

From a Mouse

Ah, Rabbie, when thy muckle ploughshare
Cut swippert through my cosie mouse-lair,
Destroying its girnel, bed and houseware,
 Thou saw'st me flee,
And jaloused that, bereft o' mouse-fare,
 I'd surely dee.

But that same swick that gar'd me swarve
And dodge thy coulter's deidly carve
Ensured I'd neither freeze nor starve
 For want o' nest,
But glegly flit to Lagangarbh
 To be its pest.

Ca' me a cowrin' tim'rous beastie?
Oh! ploughman-poet haud yer wheesht ye!
Defer to warden Swan - at least he
 Posts fearfu' notice,
And humbly warns *gli alpinisti*:
 "Beware of Mice!"

Wi' mony a crumb and ample leisure
I lead a life o' sakeless pleasure,
And tak' frae hidie-hole the measure
 O' a' the climbers.
(Sic chiels I far mair dearly treasure
 Than Burnsian rhymers.)

Now Keith through cranreuch cauld comes crunchin' -
Once in the door he soon is munchin';
O' a' the folk at table bunchin'
 His plate's the fullest!
To Kingshoose he had gane for luncheon,
 Ower Beinn a'Chrulaiste.

La Pres has led a bolder foray
Wi' Prof and Tony up the corrie,
Across Stobs Dearg, Broige and Doire
 At byous speed;
Though Graeme presents a sicht that's sorry,
 Wi' bluidy heid.

A dander much less sanguinary
Has amply satisfied Rosemary,
Who's climbed (o' higher hills bein' wary)
 The Deil's Stairway;
While Douglas found it necessary
 To tak' the chairway.

Wi' Clare and Gavin he's been skiin' -
An unco sport, ye'll be agreein',
The aim and chief attraction bein'
 Its doon-hill thrills:
A thrawn pursuit if ye luve seein'
 The taps o' hills!

Bidean Bad na h-Iolaire's lofty tower
Lured Brian and Anne to douce Glengour,
Where Marilyn's seductive power
 Infects her hall;
And there they dallied mony an hour
 In am'rous thrall.

Now all are gathered roun' the table,
And Gavin's pipes shake roof and gable.
(The mighty skirl is execrable
 To wee mouse luggies!)

And Brian wi' pins new-made is able
 To humph the haggis.

Doc Audrey bares a blade maist shockin'
And charms the Puddin' Chief by talkin'
In language that resists unlockin'
 By ony southron,
Then plies the knife as if 'twere dockin'
 My three blin' brethren!

Now, Rab, she's finished sayin' thy patter,
So folk can set aboot their platter
And scoff the meat wi' birkie clatter
 O' fork and spoon.
(I pray some uningested matter
 May fa' to ground!)

Then Tony's trifle, soused in sherry -
'Twould fill fu' twelve till February -
Ensures that all are makin' merry,
 Except puir Audrey;
To hospital she's pledged to ferry
 Ae smashit body.

Neist morn, lang-liggin folk are bleary,
And cloud-smoor'd bens are dreich and dreary.
The reddin' occupies Rosemary;
 But what has led her
To leave ahint (guid-willie dearie!)
 A whang o' cheddar?

Thou wrot'st, oh! blinkered sangster-peasant,
That my few thoughts were of the present;
But future sojourns will be pleasant
 Of climbers here,
Gifting cheeses viridescent -
 Nae prospect drear!