

Second Epistle to Davie: A Brother Poet

Auld Neighbour,
 I'm three times doubly o'er your debtor,
 For your auld-farrant, frien'ly letter;
 Tho' I maun say't I doubt ye flatter,
 Ye speak sae fair;
 For my puir, silly, rhymin clatter
 Some less maun sair.

Hale be your heart, hale be your fiddle,
 Lang may your elbuck jink diddle,
 To cheer you thro' the weary widdle
 O' war'ly cares;
 Till barins' barins kindly cuddle
 Your auld grey hairs.

But Davie, lad, I'm red ye're glaikit;
 I'm tauld the muse ye hae negleckit;
 An, gif it's sae, ye sud by lickit
 Until ye fyke;
 Sic haun's as you sud ne'er be faikit,
 Be hain't wha like.

For me, I'm on Parnassus' brink,
 Rivin the words to gar them clink;
 Whiles dazed wi' love, whiles dazed wi' drink,
 Wi' jads or masons;
 An' whiles, but aye owre late, I think
 Braw sober lessons.

Of a' the thoughtless sons o' man,
 Commen' to me the bardie clan;
 Except it be some idle plan
 O' rhymin clink,
 The devil haet,-that I sud ban-
 They ever think.

Nae thought, nae view, nae scheme o' livin,
 Nae cares to gie us joy or grievin,
 But just the pouchie put the neive in,
 An' while ought's there,
 Then, hiltie, skiltie, we gae scrievin',
 An' fash nae mair.

Leeze me on rhyme! it's aye a treasure,
 My chief, amaist my only pleasure;
 At hame, a-fiel', at wark, or leisure,
 The Muse, poor hizzie!
 Tho' rough an' raploch be her measure,
 She's seldom lazy.

Haud to the Muse, my daintie Davie:
 The warl' may play you mony a shavie;
 But for the Muse, she'll never leave ye,
 Tho' e'er sae puir,
 Na, even tho' limpin wi' the spavie
 Frae door tae door.