

Measure for Measure abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 1

Legitimacy

Situation: Announcing that he plans to take a trip to Poland, the Duke of Vienna deputizes Angelo, a more conservative man, to temporarily stand in for him, the duke believing that he hasn't enforced the local laws as tightly as he might have. The duke publicly tells Angelo that "your scope is as mine own, so to enforce or qualify the laws as to your soul seems good." At the same time he tells his citizens that he'll be out of town for awhile.

DUKE: Call hither, I say, bid come before us Angelo.

An Attendant exits.

DUKE TO ESCALUS: You must know, we with special soul have 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 honor, it is Lord Angelo.

Angelo enters.

ANGELO: I come to know your pleasure.

Duke to Angelo

Angelo, there is a behavior in
Thy life that hath overtime fully been
Observed. What thy hath to offer others
Cannot be wasted to make thyself more
Virtuous. As heaven through light confers
Our way, you must through thy virtues do for
Others, else 'twere as if you had them not.
Good spirits are granted to those who ought
To do fine deeds, and nature never lends
The smallest amount of her excellence
Without demanding the glory she sends
Be for herself, the lender. In this sense,
Angelo, in my absence, as I part,
Hold the soul of Vienna in thy heart.

DUKE TO ANGELO: Old Escalus is thy secondary. Take thy commission.