

Name:
Date:

Period:
Ms. Lopez

"To A Mouse" By Robert Burns, July 31, 1786

Wee, sleekit, cow'rin, tim'rous beastie,
O, what a panic's in thy breastie!
Thou need . . . [not] start . . . [away so] hasty,
Wi' bickering¹ brattle!
I . . . [would] be [loathe] to . . . [run] an' chase thee,
Wi' murd'ring pattle²!

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

I doubt . . . [not], whiles, but thou may thieve;
What then? poor beastie, thou . . . [must] live!
A[n odd ear of corn] . . . in . . . [twenty-four ears of corn]
'S a . . . [small] request;
I'll . . . [breed] a blessin wi' the lave,
An' never miss't!

Thy wee bit housie, too, in ruin!
It's silly [ways the winds] . . . are strewin!
An' naething³, now, to . . . [build] a new . . . [one],
O[f] . . . green [grass]!
An' bleak December's winds [ensuing],
[Both bitter] . . . an' keen!

Thou . . . [sow] the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin fast,
An' cozie here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell-
[To] . . . crash! the cruel [plow] . . . past
Out thro' thy cell⁴.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble,
Has cost thee [many] . . . a weary nibble!
Now thou's turn'd out, for . . . [all] thy trouble,
But house [before] . . . hald,
To [suffer] . . . the winter's sleety dribble,
An' [silvery frost] . . . [cold]!

But, Mousie, thou art . . . [not] thy lane,
In proving foresight may be vain;
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
[Often go awry]. . .
. . . [And leave] us naught but grief an' pain,
For promis'd joy!

Still thou art blest, compar'd wi' me
The present only toucheth thee:
But, O[u]ch! I backward cast my e'e.
On prospects drear!
An' forward, tho' I [cannot] . . . see,
I guess an' fear!

1. bickering: hurrying
2. pattle: paddle
3. naething: nothing
4. cell: room