

**I'M JUST DIGGING A HOLE IN THE WOODS AT 2
A.M.
NO REASON. WHY DO YOU ASK?**

A COMEDY DUET

by
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CHARACTERS: ANDREWS and HALLING. Either may be male or female. They are both college students.

STAGING: The play may be performed on a bare stage or with a very simple set. The setting is a forest at night, which may be suggested with tree stumps, bushes, etc. One of the characters has been digging a hole, so there may be a pile of dirt.

AT RISE: ANDREWS, wearing a winter coat, is digging a hole with a shovel (the shovel may be mimed for competition). HALLING enters, also wearing a winter coat, and approaches ANDREWS. ANDREWS does not see HALLING.

HALLING: What are you doing?

ANDREWS: (*startled*) Geez! Don't scare me like that!

HALLING: Sorry.

ANDREWS: I know you, don't I? You're in Prof. Johnson's contemporary philosophy class with me.

HALLING: Yeah. I guess so. You're in the row behind me, aren't you?

ANDREWS: Yeah. Couple of seats to your right.

HALLING: Wow. Funny running into you out here.

ANDREWS: Kinda. Yeah.

HALLING: So...um...what are you doing?

ANDREWS: What does it look like I'm doing?

HALLING: It looks like you're digging.

ANDREWS: (*mildly sarcastic*) Very good.

HALLING: What are you digging?

ANDREWS: A hole.

HALLING: A hole?

ANDREWS: What do people dig besides holes?

HALLING: I dunno. Trenches?

ANDREWS: Does this look like a trench to you?

HALLING: No. It looks like a hole.

ANDREWS: Then why did you ask? I mean...I've got a shovel in my hands. I'm digging. And this, obviously, by your own admission, looks like a hole. You should be able to walk up, look, figure out what I'm doing, and walk away without having to ask anything.

HALLING: But...it's 2 A.M.

ANDREWS: Yeah. So?

HALLING: And it's January. It's like thirty-some degrees.

ANDREWS: I know.

HALLING: Isn't the ground hard?

ANDREWS: As a matter of fact, yes, it is.

HALLING: People don't usually dig holes out in the cold at two o'clock in the morning.

ANDREWS: Are you out and about much at 2 A.M.?

HALLING: No.

ANDREWS: Then how would you know?

HALLING: I mean...it's generally understood that at 2 A.M. people are sleeping. Maybe watching TV or reading a book or blogging or Facebooking (*update reference as necessary*). Maybe partying if it's a weekend.

ANDREWS: What about people who work overnight shifts? Huh? What about them?

HALLING: Well, yeah. There's that, too. But this isn't Wal-Mart, or a convenience store or a factory. This is kind of out in the woods.

ANDREWS: And that's a good thing. Because if I was digging a hole in the floor at Wal-Mart at 2 A.M., I'd probably get thrown out.

HALLING: Well, yeah. But this seems a little...I dunno...out of the ordinary.

ANDREWS: Because it's not "generally understood" to be something people do at 2 A.M.?

HALLING: Yeah.

ANDREWS: Can you explain to me the concept of "generally understood"? What does that even mean, anyway? Who decides what's "generally understood" and what isn't?

HALLING: People.

ANDREWS: What people?

HALLING: Just...people.

ANDREWS: Just what people? Is there some committee?

HALLING: No, it's just...it's not normal.

ANDREWS: And that gives you the right to give me a bunch of grief about it?

HALLING: You're awfully touchy.

ANDREWS: Of course I'm touchy! It's 2 A.M. It's January! I'm cold. I'm tired. I've been digging a hole for the past hour, for crying out loud.

HALLING: An hour?

ANDREWS: This is a pretty big hole.

HALLING: Yeah...

ANDREWS: Look at this hole and tell me if you could dig one like it in fifteen minutes.

HALLING: No. No. It's a very nice hole. Smooth sides. Pretty deep. Quality hole. Definitely.

ANDREWS: Thank you.
HALLING: Why are you digging it?
ANDREWS: No reason. I just felt like digging a hole in the woods. Why do you ask?
HALLING: No reason?
ANDREWS: No.
HALLING: Seriously?
ANDREWS: Why not?
HALLING: You just said to yourself, "It's after midnight. I think I'll dig a hole."
ANDREWS: Pretty much. Yeah.
HALLING: Were you having trouble sleeping?
ANDREWS: No, not really.
HALLING: You just felt like digging a hole.
ANDREWS: Yeah.
HALLING: In the woods.
ANDREWS: Uh-huh.

(Beat.)

HALLING: Are you going to be long?
ANDREWS: Huh?
HALLING: Are you about done? Will you be finishing soon?
ANDREWS: Why?
HALLING: No reason.
ANDREWS: Do you want to dig your own hole, or something?
HALLING: Well, actually...yeah.
ANDREWS: What, did I inspire you? Did you look at this and think, wow...that would be fun?
HALLING: Um, to be honest, no. It was kinda what I came out here to do myself.
ANDREWS: All the stuff you just asked me...and you're out here to do the same thing?
HALLING: Heh. Yeah. Guess so.
ANDREWS: Did you notice how I never asked you what you were doing in the woods at two in the morning?
HALLING: You didn't, did you?
ANDREWS: No, I didn't. You know why?
HALLING: Why?
ANDREWS: Because I was being polite. And anyway, I figured it was none of my business.
HALLING: Oh. Um. Thank you?
ANDREWS: You, on the other hand, you interrogate me and all but imply that I'm up to something fishy—
HALLING: I'm sorry.
ANDREWS: —and now you tell me that you're doing exactly the same thing I am?
HALLING: But, I mean—it's the woods at 2 A.M. You gotta be careful, you know?
ANDREWS: If I was going to pull out an axe and kill you, don't you think I would have done it by now?
HALLING: How patient are you?
ANDREWS: More than I should be.
HALLING: Look, I'm sorry. I just—it's been kind of a stressful day and I'm feeling a little paranoid.
ANDREWS: And you go out to dig holes when you're feeling paranoid? Does it help?
HALLING: I've never tried it before. I'm hoping.
ANDREWS: Were you going to dig your hole right here?
HALLING: That was the idea, yeah.
ANDREWS: Of all the spots in the forest, you absolutely positively have to dig your hole here?
HALLING: It's a nice spot.
ANDREWS: Not really. It's pretty isolated. There's a lot of bushes and stuff.
HALLING: Why are you digging a hole here?
ANDREWS: Because I figured I'd have some privacy. Guess I was wrong about that, huh?
HALLING: Sorry.
ANDREWS: Look, there's a really nice clearing over that way. Be a great place for a hole.
HALLING: I kind of go for the secluded privacy thing myself.
ANDREWS: The privacy thing ain't happening here. At least not now.
HALLING: Guess not. Bummer. *(Beat.)* How long *do* you think you'll be?
ANDREWS: It would go a lot faster if I could be by myself and just work.
HALLING: So I should check back when? 2:30? 3:00?

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