



Shakespeare Selection

For our Shakespeare selection, we have chosen "Measure for Measure."

Read it from Charles & Mary Lamb's *Tales of Shakespeare* in the following pages. But we also recommend reading the actual play together as a family if you can. (We will link to the Folger Library for this.)

Your older kids and teens may enjoy watching a movie adaptation (please pre-screen these first). And if you can take in a live performance, your family will never forget it!

We are including a link on our website to watch a pre-recorded stage performance of "Measure for Measure" by the Texas Shakespeare Festival.

Shakespeare



Measure for Measure

by Charles & Mary Lamb

In the city of Vienna there once reigned a duke of such a mild and gentle temper, that he suffered his subjects to neglect the laws with impunity; and there was in particular one law, the existence of which was almost forgotten, the duke never having put it in force during his whole reign. This was a law dooming any man to the punishment of death, who should live with a woman that was not his wife; and this law, through the lenity of the duke, being utterly disregarded, the holy institution of marriage became neglected, and complaints were every day made to the duke by the parents of the young ladies in Vienna, that their daughters had been seduced from their protection, and were living as the companions of single men.

The good duke perceived with sorrow this growing evil among his subjects; but he thought that a sudden change in himself from the indulgence he had hitherto shown, to the strict severity requisite to check this abuse, would make his people (who had hitherto loved him) consider him as a tyrant; therefore he determined to absent himself a while from his dukedom, and depute another to the full exercise of his power, that the law against these dishonourable lovers might be put in effect, without giving offence by an unusual severity in his own person.

Angelo, a man who bore the reputation of a saint in Vienna for his strict and rigid life, was chosen by the duke as a fit person to undertake this important charge; and when the duke imparted his design to Lord Escalus, his chief counsellor, Escalus said, "If any man in Vienna be of worth to undergo such ample grace and honour, it is Lord Angelo." And now the duke departed from Vienna under pretence of making a journey into Poland, leaving Angelo to act as the lord deputy in his absence; but the duke's absence was only a feigned one, for he privately returned to Vienna, habited like a friar, with the intent to watch unseen the conduct of the saintly-seeming Angelo.

It happened just about the time that Angelo was invested with his new dignity, that a gentleman, whose name was Claudio, had seduced a young lady from her parents; and for this offence, by command of the new lord deputy, Claudio was taken up and committed to prison, and by virtue of the old law which had been so long neglected, Angelo sentenced Claudio to be beheaded. Great interest was made for the pardon of young Claudio, and the good old Lord Escalus himself interceded for him. "Alas," said he, "this gentleman whom I would save had an honourable father, for whose sake I pray you pardon the young man's transgression." But Angelo replied, "We must not make a scare-crow of the law, setting it up to frighten birds of prey, till custom, finding it harmless, makes it their perch, and not their terror. Sir, he must die."

Lucio, the friend of Claudio, visited him in the prison, and Claudio said to him, "I pray you, Lucio, do me this kind service. Go to my sister Isabel, who this day proposes to enter the convent of Saint Clare; acquaint her with the danger of my state; implore her that she make friends with the strict deputy; bid her go herself to Angelo."

I have great hopes in that; for she can discourse with prosperous art, and well she can persuade; besides, there is a speechless dialect in youthful sorrow, such as moves men."

Isabel, the sister of Claudio, had, as he said, that day entered upon her noviciate in the convent, and it was her intent, after passing through her probation as a novice, to take the veil, and she was inquiring of a nun concerning the rules of the convent, when they heard the voice of Lucio, who, as he entered that religious house, said, "Peace be in this place!"—"Who is it that speaks?" said Isabel. "It is a man's voice," replied the nun: "Gentle Isabel, go to him, and learn his business; you may, I may not. When you have taken the veil, 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."—"And have you nuns no further privileges?" said Isabel. "Are not these large enough?" replied the nun. "Yes, truly," said Isabel: "I speak not as desiring more, but rather wishing a more strict restraint upon the sisterhood, the votarists of Saint Clare." Again they heard the voice of Lucio, and the nun said, "He calls again. I pray you answer him." Isabel then went out to Lucio, and in answer to his salutation, said, "Peace and Prosperity! Who is it that calls?" Then Lucio, approaching her with reverence, said, "Hail, virgin, if such you be, as the roses on your cheeks proclaim you are no less! can you bring me to the sight of Isabel, a novice of this place, and the fair sister to her unhappy brother Claudio?"—"Why her unhappy brother?" said Isabel, "let me ask! for I am that Isabel, and his sister."—"Fair and gentle lady," he replied, "your brother kindly greets you by me; he is in prison."—"Woe is me! for what?" said Isabel. Lucio then told her, Claudio was imprisoned for seducing a young maiden. "Ah," said she, "I fear it is my cousin Juliet." Juliet and Isabel were not related, but they called each other cousin in remembrance of their school days' friendship; and as Isabel knew that Juliet loved Claudio, she feared she had been led by her affection for him into this transgression. "She it is," replied Lucio. "Why then, let my brother marry Juliet," said Isabel. Lucio replied that Claudio would gladly marry Juliet, but that the lord deputy had sentenced him to die for his offence; "Unless," said he, "you have the grace by your fair prayer to soften Angelo, and that is my business between you and your poor brother."—"Alas!" said Isabel, "what poor ability is there in me to do him good? I doubt I have no power to move Angelo."—"Our doubts are traitors," said Lucio, "and make us lose the good we might often win, by fearing to attempt it. Go to Lord Angelo! When maidens sue, and kneel, and weep, men give like gods."—"I will see what I can do," said Isabel: "I will but stay to give the prioress notice of the affair, and then I will go to Angelo. Commend me to my brother: soon at night I will send him word of my success."

Isabel hastened to the palace, and threw herself on her knees before Angelo, saying, "I am a woful suitor to your honour, if it will please your honour to hear me."—"Well, what is your suit?" said Angelo. She then made her petition in the most moving terms for her brother's life. But Angelo said, "Maiden, there is no remedy; your brother is sentenced, and he must die."—"O just, but severe law," said Isabel: "I had a brother then—Heaven keep your honour!" and she was about to depart. But Lucio, who had accompanied her, said, "Give it not over so; return 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 a more tame tongue desire it." Then again Isabel on her knees implored for mercy. "He is sentenced," said Angelo: "it is too late."—"Too late!" said Isabel: "Why, no: I that do speak a word may call it back again. Believe this, my lord, no ceremony that to great ones belongs, not the king's crown, nor the deputed sword, the marshal's truncheon, nor the judge's robe, becomes them with one half so good a grace as mercy does."—"Pray you begone," said Angelo. But still Isabel entreated; and she said, "If my brother had been as you, and you as he, you might have slipped like him, but he, like you, would not have been so stern. I would to heaven I had your power, and you were Isabel. Should it then be thus? No, I would tell you what it were to be a judge, and what a prisoner."—"Be content, fair maid!" said Angelo: "it is the law, not I, condemns your brother. Were he my kinsman, my brother, or my son, it should be thus with him. He must die to-morrow."—"To-morrow?" said Isabel; "Oh, that is sudden: spare him, spare him; he is not prepared for death. Even for our kitchens we kill the fowl in season; shall we serve Heaven with less respect than we minister to our gross selves? Good, good, my lord, bethink you, none have died for my brother's offence, though many have committed it. So you would be the first that gives this sentence, and he the first that suffers it. Go to your own bosom, my lord; knock there, and ask your heart what it does know that is like my brother's fault; if it confess a natural guiltiness such as his is, let it not sound a thought against my brother's life!" Her last words more moved Angelo than all she had before said, for the beauty of Isabel had raised a guilty passion in his heart, and he began to form thoughts of dishonourable love, such as Claudio's crime had been; and the conflict in his mind made him to turn away from Isabel; but she called him back, saying, "Gentle my lord, turn back; hark, how I will bribe you. Good my lord, turn back!"—"How, bribe me!" said Angelo, astonished that she should think of offering him a bribe. "Ay," said Isabel, "with such gifts that Heaven itself shall share with you; not with golden treasures, or those glittering stones, whose price is either rich or poor as fancy values them, but with true prayers that shall be up to Heaven before sunrise,—prayers from preserved souls, from fasting maids whose minds are dedicated to nothing temporal."—"Well, come to me to-morrow," said Angelo. And for this short respite of her brother's life, and for this permission that she might be heard again, she left him with the joyful hope that she should at last prevail over his stern nature: and as she went away she said, "Heaven keep your honour safe! Heaven save your honour!" Which when Angelo heard, he said within his heart, "Amen, I would be saved from thee and from thy virtues:" and then, affrighted at his own evil thoughts, he said, "What is this? What is this? Do I love her, that I desire to hear her speak again, and feast upon her eyes? What is it I dream on? The cunning enemy of mankind, to catch a saint, with saints does bait the hook. Never could an immodest woman once stir my temper, but this virtuous woman subdues me quite. Even till now, when men were fond, I smiled and wondered at them."

In the guilty conflict in his mind Angelo suffered more that night than the prisoner he had so severely sentenced; for in the prison Claudio was visited by the good duke, who, in his friar's habit, taught the young man the way to heaven, preaching to him the words of penitence and peace. But Angelo felt all the pangs of irresolute guilt: now wishing to seduce Isabel from the paths of innocence and honour, and now suffering remorse and horror for a crime as yet but intentional. But in the end his evil thoughts prevailed; and he who had so lately started at the offer of a bribe, resolved to tempt this maiden with so high a bribe, as she might not be able to resist, even with the precious gift of her dear brother's life.

When Isabel came in the morning, Angelo desired she might be admitted alone to his presence: and being there, he said to her, if she would yield to him her virgin honour and transgress even as Juliet had done with Claudio, he would give her her brother's life; "For," said he, "I love you, Isabel."—"My brother," said Isabel, "did so love Juliet, and yet you tell me he shall die for it."—"But," said Angelo, "Claudio shall not die, if you will consent to visit me by stealth at night, even as Juliet left her father's house at night to come to Claudio." Isabel, in amazement at his words, that he should tempt her to the same fault for which he passed sentence upon her brother, said, "I would do as much for my poor brother as for myself; that is, were I under sentence of death, the impression of keen whips I would wear as rubies, and go to my death as to a bed that longing I had been sick for, ere I would yield myself up to this shame." And then she told him, she hoped he only spoke these words to try her virtue. But he said, "Believe me, on my honour, my words express my purpose." Isabel, angered to the heart to hear him use the word Honour to express such dishonourable purposes, said, "Ha! little honour to be much believed; and most pernicious purpose. I will proclaim thee, Angelo, look for it! Sign me a present pardon for my brother, or I will tell the world aloud what man thou art!"—"Who will believe you, Isabel?" said Angelo; "my unsoiled name, the austereness of my life, my word vouched against yours, will outweigh your accusation. Redeem your brother by yielding to my will, or he shall die to-morrow. As for you, say what you can, my false will overweigh your true story. Answer me to-morrow."

"To whom should I complain? Did I tell this, who would believe me?" said Isabel, as she went towards the dreary prison where her brother was confined. When she arrived there, her brother was in pious conversation with the duke, who in his friar's habit had also visited Juliet, and brought both these guilty lovers to a proper sense of their fault; and unhappy Juliet with tears and a true remorse confessed that she was more to blame than Claudio, in that she willingly consented to his dishonourable solicitations.

As Isabel entered the room where Claudio was confined, she said, "Peace be here, grace, and good company!"—"Who is there?" said the disguised duke; "come in; the wish deserves a welcome."—"My business is a word or two with Claudio," said Isabel. Then the duke left them together, and desired the provost, who had the charge of the prisoners, to place him where he might overhear their conversation.

"Now, sister, what is the comfort?" said Claudio. Isabel told him he must prepare for death on the morrow. "Is there no remedy?" said Claudio.—"Yes, brother," replied Isabel, "there is; but such a one, as if you consented to it would strip your honour from you, and leave you naked."—"Let me know the point," said Claudio. "O, I do fear you, Claudio!" replied his sister; "and I quake, lest you should wish to live, and more respect the trifling term of six or seven winters added to your life, than your perpetual honour! Do you dare to die? The sense of death is most in apprehension, and the poor beetle that we tread upon, feels a pang as great as when a giant dies." "Why do you give me this shame?" said Claudio. "Think you I can fetch a resolution from flowery tenderness? If I must die, I will encounter darkness as a bride, and hug it in my arms."—"There spoke my brother," said Isabel; "there my father's grave did utter forth a voice. Yes, you must die; yet would you think it, Claudio! this outward sainted deputy, if I would yield to him my virgin honour, would grant your life. O, were it but my life, I would lay it down for your deliverance as frankly as a pin!"—"Thanks, dear Isabel," said Claudio. "Be ready to die to-morrow," said Isabel. "Death is a fearful thing," said Claudio. "And shamed life a hateful," replied his sister. But the thoughts of death now overcame the constancy of Claudio's temper, and terrors, such as the guilty only at their deaths do know, assailing him, he cried out, "Sweet sister, let me live! The sin you do to save a brother's life, nature dispenses with the deed

so far, that it becomes a virtue."—"O faithless coward! O dishonest wretch!" said Isabel; "would you preserve your life by your sister's shame? O fie, fie, fie! I thought, my brother, you had in you such a mind of honour, that had you twenty heads to render up on twenty blocks, you would have yielded them up all, before your sister should stoop to such dishonour." "Nay, hear me, Isabel!" said Claudio. But what he would have said in defence of his weakness, in desiring to live by the dishonour of his virtuous sister, was interrupted by the entrance of the duke; who said, "Claudio, I have overheard what has passed between you and your sister. Angelo had never the purpose to corrupt her; what he said, has only been to make trial of her virtue. She having the truth of honour in her, has given him that gracious denial which he is most glad to receive. There is no hope that he will pardon you; therefore pass your hours in prayer, and make ready for death." Then Claudio repented of his weakness, and said, "Let me ask my sister's pardon! I am so out of love with life, that I will sue to be rid of it." And Claudio retired, overwhelmed with shame and sorrow for his fault.

The duke being now alone with Isabel, commended her virtuous resolution, saying, "The hand that made you fair, has made you good."—"O," said Isabel, "how much is the good duke deceived in Angelo! if ever he return, and I can speak to him, I will discover his government." Isabel knew not that she was even now making the discovery she threatened. The duke replied, "That shall not be much amiss; yet as the matter now stands, Angelo will repel your accusation; therefore lend an attentive ear to my advisings. I believe that you may most righteously do a poor wronged lady a merited benefit, redeem your brother from the angry law, do no stain to your own most gracious person, and much please the absent duke, if peradventure he shall ever return to have notice of this business." Isabel said, she had a spirit to do anything he desired, provided it was nothing wrong. "Virtue is bold, and never fearful," said the duke: and then he asked her, if she had ever heard of Mariana, the sister of Frederick, the great soldier who was drowned at sea. "I have heard of the lady," said Isabel, "and good words went with her name."—"This lady," said the duke, "is the wife of Angelo; but her marriage dowry was on board the vessel in which her brother perished, and mark how heavily this befell to the poor gentlewoman! for, beside the loss of a most noble and renowned brother, who in his love towards her was ever most kind and natural, in the wreck of her fortune she lost the affections of her husband, the well-seeming Angelo; who pretending to discover some dishonour in this honourable lady (though the true cause was the loss of her dowry) left her in her tears, and dried not one of them with his comfort. His unjust unkindness, that in all reason should have quenched her love, has, like an impediment in the current, made it more unruly, and Mariana loves her cruel husband with the full continuance of her first affection." The duke then more plainly unfolded his plan. It was, that Isabel should go to Lord Angelo, and seemingly consent to come to him as he desired at midnight; that by this means she would obtain the promised pardon; and that Mariana should go in her stead to the appointment, and pass herself upon Angelo in the dark for Isabel. "Nor, gentle daughter," said the feigned friar, "fear you to do this thing; Angelo is her husband, and to bring them thus together is no sin." Isabel being pleased with this project, departed to do as he directed her; and he went to apprise Mariana of their intention. He had before this time visited this unhappy lady in his assumed character, giving her religious instruction and friendly consolation, at which times he had learned her sad story from her own lips; and now she, looking upon him as a holy man, readily consented to be directed by him in this undertaking.

When Isabel returned from her interview with Angelo, to the house of Mariana, where the duke had appointed her to meet him, he said, "Well met, and in good time; what is the news from this good deputy?" Isabel related the manner in which she had settled the affair. "Angelo," said she, "has a garden surrounded with a brick wall, on the western side of which is a vineyard, and to that vineyard is a gate." And then she showed to the duke and Mariana two keys that Angelo had given her; and

she said, "This bigger key opens the vineyard gate; this other a little door which leads from the vineyard to the garden. There I have made my promise at the dead of the night to call upon him, and have got from him his word of assurance for my brother's life. I have taken a due and wary note of the place; and with whispering and most guilty diligence he showed me the way twice over."—"Are there no other tokens agreed upon between you, that Mariana must observe?" said the duke. "No, none," said Isabel, "only to go when it is dark. I have told him my time can be but short; for I have made him think a servant comes along with me, and that this servant is persuaded I come about my brother." The duke commended her discreet management, and she, turning to Mariana, said, "Little have you to say to Angelo, when you depart from him, but soft and low, Remember now my brother!"

Mariana was that night conducted to the appointed place by Isabel, who rejoiced that she had, as she supposed, by this device preserved both her brother's life and her own honour. But that her brother's life was safe the duke was not well satisfied, and therefore at midnight he again repaired to the prison, and it was well for Claudio that he did so, else would Claudio have that night been beheaded; for soon after the duke entered the prison, an order came from the cruel deputy, commanding that Claudio should be beheaded, and his head sent to him by five o'clock in the morning. But the duke persuaded the provost to put off the execution of Claudio, and to deceive Angelo, by sending him the head of a man who died that morning in the prison. And to prevail upon the provost to agree to this, the duke, whom still the provost suspected not to be anything more or greater than he seemed, showed the provost a letter written with the duke's hand, and sealed with his seal, which when the provost saw, he concluded this friar must have some secret order from the absent duke, and therefore he consented to spare Claudio; and he cut off the dead man's head, and carried it to Angelo.

Then the duke in his own name, wrote to Angelo a letter, saying, that certain accidents had put a stop to his journey, and that he should be in Vienna by the following morning, requiring Angelo to meet him at the entrance of the city, there to deliver up his authority; and the duke also commanded it to be proclaimed, that if any of his subjects craved redress for injustice, they should exhibit their petitions in the street on his first entrance into the city.

Early in the morning Isabel came to the prison, and the duke, who there awaited her coming, for secret reasons thought it good to tell her that Claudio was beheaded; therefore when Isabel inquired if Angelo had sent the pardon for her brother, he said, "Angelo has released Claudio from this world. His head is off, and sent to the deputy." The much-grieved sister cried out, "O unhappy Claudio, wretched Isabel, injurious world, most wicked Angelo!" The seeming friar bid her take comfort, and when she was become a little calm, he acquainted her with the near prospect of the duke's return, and told her in what manner she should proceed in preferring her complaint against Angelo; and he bade her not fear if the cause should seem to go against her for a while. Leaving Isabel sufficiently instructed, he next went to Mariana, and gave her counsel in what manner she also should act.

Then the duke laid aside his friar's habit, and in his own royal robes, amidst a joyful crowd of his faithful subjects, assembled to greet his arrival, entered the city of Vienna, where he was met by Angelo, who delivered up his authority in the proper form. And there came Isabel, in the manner of a petitioner for redress, and said, "Justice, most royal duke! I am the sister of one Claudio, who, for the seducing a young maid, was condemned to lose his head. I made my suit to Lord Angelo for my brother's pardon. It were needless to tell your grace how I prayed and kneeled, how he repelled me,

and how I replied; for this was of much length. The vile conclusion I now begin with grief and shame to utter. Angelo would not but by my yielding to his dishonourable love release my brother; and after much debate within myself, my sisterly remorse overcame my virtue, and I did yield to him. But the next morning betimes, Angelo, forfeiting his promise, sent a warrant for my poor brother's head!" The duke affected to disbelieve her story; and Angelo said that grief for her brother's death, who had suffered by the due course of the law, had disordered her senses. And now another suitor approached, which was Mariana; and Mariana said, "Noble prince, as there comes light from heaven, and truth from breath, as there is sense in truth and truth in virtue, I am this man's wife, and, my good lord, the words of Isabel are false; for the night she says she was with Angelo, I passed that night with him in the garden-house. As this is true, let me in safety rise, or else for ever be fixed here a marble monument." Then did Isabel appeal for the truth of what she had said to Friar Lodowick, that being the name the duke had assumed in his disguise. Isabel and Mariana had both obeyed his instructions in what they said, the duke intending that the innocence of Isabel should be plainly proved in that public manner before the whole city of Vienna; but Angelo little thought that it was from such a cause that they thus differed in their story, and he hoped from their contradictory evidence to be able to clear himself from the accusation of Isabel; and he said, assuming the look of offended innocence, "I did but smile till now; but, good my lord, my patience here is touched, and I perceive these poor distracted women are but the instruments of some greater one, who sets them on. Let me have way, my lord, to find this practice out."—"Ay, with all my heart," said the duke, "and punish them to the height of your pleasure. You, Lord Escalus, sit with Lord Angelo, lend him your pains to discover this abuse; the friar is sent for that set them on, and when he comes, do with your injuries as may seem best in any chastisement. I for a while will leave you, but stir not you, Lord Angelo, till you have well determined upon this slander." The duke then went away, leaving Angelo well pleased to be deputed judge and umpire in his own cause. But the duke was absent only while he threw off his royal robes and put on his friar's habit; and in that disguise again he presented himself before Angelo and Escalus: and the good old Escalus, who thought Angelo had been falsely accused, said to the supposed friar, "Come, sir, did you set these women on to slander Lord Angelo?" He replied, "Where is the duke? It is he who should hear me speak." Escalus said, "The duke is in us, and we will hear you. Speak justly."—"Boldly at least," retorted the friar; and then he blamed the duke for leaving the cause of Isabel in the hands of him she had accused, and spoke so freely of many corrupt practices he had observed, while, as he said, he had been a looker-on in Vienna, that Escalus threatened him with the torture for speaking words against the state, and for censuring the conduct of the duke, and ordered him to be taken away to prison. Then, to the amazement of all present, and to the utter confusion of Angelo, the supposed friar threw off his disguise, and they saw it was the duke himself.

The duke first addressed Isabel. He said to her, "Come hither, Isabel. Your friar is now your prince, but with my habit I have not changed my heart. I am still devoted to your service." "O give me pardon," said Isabel, "that I, your vassal, have employed and troubled your unknown sovereignty." He answered that he had most need of forgiveness from her, for not having prevented the death of her brother—for not yet would he tell her that Claudio was living; meaning first to make a further trial of her goodness. Angelo now knew the duke had been a secret witness of his bad deeds, and he said, "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, has looked upon my actions. Then, good prince, no longer prolong my shame, but let my trial be my own confession. Immediate sentence and death is all the grace I beg." The duke replied, "Angelo, thy faults are manifest. We do condemn thee to the very block where Claudio stooped to death; and with like haste away with him; and for his possessions, Mariana, we do instate and widow you withal, to buy you a better husband."—"O my dear lord," said

Mariana, "I crave no other, nor no better man:" and then on her knees, even as Isabel had begged the life of Claudio, did this kind wife of an ungrateful husband beg the life of Angelo; and she said, "Gentle my liege, O good my lord! Sweet Isabel, take my part! Lend me your knees, and all my life to come I will lend you all my life, to do you service!" The duke said, "Against all sense you importune her. Should Isabel kneel down to beg for mercy, her brother's ghost would break his paved bed, and take her hence in horror." Still Mariana said, "Isabel, sweet Isabel, do but kneel by me, hold up your hand, say nothing! I will speak all. They say, best men are moulded out of faults, and for the most part become much the better for being a little bad. So may my husband. Oh, Isabel, will you not lend a knee?" The duke then said, "He dies for Claudio." But much pleased was the good duke, when his own Isabel, from whom he expected all gracious and honourable acts, kneeled down before him, and said, "Most bounteous sir, look, if it please you, on this man condemned, as if my brother lived. I partly think a due sincerity governed 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."

The duke, as the best reply he could make to this noble petitioner for her enemy's life, sending for Claudio from his prison-house, where he lay doubtful of his destiny, presented to her this lamented brother living; and he said to Isabel, "Give me your hand, Isabel; for your lovely sake I pardon Claudio. Say you will be mine, and he shall be my brother too." By this time Lord Angelo perceived he was safe; and the duke, observing his eye to brighten up a little, said, "Well, Angelo, look that you love your wife; her worth has obtained your pardon: joy to you, Mariana! Love her, Angelo! I have confessed her, and know her virtue." Angelo remembered, when dressed in a little brief authority, how hard his heart had been, and felt how sweet is mercy.

The duke commanded Claudio to marry Juliet, and offered himself again to the acceptance of Isabel, whose virtuous and noble conduct had won her prince's heart. Isabel, not having taken the veil, was free to marry; and the friendly offices, while hid under the disguise of a humble friar, which the noble duke had done for her, made her with grateful joy accept the honour he offered her; and when she became Duchess of Vienna, the excellent example of the virtuous Isabel worked such a complete reformation among the young ladies of that city, that from that time none ever fell into the transgression of Juliet, the repentant wife of the reformed Claudio. And the mercy-loving duke long reigned with his beloved Isabel, the happiest of husbands and of princes.