

5.1 Location: At the city gate.

0 SD *several* separate

1 cousin nobleman (used as a form of address); **fairly met** an expression of welcome

6 soul intellectual and spiritual powers

7 Cannot . . . to i.e. must give you

8 Forerunning more requital in advance of further reward

9 bonds obligations

10 desert deserving, either merit or demerit

11 wards . . . bosom i.e. secret chambers of my heart

12 characters writing, letters

13 fortified fortified; **tooth of time** proverbial, "Time devours all things" (Dent, T326).

14 razure of oblivion annihilation brought about by being completely forgotten

15 the subject i.e. my subjects

16 fain gladly

17 keep within dwell in the heart

22 Vail your regard cast your attention down

Act 5



5.1

Enter Duke, Varrius, Lords, Angelo, Escalus, Lucio, [Provost, Officers, and] Citizens at several doors.

DUKE [*To Angelo*] My very worthy cousin, fairly met. 1

[To Escalus] Our old and faithful friend, we are glad to see you.

ANGELO, ESCALUS Happy return be to Your royal Grace!

DUKE Many and hearty thankings to you both.

We have made inquiry of you, and we hear 6

Such goodness of your justice that our soul 7

Cannot but yield you forth to public thanks, 8

Forerunning more requital. 9

ANGELO You make my bonds still greater. 9

DUKE Oh, your desert speaks loud, and I should wrong it 10

To lock it in the wards of covert bosom, 11

When it deserves with characters of brass 12

A fortified residence 'gainst the tooth of time 13

And razure of oblivion. Give me your hand, 14

And let the subject see, to make them know 15

That outward courtesies would fain proclaim 16

Favors that keep within. Come, Escalus, 17

You must walk by us on our other hand;

And good supporters are you.

Enter [Friar] Peter and Isabella.

FRIAR PETER Now is your time. Speak loud and kneel before him.

ISABELLA [*Kneeling*] Justice, O royal Duke! Vail your regard 22

Upon a wronged—I would fain have said a maid.

O worthy prince, dishonor not your eye

- 30 **Reveal yourself** disclose your complaint
- 37 **Cut off** executed
- 40 **forsworn** guilty of perjury
- 42 **adulterous thief** i.e. a thief of Isabella's virginity while
betrothed to Mariana
- 47 **all** just
- 48 **truth is truth** proverbial (Dent, T581)
- 50 **in . . . sense** from a diseased mind
- 51 **conjure** entreat
- 53 **with** because of
- 54 **Make** consider
- 55 **unlike** unlikely
- 56 **caitiff** villain
- 57 **shy** cautiously reserved; **absolute** perfect

- By throwing it on any other object
 Till you have heard me in my true complaint
 And given me justice, justice, justice, justice!
- DUKE 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, 30
 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, oh, 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! 37
- 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? 40
 That Angelo's a murderer, is't not strange?
 That Angelo is an adulterous thief, 42
 An hypocrite, a virgin-violator,
 Is it not strange and strange?
- DUKE Nay, it is ten times strange.
- ISABELLA It is not truer he is Angelo
 Than this is all as true as it is strange. 47
 Nay, it is ten times true, for truth is truth 48
 To th'end of reck'ning.
- DUKE Away with her! Poor soul,
 She speaks this in th'infirmity of sense. 50
- ISABELLA O prince, I conjure thee, as thou believ'st 51
 There is another comfort than this world,
 That thou neglect me not with that opinion 53
 That I am touched with madness. Make not impossible 54
 That which but seems unlike. 'Tis not impossible 55
 But one, the wicked'st caitiff on the ground, 56
 May seem as shy, as grave, as just, as absolute 57
 As Angelo; even so may Angelo,

- 59 **dressings** official attire; **caracts** signs of character; **forms** ceremonies
- 64 **frame of sense** rational structure
- 65 **dependency . . . on thing** logical sequence
- 67 **that** my (supposed) madness
- 68 **inequality** inequity (between Angelo's story or social rank and mine)
- 70 **false seems true** falsehood that seems true
- 75 **probation . . . sisterhood** novitiate or the probationary period for religious life
- 78 **an't like** if it please
- 83 **Nor wished** 1) nor was I wished; 2) nor did I wish
- 85 **business for yourself** a matter which concerns you
- 86 **perfect** correct (in stating your case); **warrant** assure. In the next line the Duke plays on **warrant** as a "judicial writ" for an arrest.

- In all his dressings, caracts, titles, forms, 59
 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 By mine honesty,
 If she be mad—as I believe no other—
 Her madness hath the oddest frame of sense, 64
 Such a dependency of thing on thing, 65
 As e'er I heard in madness.
- ISABELLA O gracious Duke,
 Harp not on that; nor do not banish reason 67
 For inequality, but let your reason serve 68
 To make the truth appear where it seems hid,
 And hide the false seems true.
- DUKE Many that are not mad 70
 Have, sure, more lack of reason. What would you say?
- ISABELLA I am the sister of one Claudio,
 Condemned upon the act of fornication
 To lose his head, condemned by Angelo.
 I, in probation of a sisterhood, 75
 Was sent to by my brother; one Lucio,
 As then the messenger—
- LUCIO That's I, an't like Your Grace. 78
 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 You were not bid to speak.
- LUCIO No, my good lord,
 Nor wished to hold my peace.
- DUKE I wish you now, then. 83
 Pray you, take note of it, and when you have
 A business for yourself, pray heaven you then 85
 Be perfect.
- LUCIO I warrant Your Honor. 86
- DUKE The warrant's for yourself; take heed to't.
- ISABELLA This gentleman told somewhat of my tale—

- 94 **to the matter** appropriate
- 95 **Mended** corrected; **matter** main business
- 96 **set . . . by** put aside unnecessary narration
- 98 **refelled** refuted
- 102 **concupiscible** very desirous
- 103 **debatement** argument
- 104 **remorse** pity; **confutes** overcomes
- 106 **surfeiting** satisfied through excessive indulgence
- 108 **like** probable
- 109 **fond** foolish
- 110 **suborned** induced unlawfully
- 111 **practice** conspiracy
- 112 **imports no reason** makes no sense
- 113 **pursue** prosecute
- 114 **proper to** characteristic of
- 115 **weighed** judged
- 119 **ministers** i.e. angels
- 121 **Unfold** reveal
- 121-22 **wrapped . . . countenance** concealed by royal
pretense

LUCIO Right.

DUKE It may be right but you are i'the wrong
To speak before your time. [*To Isabella*] Proceed.

ISABELLA I went to this pernicious caitiff deputy—

DUKE That's somewhat madly spoken.

ISABELLA Pardon it; the phrase is to the matter. 94

DUKE Mended again. The matter; proceed. 95

ISABELLA In brief, to set the needless process by, 96

How I persuaded, how I prayed, and kneeled,
How he refelled me, and how I replied— 98

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, 102

Release my brother. And after much debatement, 103

My sisterly remorse confutes mine honor, 104

And I did yield to him. But the next morn betimes,

His purpose surfeiting, he sends a warrant 106

For my poor brother's head.

DUKE This is most likely!

ISABELLA Oh, that it were as like as it is true! 108

DUKE By heaven, fond wretch, thou know'st not what thou
speak'st, 109

Or else thou art suborned against his honor 110

In hateful practice. First, his integrity 111

Stands without blemish; next, it imports no reason 112

That with such vehemency he should pursue 113

Faults proper to himself. If he had so offended, 114

He would have weighed thy brother by himself 115

And not have cut him off. Someone hath set you on.

Confess the truth, and say by whose advice

Thou cam'st here to complain.

ISABELLA And is this all?

Then, O you blessèd ministers above, 119

Keep me in patience, and with ripened time

Unfold the evil which is here wrapped up 121

In countenance! Heaven shield Your Grace from woe, 122

- 126 **blasting** blighting
127 **needs** necessarily
129 **would** wish
130 **ghostly** spiritual; **belike** in all likelihood
131 **meddling** interfering (perhaps also “lusty”)
134 **In your retirement** when you were away; **swinged**
 beaten
135 **This’** this is
139 **saucy** insolent (with a connotation of lascivious)
140 **scurvy** contemptible
143 **abused** deceived
145 **touch or soil** sexual contact or moral stain
146 **ungot** unborn
149 **temporary meddler** meddler in temporal affairs
156 **Upon . . . request** solely at his request

- As I, thus wronged, hence unbelieved go.
- DUKE I know you'd fain be gone. —An officer!
To prison with her! [*An Officer comes forward.*]
Shall we thus permit
A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall 126
On him so near us? This needs must be a practice. 127
Who knew of your intent and coming hither?
- ISABELLA One that I would were here, Friar Lodowick. 129
- DUKE A ghostly father, belike. Who knows that Lodowick? 130
- LUCIO My lord, I know him; 'tis a meddling friar. 131
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. 134
- DUKE Words against me? This' a good friar, belike! 135
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, 139
A very scurvy fellow. 140
- 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 143
Most wrongfully accused your substitute,
Who is as free from touch or soil with her 145
As she from one ungot.
- DUKE We did believe no less. 146
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, 149
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 villainously; 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, 156
Being come to knowledge that there was complaint

159 **his** i.e. Friar Lodowick's

161 **probation** proof

162 **convented** summoned

163 **justify** vindicate

164 **vulgarly** publicly

171 **I'll be impartial** i.e. I'll take no part

183 **punk** prostitute

183-84 **neither . . . wife** proverbial definition of a prostitute,
"neither maid, wife, nor widow" (Dent, M26)

185 **prattle** chatter

Intended 'gainst Lord Angelo, came I hither,
 To speak as from his mouth what he doth know 159
 Is true and false, and what he with his oath
 And all probation will make up full clear, 161
 Whensoever he's convented. First, for this woman,
 To justify this worthy nobleman, 162
 So vulgarly and personally accused, 163
 Her shall you hear disprovèd to her eyes
 Till she herself confess it. 164

[Exit Isabella, guarded.]

DUKE Good Friar, let's hear it.

[Friar Peter goes to get Mariana.]

Do you not smile at this, Lord Angelo?

O heaven, the vanity of wretched fools!

—Give us some seats. [Chairs are provided.]

Come, cousin Angelo.

In this I'll be impartial. Be you judge 171

Of your own cause. [Duke and Angelo sit.]

Enter Mariana [veiled, escorted by Friar Peter; she kneels].

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 What, are you married?

MARIANA No, my lord.

DUKE Are you a maid?

MARIANA No, my lord.

DUKE A widow, then?

MARIANA Neither, my lord.

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

LUCIO My lord, she may be a punk, for many of them are neither 183

maid, widow, nor wife. 184

DUKE Silence that fellow! I would he had some cause to prattle 185

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.

- 190 **known** had sexual relations with
193 **were** were
195 **witness for** evidence on behalf of
199 **with such a time** with having committed the offence at
such a time
200 **depose** give evidence upon oath
201 **effect** manifestations
205 **just** exactly
208 **abuse** deceit
213 **fast belocked** securely locked
214 **match** appointment
215 **supply** satisfy
222 **since** ago
224 **proportions** marriage dowry
225 **composition** settlement

I have known my husband, yet my husband Knows not that ever he knew me.	190
LUCIO He was drunk then, my lord; it can be no better.	
DUKE For the benefit of silence, would thou wert so too!	193
LUCIO Well, my lord.	
DUKE This is no witness for Lord Angelo.	195
MARIANA Now I come to't, my lord. She that accuses him of fornication, In selfsame manner doth accuse my husband, And charges him, my lord, with such a time	199
When, I'll depose, I had him in mine arms	200
With all th' effect of love.	201
ANGELO Charges she more than me?	
MARIANA Not that I know.	
DUKE 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.	205
ANGELO This is a strange abuse; let's see thy face.	208
MARIANA My husband bids me. Now I will unmask. [Unveiling] This is that face, thou cruel Angelo, Which once thou swor'st was worth the looking on; This is the hand which, with a vowed contract, Was fast belocked in thine; this is the body	213
That took away the match from Isabel,	214
And did supply thee at thy garden house In her imagined person.	215
DUKE Know you this woman?	
LUCIO Carnally, she says.	
DUKE 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	222
	224
	225

- 226-7 **disvalued In levity** discredited for wanton behavior
- 232 **affianced** promised
- 234 **But . . . gone** this past Tuesday night; **in's** in his
- 237 **confixèd** firmly fixed
- 239 **scope** full authority
- 240 **touched** tried
- 241 **informal** disordered (in mind)
- 242 **But** than
- 244 **practice** scheme
- 247 **Compact . . . gone** in league with Isabella
- 248 **swear . . . saint** call down every saint as a witness
- 250 **That's . . . approbation** ratified (just as weights and measures are given a seal to guarantee validity) by my public approval
- 251 **pains** efforts

	For that her reputation was disvalued	226
	In levity. Since which time of five years	227
	I never spake with her, saw her, nor heard from her, Upon my faith and honor.	
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	232
	As words could make up vows; and, my good lord, But Tuesday night last gone in's garden house,	234
	He knew me as a wife. As this is true, Let me in safety raise me from my knees Or else forever be confixèd here,	237
	A marble monument.	
ANGELO	I did but smile till now.	
	Now, good my lord, give me the scope of justice;	239
	My patience here is touched. I do perceive	240
	These poor informal women are no more	241
	But instruments of some more mightier member	242
	That sets them on. Let me have way, my lord, To find this practice out.	
DUKE	Ay, with my heart	244
	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,	247
	Though they would swear down each particular saint, Were testimonies against his worth and credit	248
	That's sealed in approbation? You, Lord Escalus,	250
	Sit with my cousin; lend him your kind pains To find out this abuse, whence 'tis derived.	251
	<i>[The Duke rises; Escalus sits.]</i>	
	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.	

- 259 **well-warranted** approved (by good authority)
- 260 **forth** through to the end
- 261 **Do . . . best** punish your offenders as you see fit
- 264 **Well determined upon** made a satisfactory judgment
about
- 265 **thoroughly** thoroughly
- 268 *Cucullus . . . monachum* “A cowl does not make a monk.”
- 272 **enforce them** press charges; **notable** notorious
- 279 **Not . . . report** i.e. Escalus will not sexually **handle** (278)
Isabella better than the way Angelo, according to Isabella,
handled her.
- 281 **handled** fondled
- 283 **darkly** slyly
- 284 **light** wanton, unchaste

- DUKE [*To Provost*] Go, do it instantly.
[*Exit Provost.*]
- [*To Angelo*] And you, my noble and well-warranted cousin, 259
 Whom it concerns to hear this matter forth, 260
 Do with your injuries as seems you best 261
 In any chastisement. I for a while
 Will leave you, but stir not you till you have
 Well determined upon these slanderers. 264
- ESCALUS My lord, we'll do it throughly. 265
Exit [Duke].
- Signor 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 268
 clothes and one that hath spoke most villainous speeches 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 272
 fellow.
- LUCIO As any in Vienna, on my word.
- ESCALUS Call that same Isabel here once again. I would speak
 with her.
[*Exit Attendant.*]
- [*To Angelo*] 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. 279
- ESCALUS Say you?
- LUCIO Marry, sir, I think, if you handled her privately, she would 281
 sooner confess; perchance publicly she'll be ashamed.
- ESCALUS I will go darkly to work with her. 283
- LUCIO That's the way, for women are light at midnight. 284
Enter Duke [disguised as a friar], Provost, Isabella [and Officers].
- 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.