

# Measure for Measure

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## 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*