

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Swords, Scenes & Soliloquies

HAMLET

Act 5, scene 1: *Gravedigger Scene*
Gravedigger, Hamlet & Horatio

HAMLET

Let us speak to this fellow. Whose grave's this, sirrah?

Gravedigger

Mine, sir.

HORATIO

I think it be thine, indeed; for thou liest in't.

Gravedigger

You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours: for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

HAMLET

'Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine:
'tis for the dead, not for the quick; therefore thou liest.

Gravedigger

'Tis a quick lie, sir; 'twill away gain, from me to you.

HORATIO

What man dost thou dig it for?

Gravedigger

For no man, sir.

HORATIO

What woman, then?

Gravedigger

For none, neither.

HAMLET

Who is to be buried in't?

Gravedigger

One that was a woman, sir; but, rest her soul, she's dead.

HORATIO

[pulling Hamlet aside] How absolute the knave is! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us.!

HAMLET

How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

Gravedigger

I came to't that day that our last king Hamlet overcame Fortinbras. It was the very day that young Hamlet was born; he that is mad, and sent into England.

HAMLET

Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

Gravedigger

Why, because he was mad: he shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter there.

HORATIO

Why?

Gravedigger

There the men are as mad as he.

HORATIO

How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot?

Gravedigger

I' faith, he will last you some eight year
or nine year. Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth
three and twenty years.

HAMLET

Whose was it?

Gravedigger

A whoreson mad fellow's it was: whose do you think it was?

HAMLET

Nay, I know not.

Gravedigger

This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester.

HORATIO

This?

Gravedigger

E'en that.

HAMLET

Let me see.*[Takes the skull]*

Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio: a fellow
of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy: he hath
borne me on his back a thousand times; and now, how
abhorred in my imagination it is!. Where be your gibes now your flashes
of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar? There's a
special providence in the fall of a sparrow...The readiness is all.