God saue you Sir.

Mine honour'd Lord?

My most deare Lord?

My excellent good friends? How do'st thou
Guildensterne? Oh, Rosincrane; good Lads: How doe ye both?

As the indifferent Children of the earth.

Happy, in that we are not ouer-happy:
on Fortunes Cap, we are not the very Button.

Nor the Soales of her Shoo?

Neither my Lord.

Then you liue about her waste, or in the middle of her fauour?

Faith, her priuates, we.

In the secret parts of Fortune? Oh, most true:
she is a Strumpet. What's the newes?

None my Lord; but that the World's growne honest.

Then is Doomesday neere: But your newes is
not true. Let me question more in particular: what haue
you my good friends, deserued at the hands of Fortune,
that she sends you to Prison hither?
Prison, my Lord?

GUILDENSTERNE

Denmark's a Prison.

HAMLET

Then is the World one.

ROSINCRANCE

A goodly one, in which there are many Confines,
Wards, and Dungeons; Denmarke being one o' th' worst.

HAMLET

We thinke not so my Lord.

ROSINCRANCE

Why then 'tis none to you; for there is nothing
either good or bad, but thinking makes it so: to me it is
a prison.

HAMLET

Why then your Ambition makes it one: 'tis
too narrow for your minde.

ROSINCRANCE

O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell, and
count my selfe a King of infinite space; were it not that
I haue bad dreames.

GUILDENSTERNE

Which dreames indeed are Ambition: for the
very substance of the Ambitious, is meerely the shadow
of a Dreame.

HAMLET

A dreame it selfe is but a shadow.

ROSINCRANCE

Truely, and I hold Ambition of so ayry and
light a quality, that it is but a shadowes shadow.

HAMLET

Then are our Beggers bodies; and our Monarchs
and out-stretcht Heroes the Beggers Shadowes:
shall wee to th' Court: for, by my fey I cannot reason?
ROSINCRANCE & GUILDENSTERNE

Weel wait vpon you.

HAMLET

No such matter. I will not sort you with the rest of my servants: for to speake to you like an honest man: I am most dreadfully attended; but in the beaten way of friendship, What make you at Elsonower?

ROSINCRANCE

To visit you my Lord, no other occasion.

HAMLET

Begger that I am, I am euen poore in thankes; but I thanke you: and sure deare friends my thanks are too deare a halfe penny; were you not sent for? Is it your owne inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deale iustly with me: come, come; nay speake.

GUILDENSTERNE

What should we say my Lord?

HAMLET

Why any thing. But to the purpose; you were sent for; and there is a kinde confession in your lookes; which your modesties haue not craft enough to color, I know the good King & Queene haue sent for you.

ROSINCRANCE

To what end my Lord?

HAMLET

That you must teach me: but let mee conjure you by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the Obligation of our euer-preserued loue, and by what more deare, a better proposer could charge you withall; be euen and direct with me, whether you were sent for or no.

ROSINCRANCE

What say you?

HAMLET

Nay then I haue an eye of you: if you loue me hold not off.
My Lord, we were sent for.

HAMLET
I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery of your secret to the King and Queene: moulde no feather, I have of late, but wherefore I know not, lost all my mirth, forborne all custom of exercise; and indeed, it goes so heauenly with my disposition; that this goodly frame the Earth, seems to me a sterrill Promontory; this most excellent Canopy the Ayre, look you, this braue ore-hanging, this Maiesticall Roofe, fretted with golden fire: why, it appeares no other thing to mee, then a foule and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of worke is a man! how Noble in Reason? how infinite in faculty? in forme and mouing how expresse and admirable? in Action, how like an Angel? in apprehension, how like a God? the beauty of the world, the Parragon of Animals; and yet to me, what is this Quintessence of Dust? Man delights not me; no, nor Woman neither; though by your smiling you seeme to say so.

ROSINCANCER
My Lord, there was no such stufte in my thoughts.

HAMLET
Why did you laugh, when I said, Man delights not me?

ROSINCANCER
To thinke, my Lord, if you delight not in Man, what Lenton entertainment the Players shall receive from you: wee coated them on the way, and hither are they comming to offer you Service.

HAMLET
He that playes the King shall be welcome; his Maiestie shall haue Tribute of mee: what Players are they?

ROSINCANCER
Euen those you were wont to take delight in the Tragedians of the City.