SONNET 29

ORIGINAL TEXT

When in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes
I all alone beweep my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heav'n with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possessed,
Desiring this man's art, and that man's scope,
With what I most enjoy contented least;
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,
Like to the lark at break of day arising
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate.
For thy sweet love remembered such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

MODERN TEXT

When I'm in disgrace with everyone and my luck has deserted me, I sit all alone and cry about the fact that I'm an outcast, and bother God with useless cries, which fall on deaf ears, and look at myself and curse my fate, wishing that I had more to hope for, wishing I had this man's good looks and that man's friends, this man's skills and that man's opportunities, and totally dissatisfied with the things I usually enjoy the most. Yet, as I'm thinking these thoughts and almost hating myself, I happen to think about you, and then my condition improves—like a lark at daybreak rising up and leaving the earth far behind to sing hymns to God. For when I remember your sweet love, I feel so wealthy that I'd refuse to change places even with kings.