



The Two Gentlemen of Verona
William Shakespeare

Launce, a clownish servant, is speaking to the audience about his dog Crab. He describes how he takes the blame for all of Crab's mischief to protect his dog from being punished.

(Enter Launce with his dog.)

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 gentlemen-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 to 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?

Act 4, Scene 4