

Measure for Measure abbreviated

Act 1, Scene 4

Request

Situation: At the request of imprisoned Claudio, Lucio pays a call on Claudio's sister, Isabella, to see if she is willing to visit Angelo on her brother's behalf. Claudio has asked Lucio to ask her for help since "she will play with reason and discourse, and well she can persuade."

LUCIO: Hail, virgin, if you be, can you so help me as bring me to the sight of Isabella, the fair sister to her unhappy brother, Claudio?

ISABELLA: Why "her unhappy brother?" I am that Isabella, and his sister.

LUCIO: He's in prison.

ISABELLA: Woe me, for what?

LUCIO: He hath got his friend with child.

ISABELLA: Sir, do not make a mockery of me.

LUCIO: 'Tis true. I would not deceive and so jest.

ISABELLA: You do blaspheme the good in mocking me.

LUCIO: Do not believe it. To tell the truth in a few words, 'tis thus: your brother and his lover have embraced, and as blossoming time from being strewn with seeds the bare fallow brings to teeming abundance.

ISABELLA: Someone with child by him? Juliet?

LUCIO: She it is.

ISABELLA: O, let him marry her!

LUCIO: This is the point.

Lucio to Isabella

**The Duke is strangely gone, deluding us,
But we learn from those who know and discuss
The state that his public comment did stun
Those who know his true design. In his place
Is Angelo, a man whose blood doth run
Cold; one who never feels the sting of base
Urges, blunting his natural desire
With profits of the mind. He doesn't tire
And hath picked an act under whose heavy
Sense your brother's life falls into forfeit.
He's arrested him and follows closely
The rigor of the law to make each bit
Of him an example. Where this doth go
Depends on your softening Angelo.**

LUCIO: That's the essence of my business 'twixt you and your poor brother.