

**from *Volpone* (ca. 1605)**  
**By Ben Jonson (England)**

**VOLPONE:**

Good morning to the day; and next, my gold.  
Open the shrine that I may see my saint.  
Hail the world's soul, and mine. More glad than is  
*Line* The teeming earth to see the longed-for sun  
5 Peep through the horns of the celestial Ram,  
Am I, to view thy splendor darkening his;  
That, lying here, amongst my other hoards,  
Showest like a flame by night, or like the day  
Struck out of chaos when all darkness fled  
10 Unto the center. O thou son of Sol\*  
But brighter than thy father, let me kiss,  
With adoration, thee, and every relic  
Of sacred treasure, in this blessed room.  
Well did wise poets, by thy glorious name,  
15 Title that age which they would have the best;  
Thou being the best of things, and far transcending  
All style of joy, in children, parents, friends,  
Or any other waking dream on earth.  
Thy looks when they to Venus did ascribe,  
20 They should have given her twenty thousand Cupids;  
Such are thy beauties and our loves! Dear saint,  
Riches, the dumb God, that giv'st all men tongues,  
That canst do nought, and yet makest men do all things;  
The price of souls; even hell, with thee to boot,  
25 Is made worth heaven. Thou art virtue, fame,  
Honor, and all things else! Who can get thee,  
He shall be noble, valiant, honest, wise,--

**MOSCA:**

And what he will, sir. Riches are in fortune  
A greater good than wisdom is in nature.

\* Sol: the sun