

# **SHAKESPEARIENCE!**

## HAMLET

Act V, Scene 1: Gravediggers One and Two, Hamlet

### **FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation?

### **SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

I tell thee she is: and therefore make her grave straight: the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.

### **FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence?

### **SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

Why, 'tis found so.

### **FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

It must be 'se offendendo;' it cannot be else. For here lies the point: if I drown myself wittingly, it argues an act: it is, to act, to do, to perform: argal, she drowned herself wittingly.

### **SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

Will you ha' the truth on't? If this had not been a gentlewoman, she should have been buried out o' Christian burial.

### **FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

Why, there thou say'st: There is no ancient gentleman but gardeners, ditchers, and gravemakers: they hold up Adam's profession.

### **SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

Was he a gentleman?

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

He was the first that ever bore arms.

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

Why, he had none.

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

What, art a heathen? How dost thou understand the Scripture? The Scripture says 'Adam digged:' could he dig without arms? What is he that builds stronger than either the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter?

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

The gallows-maker; for that frame outlives a thousand tenants.

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

I like thy wit well, in good faith: the gallows does well; To't again, come.

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

'Who builds stronger than a mason, a shipwright, or a carpenter? Mass, I cannot tell. [Enter HAMLET]

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

Cudgel thy brains no more about it, when you are asked this question next, say 'a grave-maker: 'the houses that he makes last till doomsday. [they laugh]

**HAMLET**

Whose grave's this, sirrah?

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

Mine, sir.

**HAMLET**

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

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

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

**HAMLET**

What man dost thou dig it for?

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

For no man, sir.

**HAMLET**

What woman, then?

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

For none, neither.

**HAMLET**

Who is to be buried in't?

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

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

**HAMLET**

How absolute the knave is! How long hast thou been a grave-maker?

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

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

**HAMLET**

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

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

I' faith, if he be not rotten before he die he will last you some eight year or nine year

**HAMLET**

Why he more than another?

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

Here's a skull now; this skull has lain in the earth three and twenty years.

**HAMLET**

Whose was it?

**SECOND GRAVEDIGGER**

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

**HAMLET**

Nay, I know not.

**FIRST GRAVEDIGGER**

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

**HAMLET**

This?

**FIRST & SECOND GRAVEDIGGERS**

E'en that.

**HAMLET**

Let me see. Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him...