

Dramatic Monologue - Man

## HAMLET

A monologue from the play by William Shakespeare

**HAMLET:** To be, or not to be--that is the question:  
Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer  
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune  
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles  
And by opposing end them. To die, to sleep--  
No more--and by a sleep to say we end  
The heartache, and the thousand natural shocks  
That flesh is heir to. 'Tis a consummation  
Devoutly to be wished. To die, to sleep--  
To sleep--perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub,  
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come  
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,  
Must give us pause. There's the respect  
That makes calamity of so long life.  
For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,  
Th' oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely  
The pangs of despised love, the law's delay,  
The insolence of office, and the spurns  
That patient merit of th' unworthy takes,  
When he himself might his quietus make  
With a bare bodkin? Who would fardels bear,  
To grunt and sweat under a weary life,  
But that the dread of something after death,  
The undiscovered country, from whose bourn  
No traveller returns, puzzles the will,  
And makes us rather bear those ills we have  
Than fly to others that we know not of?  
Thus conscience does make cowards of us all,  
And thus the native hue of resolution  
Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought,  
And enterprise of great pitch and moment  
With this regard their currents turn awry  
And lose the name of action. -- Soft you now,  
The fair Ophelia! -- Nymph, in thy orisons  
Be all my sins remembered.

## ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL

A monologue from the play by William Shakespeare

**PAROLLES:** It is not politic in the commonwealth of nature to preserve virginity. Loss of virginity is rational increase, and there was never virgin got till virginity was first lost. That you were made of is metal to make virgins. Virginity by being once lost may be ten times found; by being ever kept is ever lost. 'Tis too cold a companion. Away with't! 'Tis against the rule of nature. To speak on the part of virginity is to accuse your mothers, which is most infallible disobedience. He that hangs himself is a virgin; virginity murders itself, and should be buried in highways out of all sanctified limit, as a desperate offendress against nature. Virginity breeds mites, much like a cheese, consumes itself to the very paring, and so dies with feeding his own stomach. Besides, virginity is peevish, proud, idle, made of self-love, which is the most inhibited sin in the canon. Keep it not; you cannot choose but lose by't. Out with't! Within ten year it will make itself ten, which is a goodly increase, and the principal itself not much the worse. Away with't! 'Tis a commodity will lose the gloss with lying: the longer kept, the less worth. Off with't while 'tis vendible; answer the time of request. Virginity, like an old courtier, wears her cap out of fashion, richly suited, but unsuitable, just like the brooch and the toothpick, which wear not now. Your date is better in your pie and your porridge than in your cheek; and your virginity, your old virginity, is like one of our French withered pears: it looks ill, it eats drily. Marry, 'tis a withered pear; it was formerly better; marry, yet 'tis a withered pear! Will you anything with it?

## TWO GENTLEMEN OF VERONA

### A monologue from the play by William Shakespeare

**LAUNCE:** When a man's servant shall play the cur with him, look you, it goes hard: one that I brought up of a puppy, one that I saved from drowning when three or four of his blind brothers and sisters went to it. I have taught him, even as one would say precisely, 'Thus I would teach a dog.' I was sent to deliver him as a present to Mistress Silvia from my master, and I came no sooner into the dining chamber but he steps me to her trencher and steals her capon's leg. O, 'tis a foul thing when a cur cannot keep himself in all companies! I would have, as one should say, one that takes upon him to be a dog indeed, to be, as it were, a dog at all things. If I had not had more wit than he, to take a fault upon me that he did, I think verily he had been hanged for't. Sure as I live, he had suffered for't. You shall judge. He thrusts me himself into the company of three or four gentleman-like dogs under the Duke's table. He had not been there -- bless the mark -- a pissing-while but all the chamber smelt him. 'Out with the dog,' says one. 'What cur is that?' says another. 'Whip him out,' says the third. 'Hang him up,' says the Duke. I, having been acquainted with the smell before, knew it was Crab, and goes me to the fellow that whips the dogs. 'Friend,' quoth I, 'you mean to whip the dog?' 'Ay, marry, do I,' quoth he. 'You do him the more wrong,' quoth I; 'twas I did the thing you wot of.' He makes me no more ado, but whips me out of the chamber. How many masters would do this for his servant? Nay, I'll be sworn, I have sat in the stocks for puddings he hath stol'n, otherwise he had been executed. I have stood in the pillory for geese he hath killed, otherwise he had suffered for't. Thou think'st not of this now. Nay, I remember the trick you served me when I took my leave of Madam Silvia. Did not I bid thee still mark me and do as I do? When didst thou see me heave up my leg and make water against a gentlewoman's farthingale? Didst thou ever see me do such a trick?

Dramatic Monologue - Woman

## ROMEO AND JULIET

A monologue from the play by William Shakespeare

**JULIET:** Thou knowest the mask of night is on my face;  
Else would a maiden blush bepaint my cheek  
For that which thou hast heard me speak to-night.  
Fain would I dwell on form -- fain, fain deny  
What I have spoke; but farewell compliment!  
Dost thou love me? I know thou wilt say 'Ay';  
And I will take thy word. Yet, if thou swear'st,  
Thou mayst prove false. At lovers' perjuries,  
They say Jove laughs. O gentle Romeo,  
If thou dost love, pronounce it faithfully.  
Or if thou thinkest I am too quickly won,  
I'll frown, and be perverse, and say thee nay,  
So thou wilt woo; but else, not for the world.  
In truth, fair Montague, I am too fond,  
And therefore thou mayst think my havior light;  
But trust me, gentleman, I'll prove more true  
Than those that have more cunning to be strange.  
I should have been more strange, I must confess,  
But that thou overheard'st, ere I was ware,  
My true-love passion. Therefore pardon me,  
And not impute this yielding to light love,  
Which the dark night hath so discovered.

Comic Monologue – Woman

**AS YOU LIKE IT**

**A monologue from the play by William Shakespeare**

**PHEBE:** Think not I love him, though I ask for him;  
'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well.  
But what care I for words? Yet words do well  
When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.  
It is a pretty youth; not very pretty;  
But sure he's proud; and yet his pride becomes him.  
He'll make a proper man. The best thing in him  
Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue  
Did make offense, his eye did heal it up.  
He is not very tall; yet for his year's he's tall.  
His leg is but so so; and yet 'tis well.  
There was a pretty redness in his lip,  
A little riper and more lusty red  
Than that mixed in his cheek; 'twas just the difference  
Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.  
There be some women, Silvius, had they marked him  
In parcels as I did, would have gone near  
To fall in love with him; but, for my part,  
I love him not nor hate him not; and yet  
I have more cause to hate him than to love him;  
For what had he to do to chide at me?  
He said mine eyes were black and my hair black;  
And, now I am rememb'ed, scorned at me.  
I marvel why I answered not again.  
But that's all one; omittance is no quittance.  
I'll write to him a very taunting letter,  
And thou shalt bear it. Wilt thou, Silvius?

Comic Monologue – Woman

## TWELFTH NIGHT

A monologue from the play by William Shakespeare

**VIOLA:** I left no ring with her. What means this lady?  
Fortune forbid my outside have not charmed her.  
She made good view of me; indeed, so much  
That, as methought, her eyes had lost her tongue,  
For she did speak in starts distractedly.  
She loves me sure; the cunning of her passion  
Invites me in this churlish messenger.  
None of my lord's ring? Why, he sent her none.  
I am the man. If it be so, as 'tis,  
Poor lady, she were better love a dream.  
Disguise, I see thou art a wickedness  
Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.  
How easy is it for the proper false  
In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!  
Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we,  
For such as we are made of, such we be.  
How will this fadge? My master loves her dearly;  
And I (poor monster) fond as much on him;  
And she (mistaken) seems to dote on me.  
What will become of this? As I am man,  
My state is desperate for my master's love.  
As I am woman (now alas the day!),  
What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe?  
O Time, thou must untangle this, not I;  
It is too hard a knot for me t' untie.