bawd time out of mind; but yet I will be content to be a lawful hangman. I would be glad to receive some instruction from my fellow partner.

Provost

What, ho! Abhorson! Where's Abhorson, there?

Enter ABHORSON

ABHORSON

Do you call, sir?

Provost

Sirrah, here's a fellow will help you to-morrow in your execution. If you think it meet, compound with him by the year, and let him abide here with you; if not, use him for the present and dismiss him. He cannot plead his estimation with you; he hath been a bawd.

ABHORSON

A bawd, sir? fie upon him! he will discredit our mystery.

Provost

Go to, sir; you weigh equally; a feather will turn the scale.

Exit

POMPEY

Pray, sir, by your good favour,--for surely, sir, a good favour you have, but that you have a hanging look,--do you call, sir, your occupation a mystery?

ABHORSON

Ay, sir; a mystery

POMPEY

Painting, sir, I have heard say, is a mystery; and your whores, sir, being members of my occupation, using painting, do prove my occupation a mystery: but what mystery there should be in hanging, if I should be hanged, I cannot imagine.

ABHORSON

Sir, it is a mystery.

POMPEY

Proof?

ABHORSON

Every true man's apparel fits your thief: if it be too little for your thief, your true man thinks it big enough; if it be too big for your thief, your thief thinks it little enough: so every true man's apparel fits your thief.

Re-enter Provost

Provost

Are you agreed?

POMPEY

Sir, I will serve him; for I do find your hangman is a more penitent trade than your bawd; he doth oftener ask forgiveness.

Provost

You, sirrah, provide your block and your axe to-morrow four o'clock.

ABHORSON

Come on, bawd; I will instruct thee in my trade; follow.

POMPEY

I do desire to learn, sir: and I hope, if you have occasion to use me for your own turn, you shall find me yare; for truly, sir, for your kindness I owe you a good turn.

Provost

Call hither Barnardine and Claudio:

Exeunt POMPEY and ABHORSON  
The one has my pity; not a jot the other,  
Being a murderer, though he were my brother.

Enter CLAUDIO

Look, here's the warrant, Claudio, for thy death:  
'Tis now dead midnight, and by eight to-morrow  
Thou must be made immortal. Where's Barnardine?

CLAUDIO

As fast lock'd up in sleep as guiltless labour  
When it lies starkly in the traveller's bones:  
He will not wake.

Provost

Who can do good on him?  
Well, go, prepare yourself.

Knocking within  
But, hark, what noise?  
Heaven give your spirits comfort!

Exit CLAUDIO

By and by.  
I hope it is some pardon or reprieve  
For the most gentle Claudio.

Enter DUKE VINCENTIO disguised as before  
Welcome father.

DUKE VINCENTIO

The best and wholesomest spirits of the night  
Envelope you, good Provost! Who call'd here of late?

Provost

None, since the curfew rung.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Not Isabel?

Provost

No.

DUKE VINCENTIO

They will, then, ere't be long.

Provost

What comfort is for Claudio?

DUKE VINCENTIO

There's some in hope.

Provost

It is a bitter deputy.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Not so, not so; his life is parallel'd  
 Even with the stroke and line of his great justice:  
 He doth with holy abstinence subdue  
 That in himself which he spurs on his power  
 To qualify in others: were he meal'd with that  
 Which he corrects, then were he tyrannous;  
 But this being so, he's just.

Knocking within  
 Now are they come.

Exit Provost  
 This is a gentle provost: seldom when  
 The steeled gaoler is the friend of men.

Knocking within  
 How now! what noise? That spirit's possessed with haste  
 That wounds the unsisting postern with these strokes.

Re-enter Provost

Provost

There he must stay until the officer  
 Arise to let him in: he is call'd up.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Have you no countermand for Claudio yet,  
 But he must die to-morrow?

Provost

None, sir, none.

DUKE VINCENTIO

As near the dawning, provost, as it is,  
You shall hear more ere morning.

Provost

Happily  
You something know; yet I believe there comes  
No countermand; no such example have we:  
Besides, upon the very siege of justice  
Lord Angelo hath to the public ear  
Profess'd the contrary.

Enter a Messenger  
This is his lordship's man.

DUKE VINCENTIO

And here comes Claudio's pardon.

Messenger

[Giving a paper]  
My lord hath sent you this note; and by me this  
further charge, that you swerve not from the  
smallest article of it, neither in time, matter, or  
other circumstance. Good morrow; for, as I take it,  
it is almost day.

Provost

I shall obey him.

Exit Messenger

DUKE VINCENTIO

[Aside] This is his pardon, purchased by such sin  
For which the pardoner himself is in.  
Hence hath offence his quick celerity,  
When it is born in high authority:  
When vice makes mercy, mercy's so extended,  
That for the fault's love is the offender friended.  
Now, sir, what news?

Provost

I told you. Lord Angelo, belike thinking me remiss  
in mine office, awakens me with this unwonted  
putting-on; methinks strangely, for he hath not used it before.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Pray you, let's hear.

Provost

[Reads]

'Whatsoever you may hear to the contrary, let Claudio be executed by four of the clock; and in the afternoon Barnardine: for my better satisfaction, let me have Claudio's head sent me by five. Let this be duly performed; with a thought that more depends on it than we must yet deliver. Thus fail not to do your office, as you will answer it at your peril.'  
What say you to this, sir?

DUKE VINCENTIO

What is that Barnardine who is to be executed in the afternoon?

Provost

A Bohemian born, but here nursed un and bred; one that is a prisoner nine years old.

DUKE VINCENTIO

How came it that the absent duke had not either delivered him to his liberty or executed him? I have heard it was ever his manner to do so.

Provost

His friends still wrought reprieves for him: and, indeed, his fact, till now in the government of Lord Angelo, came not to an undoubtful proof.

DUKE VINCENTIO

It is now apparent?

Provost

Most manifest, and not denied by himself.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Hath he born himself penitently in prison? how seems he to be touched?

Provost

A man that apprehends death no more dreadfully but as a drunken sleep; careless, reckless, and fearless of what's past, present, or to come; insensible of mortality, and desperately mortal.

DUKE VINCENTIO

He wants advice.

Provost

He will hear none: he hath evermore had the liberty

of the prison; give him leave to escape hence, he would not: drunk many times a day, if not many days entirely drunk. We have very oft awaked him, as if to carry him to execution, and showed him a seeming warrant for it: it hath not moved him at all.

DUKE VINCENTIO

More of him anon. There is written in your brow, provost, honesty and constancy: if I read it not truly, my ancient skill beguiles me; but, in the boldness of my cunning, I will lay myself in hazard. Claudio, whom here you have warrant to execute, is no greater forfeit to the law than Angelo who hath sentenced him. To make you understand this in a manifested effect, I crave but four days' respite; for the which you are to do me both a present and a dangerous courtesy.

Provost

Pray, sir, in what?

DUKE VINCENTIO

In the delaying death.

Provost

A lack, how may I do it, having the hour limited, and an express command, under penalty, to deliver his head in the view of Angelo? I may make my case as Claudio's, to cross this in the smallest.

DUKE VINCENTIO

By the vow of mine order I warrant you, if my instructions may be your guide. Let this Barnardine be this morning executed, and his head born to Angelo.

Provost

Angelo hath seen them both, and will discover the favour.

DUKE VINCENTIO

O, death's a great disguiser; and you may add to it. Shave the head, and tie the beard; and say it was the desire of the penitent to be so bared before his death: you know the course is common. If any thing fall to you upon this, more than thanks and good fortune, by the saint whom I profess, I will plead against it with my life.

Provost

Pardon me, good father; it is against my oath.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Were you sworn to the duke, or to the deputy?

Provost

To him, and to his substitutes.

DUKE VINCENTIO

You will think you have made no offence, if the duke avouch the justice of your dealing?

Provost

But what likelihood is in that?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Not a resemblance, but a certainty. Yet since I see you fearful, that neither my coat, integrity, nor persuasion can with ease attempt you, I will go further than I meant, to pluck all fears out of you. Look you, sir, here is the hand and seal of the duke: you know the character, I doubt not; and the signet is not strange to you.

Provost

I know them both.

DUKE VINCENTIO

The contents of this is the return of the duke: you shall anon over-read it at your pleasure; where you shall find, within these two days he will be here. This is a thing that Angelo knows not; for he this very day receives letters of strange tenor; perchance of the duke's death; perchance entering into some monastery; but, by chance, nothing of what is writ. Look, the unfolding star calls up the shepherd. Put not yourself into amazement how these things should be: all difficulties are but easy when they are known. Call your executioner, and off with Barnardine's head: I will give him a present shrift and advise him for a better place. Yet you are amazed; but this shall absolutely resolve you. Come away; it is almost clear dawn.

Exeunt

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### Act 4, Scene 3

SCENE III. Another room in the same.

Enter POMPEY

POMPEY

I am as well acquainted here as I was in our house of profession: one would think it were Mistress Overdone's own house, for here be many of her old customers. First, here's young Master Rash; he's in for a commodity of brown paper and old ginger, ninescore and seventeen pounds; of which he made five marks, ready money: marry, then ginger was not much in request, for the old women were all dead. Then is there here one Master Caper, at the suit of Master Three-pile the mercer, for some four suits of peach-coloured satin, which now peaches him a beggar. Then have we here young Dizzy, and young Master Deep-vow, and Master Copperspur, and Master Starve-lackey the rapier and dagger man, and young Drop-heir that killed lusty Pudding, and Master Forthlight the tilter, and brave Master Shooty the great traveller, and wild Half-can that stabbed Pots, and, I think, forty more; all great doers in our trade, and are now 'for the Lord's sake.'

Enter ABHORSON

ABHORSON

Sirrah, bring Barnardine hither.

POMPEY

Master Barnardine! you must rise and be hanged.  
Master Barnardine!

ABHORSON

What, ho, Barnardine!

BARNARDINE

[Within] A pox o' your throats! Who makes that noise there? What are you?

POMPEY

Your friends, sir; the hangman. You must be so good, sir, to rise and be put to death.

BARNARDINE

[Within] Away, you rogue, away! I am sleepy.

ABHORSON

Tell him he must awake, and that quickly too.

POMPEY

Pray, Master Barnardine, awake till you are executed, and sleep afterwards.

ABHORSON

Go in to him, and fetch him out.

POMPEY

He is coming, sir, he is coming; I hear his straw rustle.

ABHORSON

Is the axe upon the block, sirrah?

POMPEY

Very ready, sir.

Enter BARNARDINE

BARNARDINE

How now, Abhorson? what's the news with you?

ABHORSON

Truly, sir, I would desire you to clap into your prayers; for, look you, the warrant's come.

BARNARDINE

You rogue, I have been drinking all night; I am not fitted for 't.

POMPEY

O, the better, sir; for he that drinks all night, and is hanged betimes in the morning, may sleep the sounder all the next day.

ABHORSON

Look you, sir; here comes your ghostly father: do we jest now, think you?

Enter DUKE VINCENTIO disguised as before

DUKE VINCENTIO

Sir, induced by my charity, and hearing how hastily you are to depart, I am come to advise you, comfort you and pray with you.

BARNARDINE

Friar, not I I have been drinking hard all night,

and I will have more time to prepare me, or they shall beat out my brains with billets: I will not consent to die this day, that's certain.

DUKE VINCENTIO

O, sir, you must: and therefore I beseech you  
Look forward on the journey you shall go.

BARNARDINE

I swear I will not die to-day for any man's  
persuasion.

DUKE VINCENTIO

But hear you.

BARNARDINE

Not a word: if you have any thing to say to me,  
come to my ward; for thence will not I to-day.

Exit

DUKE VINCENTIO

Unfit to live or die: O gravel heart!  
After him, fellows; bring him to the block.

Exeunt ABHORSON and POMPEY

Re-enter Provost

Provost

Now, sir, how do you find the prisoner?

DUKE VINCENTIO

A creature unprepared, unmeet for death;  
And to transport him in the mind he is  
Were damnable.

Provost

Here in the prison, father,  
There died this morning of a cruel fever  
One Ragozine, a most notorious pirate,  
A man of Claudio's years; his beard and head  
Just of his colour. What if we do omit  
This reprobate till he were well inclined;  
And satisfy the deputy with the visage  
Of Ragozine, more like to Claudio?

DUKE VINCENTIO

O, 'tis an accident that heaven provides!

Dispatch it presently; the hour draws on  
 Prefix'd by Angelo: see this be done,  
 And sent according to command; whiles I  
 Persuade this rude wretch willingly to die.

Provost

This shall be done, good father, presently.  
 But Barnardine must die this afternoon:  
 And how shall we continue Claudio,  
 To save me from the danger that might come  
 If he were known alive?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Let this be done.  
 Put them in secret holds, both Barnardine and Claudio:  
 Ere twice the sun hath made his journal greeting  
 To the under generation, you shall find  
 Your safety manifested.

Provost

I am your free dependant.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Quick, dispatch, and send the head to Angelo.

Exit Provost  
 Now will I write letters to Angelo,--  
 The provost, he shall bear them, whose contents  
 Shall witness to him I am near at home,  
 And that, by great injunctions, I am bound  
 To enter publicly: him I'll desire  
 To meet me at the consecrated fount  
 A league below the city; and from thence,  
 By cold gradation and well-balanced form,  
 We shall proceed with Angelo.

Re-enter Provost

Provost

Here is the head; I'll carry it myself.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Convenient is it. Make a swift return;  
 For I would commune with you of such things  
 That want no ear but yours.

Provost

I'll make all speed.

Exit

ISABELLA

[Within] Peace, ho, be here!

DUKE VINCENTIO

The tongue of Isabel. She's come to know  
If yet her brother's pardon be come hither:  
But I will keep her ignorant of her good,  
To make her heavenly comforts of despair,  
When it is least expected.

Enter ISABELLA

ISABELLA

Ho, by your leave!

DUKE VINCENTIO

Good morning to you, fair and gracious daughter.

ISABELLA

The better, given me by so holy a man.  
Hath yet the deputy sent my brother's pardon?

DUKE VINCENTIO

He hath released him, Isabel, from the world:  
His head is off and sent to Angelo.

ISABELLA

Nay, but it is not so.

DUKE VINCENTIO

It is no other: show your wisdom, daughter,  
In your close patience.

ISABELLA

O, I will to him and pluck out his eyes!

DUKE VINCENTIO

You shall not be admitted to his sight.

ISABELLA

Unhappy Claudio! wretched Isabel!  
Injurious world! most damned Angelo!

DUKE VINCENTIO

This nor hurts him nor profits you a jot;  
Forbear it therefore; give your cause to heaven.

Mark what I say, which you shall find  
 By every syllable a faithful verity:  
 The duke comes home to-morrow; nay, dry your eyes;  
 One of our convent, and his confessor,  
 Gives me this instance: already he hath carried  
 Notice to Escalus and Angelo,  
 Who do prepare to meet him at the gates,  
 There to give up their power. If you can, pace your wisdom  
 In that good path that I would wish it go,  
 And you shall have your bosom on this wretch,  
 Grace of the duke, revenges to your heart,  
 And general honour.

ISABELLA

I am directed by you.

DUKE VINCENTIO

This letter, then, to Friar Peter give;  
 'Tis that he sent me of the duke's return:  
 Say, by this token, I desire his company  
 At Mariana's house to-night. Her cause and yours  
 I'll perfect him withal, and he shall bring you  
 Before the duke, and to the head of Angelo  
 Accuse him home and home. For my poor self,  
 I am combined by a sacred vow  
 And shall be absent. Wend you with this letter:  
 Command these fretting waters from your eyes  
 With a light heart; trust not my holy order,  
 If I pervert your course. Who's here?

Enter LUCIO

LUCIO

Good even. Friar, where's the provost?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Not within, sir.

LUCIO

O pretty Isabella, I am pale at mine heart to see  
 thine eyes so red: thou must be patient. I am fain  
 to dine and sup with water and bran; I dare not for  
 my head fill my belly; one fruitful meal would set  
 me to 't. But they say the duke will be here  
 to-morrow. By my troth, Isabel, I loved thy brother:  
 if the old fantastical duke of dark corners had been  
 at home, he had lived.

Exit ISABELLA

DUKE VINCENTIO

Sir, the duke is marvellous little beholding to your

reports; but the best is, he lives not in them.

LUCIO

Friar, thou knowest not the duke so well as I do:  
he's a better woodman than thou takest him for.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Well, you'll answer this one day. Fare ye well.

LUCIO

Nay, tarry; I'll go along with thee  
I can tell thee pretty tales of the duke.

DUKE VINCENTIO

You have told me too many of him already, sir, if  
they be true; if not true, none were enough.

LUCIO

I was once before him for getting a wench with child.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Did you such a thing?

LUCIO

Yes, marry, did I but I was fain to forswear it;  
they would else have married me to the rotten medlar.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Sir, your company is fairer than honest. Rest you well.

LUCIO

By my troth, I'll go with thee to the lane's end:  
if bawdy talk offend you, we'll have very little of  
it. Nay, friar, I am a kind of burr; I shall stick.

Exeunt

----

### Act 4, Scene 4

SCENE IV. A room in ANGELO's house.

Enter ANGELO and ESCALUS

ESCALUS

Every letter he hath writ hath disvouched other.

ANGELO

In most uneven and distracted manner. His actions show much like to madness: pray heaven his wisdom be not tainted! And why meet him at the gates, and redeliver our authorities there

ESCALUS

I guess not.

ANGELO

And why should we proclaim it in an hour before his entering, that if any crave redress of injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street?

ESCALUS

He shows his reason for that: to have a dispatch of complaints, and to deliver us from devices hereafter, which shall then have no power to stand against us.

ANGELO

Well, I beseech you, let it be proclaimed betimes i' the morn; I'll call you at your house: give notice to such men of sort and suit as are to meet him.

ESCALUS

I shall, sir. Fare you well.

ANGELO

Good night.

Exit ESCALUS

This deed unshapes me quite, makes me unpregnant  
And dull to all proceedings. A deflower'd maid!  
And by an eminent body that enforced  
The law against it! But that her tender shame  
Will not proclaim against her maiden loss,  
How might she tongue me! Yet reason dares her no;  
For my authority bears of a credent bulk,  
That no particular scandal once can touch  
But it confounds the breather. He should have lived,  
Save that riotous youth, with dangerous sense,  
Might in the times to come have ta'en revenge,  
By so receiving a dishonour'd life  
With ransom of such shame. Would yet he had lived!  
A lack, when once our grace we have forgot,  
Nothing goes right: we would, and we would not.

Exit

----

### Act 4, Scene 5

SCENE V. Fields without the town.

Enter DUKE VINCENTIO in his own habit, and FRIAR PETER

DUKE VINCENTIO

These letters at fit time deliver me

Giving letters

The provost knows our purpose and our plot.  
 The matter being afoot, keep your instruction,  
 And hold you ever to our special drift;  
 Though sometimes you do blench from this to that,  
 As cause doth minister. Go call at Flavius' house,  
 And tell him where I stay: give the like notice  
 To Valentinus, Rowland, and to Crassus,  
 And bid them bring the trumpets to the gate;  
 But send me Flavius first.

FRIAR PETER

It shall be speeded well.

Exit

Enter VARRIUS

DUKE VINCENTIO

I thank thee, Varrius; thou hast made good haste:  
 Come, we will walk. There's other of our friends  
 Will greet us here anon, my gentle Varrius.

Exeunt

---

### Act 4, Scene 6

SCENE VI. Street near the city gate.

Enter ISABELLA and MARIANA

ISABELLA

To speak so indirectly I am loath:  
 I would say the truth; but to accuse him so,  
 That is your part: yet I am advised to do it;  
 He says, to veil full purpose.

MARIANA

Be ruled by him.

ISABELLA

Besides, he tells me that, if peradventure  
He speak against me on the adverse side,  
I should not think it strange; for 'tis a physic  
That's bitter to sweet end.

MARIANA

I would Friar Peter--

ISABELLA

O, peace! the friar is come.

Enter FRIAR PETER

FRIAR PETER

Come, I have found you out a stand most fit,  
Where you may have such vantage on the duke,  
He shall not pass you. Twice have the trumpets sounded;  
The generous and gravest citizens  
Have hent the gates, and very near upon  
The duke is entering: therefore, hence, away!

Exeunt

----

## Act 5, Scene 1

SCENE I. The city gate.

MARIANA veiled, ISABELLA, and FRIAR PETER, at their stand. Enter DUKE VINCENTIO, VARRIUS, Lords, ANGELO, ESCALUS, LUCIO, Provost, Officers, and Citizens, at several doors

DUKE VINCENTIO

My very worthy cousin, fairly met!  
Our old and faithful friend, we are glad to see you.

ANGELO ESCALUS

Happy return be to your royal grace!

DUKE VINCENTIO

Many and hearty thankings to you both.  
We have made inquiry of you; and we hear  
Such goodness of your justice, that our soul  
Cannot but yield you forth to public thanks,  
Forerunning more requital.

ANGELO

You make my bonds still greater.

DUKE VINCENTIO

O, your desert speaks loud; and I should wrong it,  
To lock it in the wards of covert bosom,  
When it deserves, with characters of brass,  
A fortified residence 'gainst the tooth of time  
And razure of oblivion. Give me your hand,  
And let the subject see, to make them know  
That outward courtesies would fain proclaim  
Favours that keep within. Come, Escalus,  
You must walk by us on our other hand;  
And good supporters are you.

FRIAR PETER and ISABELLA come forward

FRIAR PETER

Now is your time: speak loud and kneel before him.

ISABELLA

Justice, O royal duke! Vail your regard  
Upon a wrong'd, I would fain have said, a maid!  
O worthy prince, dishonour not your eye  
By throwing it on any other object  
Till you have heard me in my true complaint  
And given me justice, justice, justice, justice!

DUKE VINCENTIO

Relate your wrongs; in what? by whom? be brief.  
Here is Lord Angelo shall give you justice:  
Reveal yourself to him.

ISABELLA

O worthy duke,  
You bid me seek redemption of the devil:  
Hear me yourself; for that which I must speak  
Must either punish me, not being believed,  
Or wring redress from you. Hear me, O hear me, here!

ANGELO

My lord, her wits, I fear me, are not firm:  
She hath been a suitor to me for her brother  
Cut off by course of justice,--

ISABELLA

By course of justice!

ANGELO

And she will speak most bitterly and strange.

ISABELLA

Most strange, but yet most truly, will I speak:  
That Angelo's forsworn; is it not strange?  
That Angelo's a murderer; is 't not strange?  
That Angelo is an adulterous thief,  
An hypocrite, a virgin-violator;  
Is it not strange and strange?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Nay, it is ten times strange.

ISABELLA

It is not truer he is Angelo  
Than this is all as true as it is strange:  
Nay, it is ten times true; for truth is truth  
To the end of reckoning.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Away with her! Poor soul,  
She speaks this in the infirmity of sense.

ISABELLA

O prince, I conjure thee, as thou believest  
There is another comfort than this world,  
That thou neglect me not, with that opinion  
That I am touch'd with madness! Make not impossible  
That which but seems unlike: 'tis not impossible  
But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground,  
May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute  
As Angelo; even so may Angelo,  
In all his dressings, characts, titles, forms,  
Be an arch-villain; believe it, royal prince:  
If he be less, he's nothing; but he's more,  
Had I more name for badness.

DUKE VINCENTIO

By mine honesty,  
If she be mad,--as I believe no other,--  
Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense,  
Such a dependency of thing on thing,  
As e'er I heard in madness.

ISABELLA

O gracious duke,  
Harp not on that, nor do not banish reason  
For inequality; but let your reason serve  
To make the truth appear where it seems hid,  
And hide the false seems true.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Many that are not mad  
Have, sure, more lack of reason. What would you say?

ISABELLA

I am the sister of one Claudio,  
Condemn'd upon the act of fornication  
To lose his head; condemn'd by Angelo:  
I, in probation of a sisterhood,  
Was sent to by my brother; one Lucio  
As then the messenger,--

LUCIO

That's I, an't like your grace:  
I came to her from Claudio, and desired her  
To try her gracious fortune with Lord Angelo  
For her poor brother's pardon.

ISABELLA

That's he indeed.

DUKE VINCENTIO

You were not bid to speak.

LUCIO

No, my good lord;  
Nor wish'd to hold my peace.

DUKE VINCENTIO

I wish you now, then;  
Pray you, take note of it: and when you have  
A business for yourself, pray heaven you then  
Be perfect.

LUCIO

I warrant your honour.

DUKE VINCENTIO

The warrants for yourself; take heed to't.

ISABELLA

This gentleman told somewhat of my tale,--

LUCIO

Right.

DUKE VINCENTIO

It may be right; but you are i' the wrong  
To speak before your time. Proceed.

ISABELLA

I went  
To this pernicious caitiff deputy,--

DUKE VINCENTIO

That's somewhat madly spoken.

ISABELLA

Pardon it;  
The phrase is to the matter.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Mended again. The matter; proceed.

ISABELLA

In brief, to set the needless process by,  
How I persuaded, how I pray'd, and kneel'd,  
How he refell'd me, and how I replied,--  
For this was of much length,--the vile conclusion  
I now begin with grief and shame to utter:  
He would not, but by gift of my chaste body  
To his concupiscible intemperate lust,  
Release my brother; and, after much debatement,  
My sisterly remorse confutes mine honour,  
And I did yield to him: but the next morn betimes,  
His purpose surfeiting, he sends a warrant  
For my poor brother's head.

DUKE VINCENTIO

This is most likely!

ISABELLA

O, that it were as like as it is true!

DUKE VINCENTIO

By heaven, fond wretch, thou knowist not what thou speak'st,  
Or else thou art suborn'd against his honour  
In hateful practise. First, his integrity  
Stands without blemish. Next, it imports no reason  
That with such vehemency he should pursue  
Faults proper to himself: if he had so offended,  
He would have weigh'd thy brother by himself  
And not have cut him off. Some one hath set you on:  
Confess the truth, and say by whose advice  
Thou camest here to complain.

ISABELLA

And is this all?  
 Then, O you blessed ministers above,  
 Keep me in patience, and with ripen'd time  
 Unfold the evil which is here wrapt up  
 In countenance! Heaven shield your grace from woe,  
 As I, thus wrong'd, hence unbeliev'd go!

DUKE VINCENTIO

I know you'd fain be gone. An officer!  
 To prison with her! Shall we thus permit  
 A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall  
 On him so near us? This needs must be a practise.  
 Who knew of Your intent and coming hither?

ISABELLA

One that I would were here, Friar Lodowick.

DUKE VINCENTIO

A ghostly father, belike. Who knows that Lodowick?

LUCIO

My lord, I know him; 'tis a meddling friar;  
 I do not like the man: had he been lay, my lord  
 For certain words he spake against your grace  
 In your retirement, I had swung him soundly.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Words against me? this is a good friar, belike!  
 And to set on this wretched woman here  
 Against our substitute! Let this friar be found.

LUCIO

But yesternight, my lord, she and that friar,  
 I saw them at the prison: a saucy friar,  
 A very scurvy fellow.

FRIAR PETER

Blessed be your royal grace!  
 I have stood by, my lord, and I have heard  
 Your royal ear abused. First, hath this woman  
 Most wrongfully accused your substitute,  
 Who is as free from touch or soil with her  
 As she from one ungot.

DUKE VINCENTIO

We did believe no less.  
 Know you that Friar Lodowick that she speaks of?

FRIAR PETER

I know him for a man divine and holy;  
 Not scurvy, nor a temporary meddler,  
 As he's reported by this gentleman;  
 And, on my trust, a man that never yet  
 Did, as he vouches, misreport your grace.

LUCIO

My lord, most villanously; believe it.

FRIAR PETER

Well, he in time may come to clear himself;  
 But at this instant he is sick my lord,  
 Of a strange fever. Upon his mere request,  
 Being come to knowledge that there was complaint  
 Intended 'gainst Lord Angelo, came I hither,  
 To speak, as from his mouth, what he doth know  
 Is true and false; and what he with his oath  
 And all probation will make up full clear,  
 Whensoever he's convented. First, for this woman.  
 To justify this worthy nobleman,  
 So vulgarly and personally accused,  
 Her shall you hear disproved to her eyes,  
 Till she herself confess it.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Good friar, let's hear it.

ISABELLA is carried off guarded; and MARIANA comes forward  
 Do you not smile at this, Lord Angelo?  
 O heaven, the vanity of wretched fools!  
 Give us some seats. Come, cousin Angelo;  
 In this I'll be impartial; be you judge  
 Of your own cause. Is this the witness, friar?  
 First, let her show her face, and after speak.

MARIANA

Pardon, my lord; I will not show my face  
 Until my husband bid me.

DUKE VINCENTIO

What, are you married?

MARIANA

No, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Are you a maid?

MARIANA

No, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

A widow, then?

MARIANA

Neither, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Why, you are nothing then: neither maid, widow, nor wife?

LUCIO

My lord, she may be a punk; for many of them are  
neither maid, widow, nor wife.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Silence that fellow: I would he had some cause  
To prattle for himself.

LUCIO

Well, my lord.

MARIANA

My lord; I do confess I ne'er was married;  
And I confess besides I am no maid:  
I have known my husband; yet my husband  
Knows not that ever he knew me.

LUCIO

He was drunk then, my lord: it can be no better.

DUKE VINCENTIO

For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so too!

LUCIO

Well, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

This is no witness for Lord Angelo.

MARIANA

Now I come to't my lord  
She that accuses him of fornication,  
In self-same manner doth accuse my husband,

And charges him my lord, with such a time  
When I'll depose I had him in mine arms  
With all the effect of love.

ANGELO

Charges she more than me?

MARIANA

Not that I know.

DUKE VINCENTIO

No? you say your husband.

MARIANA

Why, just, my lord, and that is Angelo,  
Who thinks he knows that he ne'er knew my body,  
But knows he thinks that he knows Isabel's.

ANGELO

This is a strange abuse. Let's see thy face.

MARIANA

My husband bids me; now I will unmask.

Unveiling  
This is that face, thou cruel Angelo,  
Which once thou sworest was worth the looking on;  
This is the hand which, with a vow'd contract,  
Was fast belock'd in thine; this is the body  
That took away the match from Isabel,  
And did supply thee at thy garden-house  
In her imagined person.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Know you this woman?

LUCIO

Carnally, she says.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Sirrah, no more!

LUCIO

Enough, my lord.

ANGELO

My lord, I must confess I know this woman:

And five years since there was some speech of marriage  
 Betwixt myself and her; which was broke off,  
 Partly for that her promised proportions  
 Came short of composition, but in chief  
 For that her reputation was disvalued  
 In levity: since which time of five years  
 I never spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her,  
 Upon my faith and honour.

MARIANA

Noble prince,  
 As there comes light from heaven and words from breath,  
 As there is sense in truth and truth in virtue,  
 I am affianced this man's wife as strongly  
 As words could make up vows: and, my good lord,  
 But Tuesday night last gone in's garden-house  
 He knew me as a wife. As this is true,  
 Let me in safety raise me from my knees  
 Or else for ever be confixed here,  
 A marble monument!

ANGELO

I did but smile till now:  
 Now, good my lord, give me the scope of justice  
 My patience here is touch'd. I do perceive  
 These poor informal women are no more  
 But instruments of some more mightier member  
 That sets them on: let me have way, my lord,  
 To find this practise out.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Ay, with my heart  
 And punish them to your height of pleasure.  
 Thou foolish friar, and thou pernicious woman,  
 Compact with her that's gone, think'st thou thy oaths,  
 Though they would swear down each particular saint,  
 Were testimonies against his worth and credit  
 That's seal'd in approbation? You, Lord Escalus,  
 Sit with my cousin; lend him your kind pains  
 To find out this abuse, whence 'tis derived.  
 There is another friar that set them on;  
 Let him be sent for.

FRIAR PETER

Would he were here, my lord! for he indeed  
 Hath set the women on to this complaint:  
 Your provost knows the place where he abides  
 And he may fetch him.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Go do it instantly.

Exit Provost

And you, my noble and well-warranted cousin,  
Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth,  
Do with your injuries as seems you best,  
In any chastisement: I for a while will leave you;  
But stir not you till you have well determined  
Upon these slanderers.

ESCALUS

My lord, we'll do it throughly.

Exit DUKE  
Signior Lucio, did not you say you knew that  
Friar Lodowick to be a dishonest person?

LUCIO

'Cucullus non facit monachum:' honest in nothing  
but in his clothes; and one that hath spoke most  
villanous speches of the duke.

ESCALUS

We shall entreat you to abide here till he come and  
enforce them against him: we shall find this friar a  
notable fellow.

LUCIO

As any in Vienna, on my word.

ESCALUS

Call that same Isabel here once again; I would speak with her.

Exit an Attendant  
Pray you, my lord, give me leave to question; you  
shall see how I'll handle her.

LUCIO

Not better than he, by her own report.

ESCALUS

Say you?

LUCIO

Marry, sir, I think, if you handled her privately,  
she would sooner confess: perchance, publicly,  
she'll be ashamed.

ESCALUS

I will go darkly to work with her.

LUCIO

That's the way; for women are light at midnight.

Re-enter Officers with ISABELLA; and Provost with the DUKE VINCENTIO in his friar's habit

ESCALUS

Come on, mistress: here's a gentlewoman denies all that you have said.

LUCIO

My lord, here comes the rascal I spoke of; here with the provost.

ESCALUS

In very good time: speak not you to him till we call upon you.

LUCIO

Mum.

ESCALUS

Come, sir: did you set these women on to slander Lord Angelo? they have confessed you did.

DUKE VINCENTIO

'Tis false.

ESCALUS

How! know you where you are?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Respect to your great place! and let the devil  
Be sometime honour'd for his burning throne!  
Where is the duke? 'tis he should hear me speak.

ESCALUS

The duke's in us; and we will hear you speak:  
Look you speak justly.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Boldly, at least. But, O, poor souls,  
Come you to seek the lamb here of the fox?  
Good night to your redress! Is the duke gone?  
Then is your cause gone too. The duke's unjust,  
Thus to retort your manifest appeal,  
And put your trial in the villain's mouth  
Which here you come to accuse.

LUCIO

This is the rascal; this is he I spoke of.

ESCALUS

Why, thou unreverend and unhallow'd friar,  
Is't not enough thou hast suborn'd these women  
To accuse this worthy man, but, in foul mouth  
And in the witness of his proper ear,  
To call him villain? and then to glance from him  
To the duke himself, to tax him with injustice?  
Take him hence; to the rack with him! We'll touse you  
Joint by joint, but we will know his purpose.  
What 'unjust'!

DUKE VINCENTIO

Be not so hot; the duke  
Dare no more stretch this finger of mine than he  
Dare rack his own: his subject am I not,  
Nor here provincial. My business in this state  
Made me a looker on here in Vienna,  
Where I have seen corruption boil and bubble  
Till it o'er-run the stew; laws for all faults,  
But faults so countenanced, that the strong statutes  
Stand like the forfeits in a barber's shop,  
As much in mock as mark.

ESCALUS

Slander to the state! Away with him to prison!

ANGELO

What can you vouch against him, Signior Lucio?  
Is this the man that you did tell us of?

LUCIO

'Tis he, my lord. Come hither, goodman baldpate:  
do you know me?

DUKE VINCENTIO

I remember you, sir, by the sound of your voice: I  
met you at the prison, in the absence of the duke.

LUCIO

O, did you so? And do you remember what you said of the duke?

DUKE VINCENTIO

Most notedly, sir.

LUCIO

Do you so, sir? And was the duke a fleshmonger, a fool, and a coward, as you then reported him to be?

DUKE VINCENTIO

You must, sir, change persons with me, ere you make that my report: you, indeed, spoke so of him; and much more, much worse.

LUCIO

O thou damnable fellow! Did not I pluck thee by the nose for thy speeches?

DUKE VINCENTIO

I protest I love the duke as I love myself.

ANGELO

Hark, how the villain would close now, after his treasonable abuses!

ESCALUS

Such a fellow is not to be talked withal. Away with him to prison! Where is the provost? Away with him to prison! lay bolts enough upon him: let him speak no more. Away with those giglots too, and with the other confederate companion!

DUKE VINCENTIO

[To Provost] Stay, sir; stay awhile.

ANGELO

What, resists he? Help him, Lucio.

LUCIO

Come, sir; come, sir; come, sir; foh, sir! Why, you bald-pated, lying rascal, you must be hooded, must you? Show your knave's visage, with a pox to you! show your sheep-biting face, and be hanged an hour! Will't not off?

Pulls off the friar's hood, and discovers DUKE VINCENTIO

DUKE VINCENTIO

Thou art the first knave that e'er madest a duke. First, provost, let me bail these gentle three.

To LUCIO

Sneak not away, sir; for the friar and you must have a word anon. Lay hold on him.

LUCIO

This may prove worse than hanging.

DUKE VINCENTIO

[To ESCALUS] What you have spoke I pardon: sit you down:  
We'll borrow place of him.

To ANGELO

Sir, by your leave.

Hast thou or word, or wit, or impudence,  
That yet can do thee office? If thou hast,  
Rely upon it till my tale be heard,  
And hold no longer out.

ANGELO

O my dread lord,  
I should be guiltier than my guiltiness,  
To think I can be undiscernible,  
When I perceive your grace, like power divine,  
Hath look'd upon my passes. Then, good prince,  
No longer session hold upon my shame,  
But let my trial be mine own confession:  
Immediate sentence then and sequent death  
Is all the grace I beg.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Come hither, Mariana.

Say, wast thou e'er contracted to this woman?

ANGELO

I was, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Go take her hence, and marry her instantly.  
Do you the office, friar; which consummate,  
Return him here again. Go with him, provost.

Exeunt ANGELO, MARIANA, FRIAR PETER and Provost

ESCALUS

My lord, I am more amazed at his dishonour  
Than at the strangeness of it.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Come hither, Isabel.

Your friar is now your prince: as I was then  
Advertising and holy to your business,  
Not changing heart with habit, I am still  
Attorney'd at your service.

ISABELLA

O, give me pardon,  
That I, your vassal, have employ'd and pain'd  
Your unknown sovereignty!

DUKE VINCENTIO

You are pardon'd, Isabel:  
And now, dear maid, be you as free to us.  
Your brother's death, I know, sits at your heart;  
And you may marvel why I obscured myself,  
Labouring to save his life, and would not rather  
Make rash remonstrance of my hidden power  
Than let him so be lost. O most kind maid,  
It was the swift celerity of his death,  
Which I did think with slower foot came on,  
That brain'd my purpose. But, peace be with him!  
That life is better life, past fearing death,  
Than that which lives to fear: make it your comfort,  
So happy is your brother.

ISABELLA

I do, my lord.

Re-enter ANGELO, MARIANA, FRIAR PETER, and Provost

DUKE VINCENTIO

For this new-married man approaching here,  
Whose salt imagination yet hath wrong'd  
Your well defended honour, you must pardon  
For Mariana's sake: but as he adjudged your brother,--  
Being criminal, in double violation  
Of sacred chastity and of promise-breach  
Thereon dependent, for your brother's life,--  
The very mercy of the law cries out  
Most audible, even from his proper tongue,  
'An Angelo for Claudio, death for death!'  
Haste still pays haste, and leisure answers leisure;  
Like doth quit like, and MEASURE still FOR MEASURE.  
Then, Angelo, thy fault's thus manifested;  
Which, though thou wouldst deny, denies thee vantage.  
We do condemn thee to the very block  
Where Claudio stoop'd to death, and with like haste.  
Away with him!

MARIANA

O my most gracious lord,  
I hope you will not mock me with a husband.

DUKE VINCENTIO

It is your husband mock'd you with a husband.  
Consenting to the safeguard of your honour,

I thought your marriage fit; else imputation,  
 For that he knew you, might reproach your life  
 And choke your good to come; for his possessions,  
 Although by confiscation they are ours,  
 We do instate and widow you withal,  
 To buy you a better husband.

MARIANA

O my dear lord,  
 I crave no other, nor no better man.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Never crave him; we are definitive.

MARIANA

Gentle my liege,--  
 Kneeling

DUKE VINCENTIO

You do but lose your labour.  
 Away with him to death!

To LUCIO  
 Now, sir, to you.

MARIANA

O my good lord! Sweet Isabel, take my part;  
 Lend me your knees, and all my life to come  
 I'll lend you all my life to do you service.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Against all sense you do importune her:  
 Should she kneel down in mercy of this fact,  
 Her brother's ghost his paved bed would break,  
 And take her hence in horror.

MARIANA

Isabel,  
 Sweet Isabel, do yet but kneel by me;  
 Hold up your hands, say nothing; I'll speak all.  
 They say, best men are moulded out of faults;  
 And, for the most, become much more the better  
 For being a little bad: so may my husband.  
 O Isabel, will you not lend a knee?

DUKE VINCENTIO

He dies for Claudio's death.

ISABELLA

Most bounteous sir,

Kneeling

Look, if it please you, on this man condemn'd,  
 As if my brother lived: I partly think  
 A due sincerity govern'd his deeds,  
 Till he did look on me: since it is so,  
 Let him not die. My brother had but justice,  
 In that he did the thing for which he died:  
 For Angelo,  
 His act did not o'ertake his bad intent,  
 And must be buried but as an intent  
 That perish'd by the way: thoughts are no subjects;  
 Intents but merely thoughts.

MARIANA

Merely, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Your suit's unprofitable; stand up, I say.  
 I have bethought me of another fault.  
 Provost, how came it Claudio was beheaded  
 At an unusual hour?

Provost

It was commanded so.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Had you a special warrant for the deed?

Provost

No, my good lord; it was by private message.

DUKE VINCENTIO

For which I do discharge you of your office:  
 Give up your keys.

Provost

Pardon me, noble lord:  
 I thought it was a fault, but knew it not;  
 Yet did repent me, after more advice;  
 For testimony whereof, one in the prison,  
 That should by private order else have died,  
 I have reserved alive.

DUKE VINCENTIO

What's he?

Provost

His name is Barnardine.

DUKE VINCENTIO

I would thou hadst done so by Claudio.  
Go fetch him hither; let me look upon him.

Exit Provost

ESCALUS

I am sorry, one so learned and so wise  
As you, Lord Angelo, have still appear'd,  
Should slip so grossly, both in the heat of blood.  
And lack of temper'd judgment afterward.

ANGELO

I am sorry that such sorrow I procure:  
And so deep sticks it in my penitent heart  
That I crave death more willingly than mercy;  
'Tis my deserving, and I do entreat it.

Re-enter Provost, with BARNARDINE, CLAUDIO muffled, and JULIET

DUKE VINCENTIO

Which is that Barnardine?

Provost

This, my lord.

DUKE VINCENTIO

There was a friar told me of this man.  
Sirrah, thou art said to have a stubborn soul.  
That apprehends no further than this world,  
And squarest thy life according. Thou'rt condemn'd:  
But, for those earthly faults, I quit them all;  
And pray thee take this mercy to provide  
For better times to come. Friar, advise him;  
I leave him to your hand. What muffled fellow's that?

Provost

This is another prisoner that I saved.  
Who should have died when Claudio lost his head;  
As like almost to Claudio as himself.

Unmuffles CLAUDIO

DUKE VINCENTIO

[To ISABELLA] If he be like your brother, for his sake  
Is he pardon'd; and, for your lovely sake,  
Give me your hand and say you will be mine.

He is my brother too: but fitter time for that.  
 By this Lord Angelo perceives he's safe;  
 Methinks I see a quickening in his eye.  
 Well, Angelo, your evil quits you well:  
 Look that you love your wife; her worth worth yours.  
 I find an apt remission in myself;  
 And yet here's one in place I cannot pardon.

To LUCIO  
 You, sirrah, that knew me for a fool, a coward,  
 One all of luxury, an ass, a madman;  
 Wherein have I so deserved of you,  
 That you extol me thus?

LUCIO

'Faith, my lord. I spoke it but according to the  
 trick. If you will hang me for it, you may; but I  
 had rather it would please you I might be whipt.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Whipt first, sir, and hanged after.  
 Proclaim it, provost, round about the city.  
 Is any woman wrong'd by this lewd fellow,  
 As I have heard him swear himself there's one  
 Whom he begot with child, let her appear,  
 And he shall marry her: the nuptial finish'd,  
 Let him be whipt and hang'd.

LUCIO

I beseech your highness, do not marry me to a whore.  
 Your highness said even now, I made you a duke:  
 good my lord, do not recompense me in making me a cuckold.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Upon mine honour, thou shalt marry her.  
 Thy slanders I forgive; and therewithal  
 Remit thy other forfeits. Take him to prison;  
 And see our pleasure herein executed.

LUCIO

Marrying a punk, my lord, is pressing to death,  
 whipping, and hanging.

DUKE VINCENTIO

Slandering a prince deserves it.

Exit Officers with LUCIO  
 She, Claudio, that you wrong'd, look you restore.  
 Joy to you, Mariana! Love her, Angelo:  
 I have confess'd her and I know her virtue.  
 Thanks, good friend Escalus, for thy much goodness:  
 There's more behind that is more grate.

Thanks, provost, for thy care and secrecy:  
We shill employ thee in a worthier place.  
Forgive him, Angelo, that brought you home  
The head of Ragozine for Claudio's:  
The offence pardons itself. Dear Isabel,  
I have a motion much imports your good;  
Whereto if you'll a willing ear incline,  
What's mine is yours and what is yours is mine.  
So, bring us to our palace; where we'll show  
What's yet behind, that's meet you all should know.

Exeunt

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