

SHAKESPEARIENCE!

Swords, Scenes & Soliloquies

HAMLET

16

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.