

Let mine own judgement pattern out my death
And nothing come in partial. Sir, he must die.

Enter PROVOST

ESCALUS Be it as your wisdom will.

ANGELO Where is the provost?

PROVOST Here, if it like your honour.

ANGELO See that Claudio

Be executed by nine tomorrow morning.

Bring him his confessor, let him be prepared,

For that's the utmost of his pilgrimage.

[Exit Provost]

ESCALUS Well, heaven forgive him, and forgive us all.

Some rise by sin and some by virtue fall,

Some run from breaks of ice and answer none,

And some condemnèd for a fault alone.

Enter ELBOW [and] OFFICERS [with] FROTH [and] POMPEY

ELBOW Come, bring them away. If these be good people in a
commonweal, that do nothing but use their abuses in common
houses, I know no law. Bring them away.

ANGELO How now, sir, what's your name, and what's the matter?

ELBOW If it please your honour, I am the poor Duke's constable, and
my name is Elbow. I do lean upon justice, sir, and do bring in
here, before your good honour, two notorious benefactors.

31 SD] F; after 32, Collier 36 SD] Rowe; not in F 38] *Italic in F* 39] breaks of ice] Collier, conj. Steevens; brakes of
ice F; brakes of vice Rowe

30 judgement sentence (on Claudio) (Evans).

31 come in partial extenuating be admitted on my behalf.

36 utmost . . . pilgrimage limit of his life's journey (Evans).

39 breaks of ice F's spelling 'brakes' has provoked much editorial speculation, but the simplest explanation of 39-40 seems preferable: 'some escape after breaking the ice many times, some are caught by the first fault'. 'answer none' = 'get away with it' (see *OED Answer v* 6). See *The Revenger's Tragedy*, ed. Brian Gibbons, 1990, 4.4.80-2: 'she first begins with one / Who afterward to thousand proves a whore: / "Break ice in one place, it will crack in more."' Sisson, in support of 'brakes', compares *Tro.* 3.3.215: 'The fool slides o'er the ice that you should break.' Alternative

suggestions are 'brake' = sharp bit, snaffle, or = thickset; both of these assume the emendation of 'ice' to 'vice'. Lever suggests 'brakes' = constrictions, and the whole phrase = hell pains. The key idea is the opposition of many crimes going unpunished to one crime fully punished.

42-3 use . . . houses carry on their corrupt activities in brothels.

45 poor Duke's i.e. Duke's poor (a comic reversal or hypallage).

46 lean upon Possibly 'depend on' (*OED Lean v* 3, 'trust to'), possibly mistaken for 'uphold' (Evans), possibly an attempt at wit, playing on his name, 'Elbow'. The prolixity recalls Shakespeare's earlier constable Dogberry in *Ado*, also a gifted malapropist.

ANGELO Benefactors? Well, what benefactors are they? Are they not
malefactors?

ELBOW If it please your honour, I know not well what they are: but
precise villains they are, that I am sure of, and void of all
profanation in the world that good Christians ought to have.

ESCALUS This comes off well: here's a wise officer.

ANGELO Go to. What quality are they of? Elbow is your name? Why
dost thou not speak, Elbow?

POMPEY He cannot, sir: he's out at elbow.

ANGELO What are you, sir?

ELBOW He, sir? A tapster, sir, parcel bawd, one that serves a bad
woman, whose house, sir, was, as they say, plucked down in the
suburbs; and now she professes a hot-house; which I think is a
very ill house too.

ESCALUS How know you that?

ELBOW My wife, sir, whom I detest before heaven and your honour –

ESCALUS How? Thy wife?

ELBOW Ay, sir: whom I thank heaven is an honest woman –

ESCALUS Dost thou detest her therefore?

ELBOW I say, sir, I will detest myself also, as well as she, that this
house, if it be not a bawd's house, it is pity of her life, for it is a
naughty house.

ESCALUS How dost thou know that, constable?

ELBOW Marry, sir, by my wife, who, if she had been a woman
cardinally given, might have been accused in fornication,
adultery, and all uncleanliness there.

63 sir,] F2; Sir? F

51 precise puritanical (*OED sv adj* 2 b), here used mistakenly for 'decided' or 'precious', 'arrant', but see 3.1.93 and 96.

52 profanation Possibly 'profession' is meant, possibly mistaken for 'fear of God'. As it is, together with 'precise villain', unconsciously a good description of Angelo. Through these verbal echoes Shakespeare alerts the spectator to deeper parallels and interconnections between ostensibly separate dramatic actions and characters.

53 comes off well is well said.

56 Punning on (1) 'out', at a loss, speechless, (2) 'out at elbow', impoverished in dress (and intelligence).

58 parcel part-time.

60 professes Lever suspects an ironic allusion to the sense 'make one's vows to a religious order

or house' (*OED Profess v* 1, citation of 1494 'to be professed in an house of religion'); 'professes' may also imply pretence or insincerity (*OED sv v* 3). Elbow intends to discredit but may nevertheless be making a malapropism; the irony then being Shakespeare's.

60 hot-house bath-house. Jonson, *Epigrams*, vii, says, 'hot-house' is another word for 'whore-house'. See also 1.2.67 and n.

63 detest Mistake for 'attest' or 'protest'.

68 pity of her life a very sad thing for her.

69 naughty wicked.

72 cardinally Mistaken for 'carnally'. The adjective 'cardinal' means 'chief', hence the 'cardinal virtues'.

72-3 Compare Gal. 5.19: 'adultery, fornication, uncleanness . . .'