

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Hamlet Scenes

ACT V, Scene 1: Hamlet, Horatio & the Gravedigger

HAMLET

Whose grave's this, sirrah?

GRAVEDIGGER

Mine, sir.

HAMLET

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

GRAVEDIGGER

I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

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

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

Cannot you tell that? Every fool can tell that: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born.

HORATIO

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

GRAVEDIGGER

I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die 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 mad fellow's it was: 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...

HORATIO

Oh, this mortal coil...

HAMLET

To what base uses we may return, Horatio.