

Side 10: Hamlet, Rosencrantz & Guildenstern

| Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN, stage left | | |
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| The boisterous, affectionate greeting of childhood friends. | GUILDENSTERN | My honoured lord! |
| | ROSENCRANTZ | My most dear lord! |
| Immediately recognizes the fact that either Claudius or Gertrude must have sent for them, but contains that reaction and plays along. | HAMLET | My excellent good friends! How dost thou, Guildenstern? Ah, Rosencrantz! Good lads, how do ye both? |
| Breaks out the peace pipe and starts packing it; marijuana was the bored-rich-boy habit they all picked up around the age of fifteen or sixteen. | 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 favours? |
| | GUILDENSTERN | 'Faith, her privates we. |
| | HAMLET | In the secret parts of fortune? O, most true; she is a strumpet. What's the 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 confines, wards and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the 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. |
| A miscalculated attempt to ingratiate | ROSENCRANTZ | Why then, your ambition makes it one; 'tis too narrow for your mind. |
| More and more deeply disturbed to find the friends of your youth playing sycophantic courtiers. | HAMLET | O God, I could be bounded in a nut shell and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that I have bad dreams. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore? |
| An infinitesimal pause, an attempt to be casual that doesn't quite wash | ROSENCRANTZ | To visit you, my lord; no other occasion. |
| | HAMLET | Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks; but I thank you: and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for? Is it your own inclining? Is it a free visitation? Come, deal justly with me: come, come; nay, speak. |
| | GUILDENSTERN | What should we say, my lord? |
| | HAMLET | Why, any thing, but to the purpose. You were sent for; and there is a kind of confession in your looks which your modesties have not craft enough to colour: I know the good king and queen have sent for you. |

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| | ROSENCRANTZ | To what end, my lord? |
| | HAMLET | That you must teach me. But let me conjure you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent for, or no? |
| After a long look at Rosencrantz | GUILDENSTERN | My lord, we were sent for. |
| | HAMLET | I will tell you why; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery. I have of late--but wherefore I know not--lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of exercises; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory, this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me than a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man! how noble in reason! how infinite in faculty! in form and moving how express and admirable! in action how like an angel! in apprehension how like a god! the beauty of the world! the paragon 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 seem to say so. |