

**Rosencrantz & Guildenstern Are Dead**  
**By Tom Stoppard**

This play, based on two rather insignificant characters from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, is all about life's lack of meaning/sense. Here Rosencrantz stupidly considers such things.

**Rosencrantz:** Do you ever think of yourself as actually dead, lying in a box with the lid on it? Nor do I really. Silly to be depressed by it. I mean, one thinks of it like being alive in a box. One keeps forgetting to take into account that one is dead. Which should make all the difference. Shouldn't it? I mean, you'd never know you were in a box would you? It would be just like you were asleep in a box. Not that I'd like to sleep in a box, mind you. Not without any air. You'd wake up dead for a start and then where would you be? In a box. That's the bit I don't like, frankly. That's why I don't think of it. Because you'd be helpless wouldn't you? Stuffed in a box like that. I mean, you'd be in there forever. Even taking into account the fact that you're dead. It isn't a pleasant thought. Especially if you're dead, really. Ask yourself: if I asked you straight off I'm going to stuff you in this box now – would you rather to be alive or dead? Naturally you'd prefer to be alive. Life in a box is better than no life at all. I expect. You'd have a chance at least. You could lie there thinking, well, at least I'm not dead. In a minute, somebody's going to bang on the lid and tell me to come out. **(knocks)** "Hey you! What's your name? Come out of there!"