

# Measure for Measure

## 1.1

*Enter the Duke, Escalus, and other lords*

DUKE      Escalus.

ESCALUS      My lord.

DUKE

Of government the properties to unfold  
Would seem in me t'affect speech and discourse,  
Since I am put to know that your own science      5  
Exceeds in that the lists of all advice  
My strength can give you. Then no more remains  
But this: to your sufficiency, as your worth is able,  
And let them work. The nature of our people,  
Our city's institutions and the terms      10  
For common justice, you're as pregnant in  
As art and practice hath enrich'd any  
That we remember.

*He gives Escalus papers*

   There is our commission,  
From which we would not have you warp.  
(To a lord)      Call hither,  
I say bid come before us, Angelo.      15

*Exit lord*

(To Escalus)      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, dressed him with our love,  
And given his deputation all the organs      20  
Of our own power. What think you of it?

ESCALUS

If any in Vienna be of worth  
To undergo such ample grace and honour,  
It is Lord Angelo.

*Enter Angelo*

DUKE      Look where he comes.

ANGELO

Always obedient to your grace's will,      25

I come to know your pleasure.

**DUKE**

Angelo,

There is a kind of character in thy life  
That to th'observer doth thy history  
Fully unfold. Thyself and thy belongings  
Are not thine own so proper as to waste 30  
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 touched 35  
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 40  
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, 45  
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 stamped upon it.

**DUKE**

No more evasion.

50

We have with leavened and prepare'd choice  
Proceeded to you; therefore take your honours.

*[Angelo takes his commission]*

Our haste from hence is of so quick condition  
That it prefers itself, and leaves unquestioned  
Matters of needful value. We shall write to you 55  
As time and our concernings shall importune,  
How it goes with us; and do look to know  
What doth befall you here. So fare you well.  
To th' hopeful execution do I leave you  
Of your commissions.

**ANGELO**

Yet give leave, my lord,

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That we may bring you something on the way.

**DUKE** My haste may not admit it;  
Nor need you, on mine honour, have to do  
With any scruple. Your scope is as mine own,  
So to enforce or qualify the laws 65  
As to your soul seems good. Give me your hand.  
I'll privily away. I love the people,  
But do not like to stage me to their eyes.  
Though it do well, I do not relish well  
Their loud applause and aves vehement; 70  
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. 75

*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. 80

**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*