

Rabbie Burns
Address to a Haggis

*Fair fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o the puddin'-race!
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Painch, tripe, or thairm:
Weel are ye wordy o' a grace
As lang's my earm.*

*The groaning trencher there ye fill,
Your hurdies like a distant hill,
Your pin wad help to mend a mill
In time o need,
While thro your pores the dew's distil
Like amber bead.*

*His knife see rustic Labour dight,
An cut ye up wi ready slicht,
Trenching your gushing entrails bright,
Like onie ditch;
And then, O what a glorious sight,
Warm-reekin, rich!*

*Then, horn for horn, they stretch an strive:
Deil tak the hindmast, on they drive,
Till a' their weel-swallow'd kytes belyve
Are bent like drums;
Then auld Guidman, maist like to rive,
'Bethankit' hums.*

*Is there that owre his French ragout,
Or olio that wad stow a sew,
Or fricassee wad mak her spew
Wi perfect scunner,
Looks down wi sneering, scornfu view
On sic a dinner?*

*Peer devil! see him owre his trash,
As feckless as a wither'd rash,
His spindle shank a guid whip-lash,
His nieve a nit;
Thro bluidy flood an field to dash,
O how unfit!*

*But mark the Rustic, haggis-fed,
The trembling earth resounds his tread,
Clap in his walie nieve a blade,
He'll mak it whistle;
An legs an arms, an heads will sned,
Like taps o thrissle.*

*Ye Pow'rs, wha mak mankind your care,
And dish them oot their bill o fare,
Auld Scotland wants nae skinking ware
That jaups in luggies:
But, if ye wish her gratefu prayer,
Gie har a Haggis*

Address to a Haggis
English Translation

*Good luck to you and your honest, plump face,
Great chieftain of the pudding race!
Above them all you take your place, gut,
stomach-lining, or intestine,
You're well worth a grace as long as my arm.*

*The overloaded serving tray there you fill,
Your buttocks are shaped like a distant hilltop,
Your wooden skewer could be used to fix a mill
if need be,
While through your pores your juices drip like
liquid gold.*

*See the serving-man clean his knife,
And then cut you up with great skill,
Making a trench in your bright, gushing guts to
form a ditch,
And then, Oh! What a glorious sight!
Warm, steaming, and rich!*

*Then, spoonful after spoonful, they eagerly eat,
As if the devil will get the last bit, on they go,
Until all their well-stretched stomachs in the
end, are taut like drums,
Then the head of the family, about to burst,
murmurs "Thank the Lord".*

*Is there a pretentious soul who, over his French
ragout,
Or Italian cuisine that would make a pig sick,
Or French stew that would make that same pig
vomit violently with complete and utter disgust,
Who looks down his nose with a sneering,
scornful attitude, on such a meal?
(meaning a Haggis)*

*Poor devil! See him over his unappetising meal!
As feeble as a withered bullrush,
His skinny legs no thicker than a thin rope,
His fist the size of a small nut,
Through a bloody battlefield to charge,
He'd be completely unfit!*

*But look at the healthy, Haggis-fed warrior
The earth trembles under his stampede!
Put a knife in his massive hand,
He'll swing it through the air frantically!
And legs, and arms, and heads will be severed
As easily as the tops off of a thistle.*

*You governer's who look after us,
And dish out our food and drink,
The Scots don't want any watery, wimpy stuff
That splashes about in little wooden bowls!
So, if you want us to be happy and do well,
Give all us Scots a Haggis!*