

Thomas Hardy (1840-1928)

1    *“Ah, Are You Digging on My Grave?”*

“Ah, are you digging on my grave,  
    My loved one?—planting rue?”  
—“No: yesterday he went to wed  
One of the brightest wealth has bred.  
‘It cannot hurt her now,’ he said,                     5  
    ‘That I should not be true.’”

“Then who is digging on my grave?  
    My nearest dearest kin?”  
—“Ah, no: they sit and think, ‘What use!  
What good will planting flowers produce?             10  
No tendance of her mound can loose  
    Her spirit from Death’s gin.”

“But some one digs upon my grave?  
    My enemy?—prodding sly?”  
—“Nay: when she heard you had passed the Gate    15  
That shuts on all flesh soon or late,  
She thought you no more worth her hate,  
    And cares not where you lie.”

“Then, who is digging on my grave?  
    Say—since I have not guessed!”                     20  
—“O it is I, my mistress dear,  
Your little dog, who still lives near,  
And much I hope my movements here  
    Have not disturbed your rest?”

“Ah, yes!    *You* dig upon my grave . . .             25  
    Why flashed it not on me  
That one true heart was left behind!  
What feeling do we ever find

To equal among human kind  
A dog's fidelity!" 30

"Mistress, I dug upon your grave  
To bury a bone, in case  
I should be hungry near this spot  
When passing on my daily trot.  
I am sorry, but I quite forgot 35  
It was your resting-place."

*1913*

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