

To a Mouse, by Robert Burns

WEE, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need na start awa sae hasty,
 Wi' bickering brattle!
I wad be laith to rin an' chase thee,
 Wi' murd'ring pattle!

I'm truly sorry man's dominion,
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion,
 Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor, earth-born companion,
 An' fellow-mortal!

I doubt na, whiles, but thou mayst thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou maun live!
A daimen icker in a thrave
 'S a sma' request;
I'll get a blessing wi' the lave,
 An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
It's silly wa's the win's are strewin'
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,
 O' foggage green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin,
 Baith snell an' keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
 Thou thought to dwell—
Till crash! the cruel coulter past
 Out thro' thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee mony a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for a' thy trouble,
 But house or hald,
To thole the winter's sleety dribble,
 An' cranreuch cauld!

But, Mousie, thou art no thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
 Gang aft agley,
An'lea'e us nought but grief an' pain,
 For promis'd joy!

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me
The present only toucheth thee:
But, Och! I backward cast my e'e
 On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I canna see,
 I guess an' fear!