

# CHAPTER 8

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Discussion with spirit guide  
**William Shakespeare**

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**WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE:** Nice and easy now, and I'll take care of the rest. . . . So you want to know what William Shakespeare has to say from the after-life? Now I have a choice. I could act high and mighty and say "How dare you people still think of me as William Shakespeare! I'm not William Shakespeare any more I tell you!" Or I could. . . .

(He laughs.)

No, no, no, you didn't get the spirit of what I just said. I'm standing on a stage, everybody, right in front of you. So close that you could just touch me and give me a great hug, and yet so far that you'll all go back to your usual lonely selves after you close this book. And,

oh how lonely you all are! It just breaks my heart!

Can you all “see” me now? I’m wearing the same type of outfit that I wore as William Shakespeare. I’m standing on a stage playing out yet another act for humanity to see—that is assuming that you actually care.

(He breathes a sigh.)

Ahh, America. America. America. Do you really care about the REAL William Shakespeare or are you all too busy chasing the almighty dollar? Too busy to smell the real roses in heaven?

(He motions to “smell” a rose.)

Oh how you Americans amuse me. The English will never cease to amuse me but it just plain figures that out of the bosom of my old country came. . . . AMERICA! It seems I can’t say it enough—AMERICA! Land of the free. Home of the brave. Lovers of life—for it’s money that makes the world go round.

(He laughs.)

I haven’t come to satirize you all. Please understand that it’s my nature to be. . . what do you Americans call it. . . a son of a bitch. But alas! I have betrayed your confidence in me by resorting to such vulgar language.

(He makes a fist in the air and takes a deep breath.)

America, the most powerful country there ever was—and maybe, just maybe, the most powerful country there ever will be! And what do you have to show for it? That remains to be seen!

Ahhh, America—the land of opportunity. The land

where dollar bills could be plucked off of trees like the ripest and tastiest of fruit! The land where you could be anything that you want to be. There was a time in which I'd say that you could be anything you want to be as long as you were white, male and protestant, but alas! If you are a black female you now have some glimmer of hope to be a success!

(I was about to speak when he interrupted me.)

Ah, how amusing you are being now, Dr. Frick. You think that by "sugar coating" the truth, people will like you more! What you don't yet understand is that by being honest, you'll at least have some shred of dignity. . . . and maybe just maybe, you'll be appreciated by a select few in the most important of ways.

But deceiving others by spinning lies. . .

(He waves his index finger as if to say  
"No, no, no, you mustn't do that!")

Take your chances! Aim for the stars, and if you should fail, just remember that William Shakespeare himself participated in this Shakespearian tragedy!

Ah, what a special experience this would be if you people really cared whether or not I was for real! The great William Shakespeare, the author of all legendary plays, is back! Back to give you Americans the bitter-sweet truth. A truth that is in fact more sweet than bitter, maybe even much more sweet than bitter, but you people don't want to hear from me. How much longer shall I waste your time?

Ah, the romantic in me is back and ready as ever to burn the fires of passion. How many of you out there really have the childlike innocence to say to yourselves, "I can't believe it! That really is William Shakespeare! This isn't a put on!"

(He shakes his “head.”)

Ah, but your indifference is a Shakespearean tragedy in and of itself. What do you people do for a good time I might ask? Who is it that entertains you if not the REAL William Shakespeare?

(He “sits backwards” in a chair with the back of the chair in front. He then poses in a reflective position.)

Ah, how the world has changed in so many ways, yet not at all! How many of these books have to be sold before the emperor could walk among you all naked and proud as ever! How popular do these writings need to be in order for you to believe I’m for real?

(He shakes his “head.”)

But you people don’t want to hear my whining. Just give me a few minutes everybody and I’ll be as chipper as ever—in a drunken, but conscious sort of manner.

During my lifetime as William Shakespeare. . . ah, how the world was. . . dare I say it? In many ways a better place to live than it is today. Ah, those were the days when “how are you doing” meant “are you going to live another day?”

People didn’t need to use clichés during those times such as “live life to the fullest” and “life is short” and “every day is precious,” because everybody knew that life in your existence is fleeting. I don’t care if you are but ten years old—your life will be over before you know it! That I could guarantee you! (Even if you live to be a hundred!)

Most children didn’t even live to adulthood during those times. If an adult man or a woman had a terminal illness, his attitude would be, “Thank God I lived even this long!” If a child was sick, he or she wouldn’t worry either, for all children think that they are going

to live forever. And I could attest to the fact that they will, and you will too!

(He takes a deep breath and waves his “fist” in the air.)

Ah, the things you people take for granted, and it haunts you all too! There is a reason why slavemasters committed suicide even more often than slaves did. There is a reason why suicide rates are higher during times of peace than at war. It’s a very fundamental flaw of human nature. . . . Somehow—when life gets easier it could get all the more depressing.

And to make matters even more depressing, for some reason I feel compelled to remind most of you modern day Americans of how good you have it. And I suppose it is so. I suppose there is no way you could go back to the simpler times that William Shakespeare lived, and maybe you shouldn’t want to.