***ACT 2.*** Scene 1 – Duke’s Office

*(Enter Angelo, Escalus, Elbow, Pompey, Froth)*

ANGELO

 How now, sir, what’s your name? And what’s

 the matter?

ELBOW

If it please your Honor, 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

 Honor two notorious benefactors.

ANGELO

 Benefactors? Well, what benefactors are they?

 Are they not malefactors?

ELBOW

If it please your Honor, 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.

ESCALUS*,*(*to Angelo*)

 This comes off well. Here’s a wise officer.

ANGELO*,*(*to Elbow*)

 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 hothouse, 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 Honor—

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.

ESCALUS

By the woman’s means?

ELBOW

 Ay, sir, by Mistress Overdone’s means; but as

she spit in his face, so she defied him.

POMPEY(*to Escalus*)

 Sir, if it please your Honor, this is

 not so.

ELBOW

Prove it before these varlets here, thou honorable

 man, prove it.

ESCALUS*,*(*to Angelo*)

 Do you hear how he misplaces?

POMPEY

 Sir, she came in great with child, and longing,

 saving your Honor’s reverence, for stewed prunes.

 Sir, we had but two in the house, which at that very

 distant time stood, as it were, in a fruit dish, a dish

 of some threepence; your Honors have seen such

 dishes; they are not china dishes, but very good

 dishes—

ESCALUS

Go to, go to. No matter for the dish, sir.

POMPEY

No, indeed, sir,

But to the point: as I say, this Mistress

 Elbow, being, as I say, with child, and being great-bellied,

 and longing, as I said, for prunes; and

 having but two in the dish, as I said, Master Froth

 here, this very man, having eaten the rest, cracking the

stones of the foresaid prunes—

ESCALUS

 Come, you are a tedious fool. To the purpose:

ANGELO(*to Escalus*)

 This will last out a night in Russia

 When nights are longest there. I’ll take my leave,

 And leave you to the hearing of the cause,

 Hoping you’ll find good cause to whip them all.