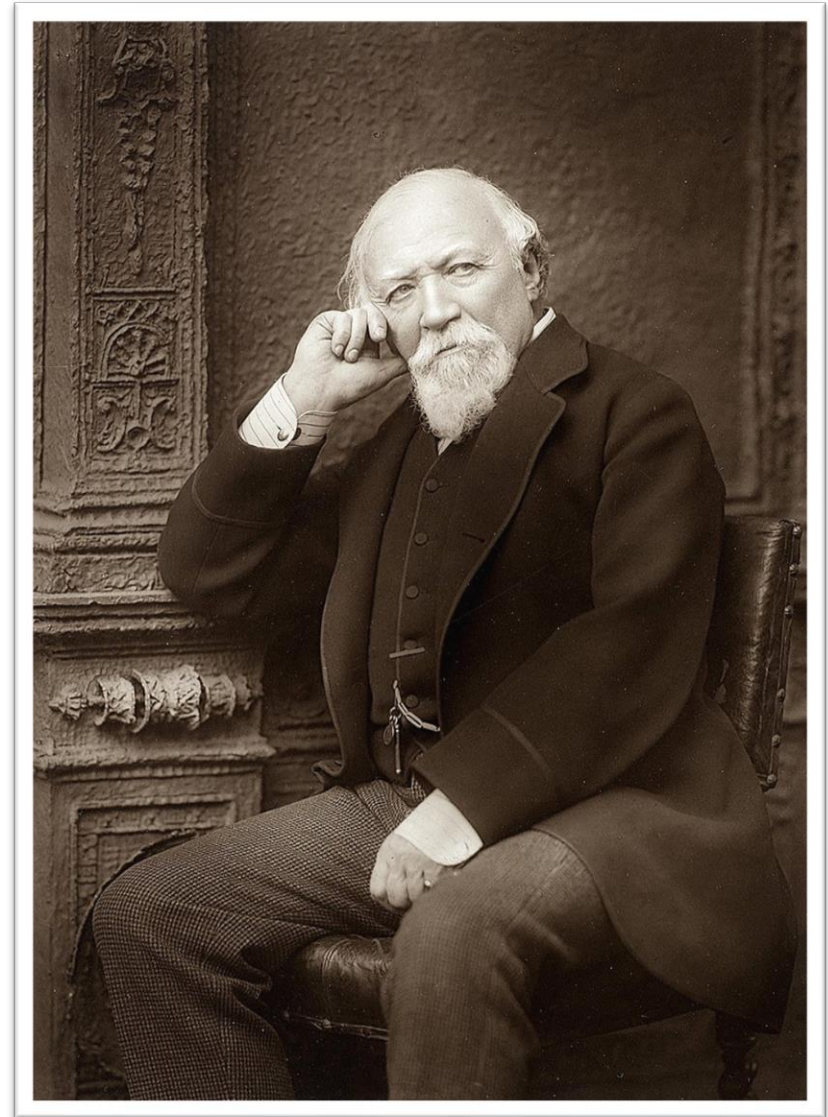


Robert Browning (1812 – 1889)



dramatic monologue

A **monologue** is a lengthy speech by a single person. In a play, when a character utters a monologue that expresses his or her private thoughts, it is called a soliloquy.

Dramatic monologue, however, does not designate a component in a play, but a type of lyric poem that was perfected by Robert Browning.

dramatic monologue

In its fullest form, the dramatic monologue has the following features:

- 1) A single person, who is *not* the poet, utters the speech that makes up the whole of the poem, in a specific situation at a critical moment.
- 2) This person addresses and interacts with one or more other people; but we know of the auditor's presence, and what they say and do, only from clues in the discourse of the single speaker.

dramatic monologue

- 3) The main principle controlling the poet's choice and formulation of what the lyric speaker says is to reveal to the reader, in a way that enhances its interest, the speaker's temperament and character.

갈라디아서 5장

육체의 일은 분명하니 곧 음행과 더러운 것과 호색과
우상 숭배와 주술과 원수 맺는 것과 분쟁과 시기와 분냄과 당 짓는 것과 분열함과
이단과 투기와 술 취함과 방탕함과 또 그와 같은 것들이라

<개역개정 성경>

Source

- Ross Murfin and Supryia M. Ray, *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*, 3rd ed., Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. (Slides 2-4)

Soliloquy of the Spanish Cloister

Robert Browning

1

Gr-r-r—there go, my heart's abhorrence!
Water your damned flowerpots, do!
If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence,
God's blood,¹ would not mine kill you!
What? your myrtle bush wants trimming?
Oh, that rose has prior claims—
Needs its leaden vase filled brimming?
Hell dry you up with its flames!

2

At the meal we sit together:
*Salve tibi!*² I must hear
Wise talk of the kind of weather,
Sort of season, time of year:
Not a plenteous cork crop: scarcely
*Dare we hope oak-galls*³, I doubt:
What's the Latin name for "parsley"?
What's the Greek name for Swine's Snout?⁴

3

Whew! We'll have our platter burnished,
Laid with care on our own shelf!
With a fire-new spoon we're furnished,
And a goblet for ourself,
Rinsed like something sacrificial
Ere 'tis fit to touch our chaps* * *jaws*
Marked with L. for our initial!
(He-he! There his lily snaps!)

4

Saint, forsooth! While Brown Dolores
Squats outside the Convent bank

¹ An oath (archaic)

² Hail to thee! (Latin); i.e., "your health!" This and other speeches in italics in this stanza are the words of Brother Lawrence.

³ Abnormal outgrowths on oak trees, used for tanning.

⁴ Dandelion (19th-century use)

With Sanchicha, telling stories,
Steeping tresses in the tank,
Blue-black, lustrous, thick like horsehairs,
—Can't I see his dead eye glow,
Bright as 'twere a Barbary corsair's?⁵
(That is, if he'd let it show!)

5

When he finishes refection,*
Knife and fork he never lays
Cross-wise, to my recollection,
As do I, in Jesu's praise.
I the Trinity illustrate,
Drinking watered orange pulp—
In three sips the Arian⁶ frustrate;
While he drains his at one gulp.

* dinner

6

Oh, those melons! If he's able
We're to have a feast! so nice!
One goes to the Abbot's table,
All of us get each a slice.
How go on your flowers? None double?
Not one fruit-sort can you spy?
Strange! —And I, too, at such trouble,
Keep them close-nipped on the sly!

7

There's a great text in Galatians,⁷
Once you trip on it, entails
Twenty-nine district damnations,
One sure, if another fails:
If I trip him just a-dying,
Sure of heaven as sure can be,
Spin him round and send him flying

⁵ Pirate of the Barbary Coast of northern Africa, renowned for fierceness and lechery.

⁶ Heretical follower of Arius (256-336 C. E.), who denied the doctrine of the Trinity.

⁷ The speaker hopes to obtain Lawrence's damnation by luring him into a heresy when he may prove unable to interpret Galatians in an unswervingly orthodox way. In Galatians 5.15-23 St. Paul specifies an assortment of "works of the flesh" that lead to damnation, which could make up a total of "twenty-nine" (line 51).

Off to hell, a Manichee?⁸

8

Or, my scrofulous French novel
 On grey paper with blunt type!
Simply glance at it, you grovel
 Hand and foot in Belial's gripe;
If I double down its pages
 At the woeful sixteenth print,
When he gathers his greengages,
 Ope a sieve and slip it in't?

9

Or, there's Satan! —one might venture
 Pledge one's soul to him, yet leave
Such a flaw in the indenture
 As he'd miss till, past retrieve,
Blasted lay that rose-acacia⁹
 We're so proud of! *Hy, Zy, Hine*¹⁰
'St, there's Vespers!¹¹ *Plena gratiâ*
 *Ave, Virgo!*¹² Gr-r-r—you swine!

Source: *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*, Vol. 2., 9th ed., 2012.

⁸ A heretic, a follower of Mani (3rd century), Persian religious leader.

⁹ The speaker would pledge his own soul to Satan in return for blasting Lawrence and his "rose-acacia," but the pledge would be so cleverly worded that the speaker would not have to pay his debt to Satan. There would be an escape clause ("flaw in the indenture") for himself.

¹⁰ Perhaps the opening of a mysterious curse against Lawrence.

¹¹ Evening prayers.

¹² Full of grace, Hail, Virgin! (Latin). The speaker's state of mind may be reflected in his mixed-up version of the prayer to Mary: "*Ave, Maria, gratia plena.*"