

William Shakespeare (1564-1616)

Sonnet 37

As a decrepit¹ father takes delight
To see his active child do deeds of youth,
So I, made lame by Fortune's² dearest spite³,
Take all my comfort of thy worth and truth;
5 For whether beauty, birth⁴, or wealth, or wit,
Or any of these all, or all, or more,
Entitled⁵ in thy parts, do crowned sit,
I make my love engrafted to this store:
So then I am not lame, poor, nor despis'd,
10 Whilst that this shadow doth such substance give
That I in thy abundance am suffic'd⁶,
And by a part of all thy glory live.
Look what⁷ is best, that best I wish in thee:
This wish I have; then ten times happy me!
(116 words)

¹**decrepit** old and weak – ²**Fortune** luck – ³**dearest spite** direct malice, most grievous cruelty – ⁴**birth** inherited high status –

⁵**Entitled** listed – ⁶**suffic'd** satisfied – ⁷**Look what** whatever