



## FAVOURITE SHAKESPEARE MONOLOGUES AND DUOLOGUES OF PROFESSIONAL ACTORS

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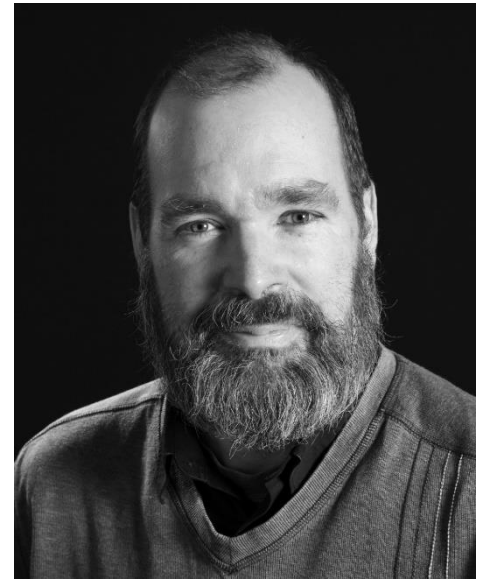
Oliver Hume

The monologue I like the best from any Shakespeare play is Launce's speech from *Two Gentlemen of Verona* Act 2, Scene 3.

*I think Crab, my dog, be the sourest-natured dog that lives: my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity, yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear: he is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog: why, my grandam, having no eyes, look you, wept herself blind at my parting.*

*Nay, I'll show you the manner of it.*

*This shoe is my father: no, this left shoe is my father: no, no, this left shoe is my mother: nay, that cannot be so neither: yes, it is so, it is so, it hath the worser sole. This shoe, with the hole in it, is my mother, and this my father; a vengeance on't! there 'tis: now, sit, this staff is my sister, for, look you, she is as white as a lily and as small as a wand: this hat is Nan, our maid: I am the dog: no, the dog is himself, and I am the dog--Oh! the dog is me, and I am myself; ay, so, so. Now come I to my father; Father, your blessing: now should not the shoe speak a word for weeping: now should I kiss my father; well, he weeps on. Now*



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*come I to my mother: O, that she could speak now  
like a wood woman! Well, I kiss her; why, there  
'tis; here's my mother's breath up and down. Now  
come I to my sister; mark the moan she makes. Now  
the dog all this while sheds not a tear nor speaks a  
word; but see how I lay the dust with my tears.*

I like it because it's quite a hard speech to do well.

It involves a visual element which is hard to work out and it only really works as a comedy piece if the character is completely unaware that he's getting everything wrong. I first heard it done in a Welsh accent and to me it's always hilarious if it's done that way.