

SONNET 29 by William Shakespeare

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,
I all alone beweepe my outcast state,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,
And look upon myself, and curse my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,
Featur'd like him, like him with friends possess'd,
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 remember'd such wealth brings
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.

SONNET 29 PARAPHRASE

When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes,	When I've fallen out of favor with fortune and men,
I all alone beweepe my outcast state	All alone I weep over my position as a social outcast,
And trouble deaf heaven with my bootless cries,	And pray to heaven, but my cries go unheard,
And look upon myself and curse my fate,	And I look at myself, cursing my fate,
Wishing me like to one more rich in hope,	Wishing I were like one who had more hope,
Featured like him, like him with friends possess'd,	Wishing I looked like him; wishing I were surrounded by friends,
Desiring this man's art and that man's scope,	Wishing I had this man's skill and that man's freedom.
With what I most enjoy contented least;	I am least contented with what I used to enjoy most.
Yet in these thoughts myself almost despising,	But, with these thoughts – almost despising myself,
Haply I think on thee, and then my state,	I, by chance, think of you and then my melancholy
Like to the lark at break of day arising	Like the lark at the break of day, rises
From sullen earth, sings hymns at heaven's gate;	From the dark earth and (I) sing hymns to heaven;
For thy sweet love remember'd such wealth brings	For thinking of your love brings such happiness
That then I scorn to change my state with kings.	That then I would not change my position in life with kings.