Burns, it is said, wrote this poem during a low period in his life, when things were not going so well and he was contemplating high-tailing it to Jamaica. He sure sounds depressed!

The aim of this modern translation is to help students comprehend the word meanings. To that end, the words thee, thine and thy have been changed to you and your. No effort was made to rhyme perfectly.

**TO A MOUNTAIN DAISY by ROBERT BURNS**

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flower,
You have met me in an evil hour;
For I must crush among the dust
Your slender stem:
To spare you now is past my power,
You bonnie gem.

Alas! it’s not your neighbor sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending you among the wet dew,
With spreckled breast,
When upward-springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cold blew the bitter-biting north
Upon your early, humble birth;
Yet cheerfully you glinted forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth
Your tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield,
High sheltering woods and walls must shield
But you, beneath the random refuge
Of clod or stone,
Adorns the barren stubble-field,
Unseen, alone.

There, in your scanty mantle clad,
Your snowy bosom sunward spread,
You lift your unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears your bed,
And low you lie!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet floret of the rural shade!
By love’s simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
’Till she, like you, all soiled, is laid
Low in the dust.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life’s rough ocean luckless starred!
Unskillful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
’Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him over!

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
To misery’s brink,
’Till wrenched of every stay but Heaven,
He, ruined, sink!

Even you who mourns the Daisy’s fate,
That fate is yours—no distant date;
Stern Ruin’s ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on your bloom,
’Till crushed beneath the furrow’s weight,
Shall be your doom!