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In Robert Browning's (1812-89) poem "The Patriot" (1855), the speaker shares his story of changing fortunes. Once loved and celebrated, he is now hated and punished. The poem shows how public opinion can change quickly. Browning contrasts admiration and rejection to highlight how people can be both supportive and cruel.

Celebration and Admiration: At the beginning of the poem, the speaker remembers a time of great love and respect. The people decorated his path with roses and myrtle. They waved flags and cheered for him. The air was filled with the sound of bells and excitement. He was treated like a hero and given everything he wanted. Browning uses these joyful images to show how the public adores the speaker. It was a moment of triumph and honor. However, this happiness did not last long.

Rejection and Punishment: In the later stanzas, the speaker's situation changes completely. The crowd now gathers at the scaffold to watch him face punishment. He is tied with ropes, bleeding, and walking in the rain. Instead of flowers, they throw stones at him. Nobody cheers or celebrates him anymore. Browning uses these harsh images to show the cruelty of rejection. The speaker feels betrayed and abandoned by the same people who once praised him.

Browning contrasts public admiration and rejection to show how people's loyalty can be temporary. The poem reminds us of human nature's unpredictability.