

ROSENCRANTZ  
 As the indifferent children of the earth.

GUILDENSTERN  
 Happy in that we are not over-happy.  
 On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

HAMLET Nor the soles of her shoe?

ROSENCRANTZ Neither, my lord.

HAMLET Then you live about her waist, or in the middle  
 of her favors?

GUILDENSTERN Faith, her privates we.

HAMLET In the secret parts of Fortune? O, most true!  
 she is a strumpet. What news?

ROSENCRANTZ None, my lord, but that the world's  
 grown honest.

HAMLET Then is doomsday near. But your news is not  
 true. [Let me question more in particular. What have  
 you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of Fortune  
 that she sends you to prison hither?

GUILDENSTERN Prison, my lord?

HAMLET Denmark's a prison.

ROSENCRANTZ Then is the world one.

HAMLET A goodly one; in which there are many con-  
 fines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' th'  
 worst.

ROSENCRANTZ We think not so, my lord.

HAMLET 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.

ROSENCRANTZ Why, then your ambition makes it one.  
 'Tis too narrow for your mind.

HAMLET O God, I could be bounded in a nutshell and  
 count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I  
 have bad dreams.

GUILDENSTERN Which dreams indeed are ambition, for  
 the very substance of the ambitious is merely the  
 shadow of a dream.

HAMLET A dream itself is but a shadow.

ROSENCRANTZ Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and  
 light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

HAMLET Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs  
 and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. Shall we  
 to th' court? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

(II ii: 224-262)