**The Standard English Version**

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| Small, sleek, cowering, timorous beast,Oh, what panic is in your breast!You need not start away so hastyWith a hurrying scamper!I would be loath to run and chase you,With a murderous spade! I'm truly sorry that Man's dominionHas broken Nature's social union,And justifies that ill opinionWhich makes you startledAt me, your poor, earth-born companionAnd fellow mortal!I doubt not that you may steal;So what? Poor beast, you must live!An odd ear from twenty four sheaves of cornis a small request:I'll get a blessing with the rest,And never miss it!Your tiny housie, too, is in ruin!Its feeble walls the winds are strewing!And nothing now, from which to build a new oneOf foliage green!And bleak December's winds ensuingBoth bitter and keen!You saw the fields laid bare and wastedAnd weary Winter coming fast,And cosy here, beneath the blast,You thought to dwell,Until crash! the cruel plow passedRight through your cell.That tiny heap of leaves and stubble (grain stalks)Has cost you many a weary nibble!Now you are turned out for your troubleWithout house or home (belongings),To endure the Winter's sleety dribble,and frosty cold.But Mousie, you are not aloneIn proving that foresight may be vain:The best laid schemes (plans) of mice and menGo oft astray (oft go awry)And leave us nothing but grief and painInstead of promised joy!Still, you are blessed, compared with me!Only this moment touches you:But oh! I backward cast my eyeOn prospects turned to sadness!And though forward I cannot see,I guess and fear! |