

The farmer speaks in heated terms of woes, that dog his feet; for fifty million bugs and worms will spoil his corn and wheat. And when he's tired of using words which taint the passing breeze, he gets his gun and shoots some birds that lived in yonder trees. The farmer keeps a score of cats, and gives them milk and curds, supposing they'll fill up on rats—but they are after birds. The birds are death to worms and bugs which desolate the crops, and yet they're killed with cats and drugs and guns—it never stops. The farmer slays his fairest friend, the bird in wet elm tree, then says "Alas, there is no end to pests that ruin me!" His righteous heart within him aches, the gophers are so thick, so he pursues a dozen snakes and kills them with a brick. Yet snakes devour the noisome pests that bring the farmer loss; they swallow mice with eager zest, nor ask imported sauce. The husbandman, the man of woes, would have less cause to groan if he would only kill his foes and leave his friends alone.

Walt Mason.