

❧ 'TIS WELL THAT'S NOT WORSE ❧

A MORAL TALE

THE nights were lang, the frost was snell,
 The snaw wreaths deep on ilka fell,
 When trav'lers Sandy, Tam and Pate
 Met at ane inn when it was late. 5
 The beds were a' tane up but ane
 And not ae guest was laid alane.
 On which these three maun do their best
 To pigg together in ae nest.
 Slee Sandy, he contrived it sae
 To get the midst between the twae, 10
 As warmest place, he thought, 'till dawn,
 To what-e'er side the claiths were drawn.
 Now past his first and soundest sleep,
 He fand dificulty to keep 15
 Himsell frae rising to the pot,
 Or setting a' the bed on flote.
 He doughtna think of ganging forth,
 Lest he shou'd tine his cosie birth,
 But rather chuse by way of jest
 To stroan upon his nighbour neist. 20
 Who wak'ning with the hovan glow
 That frae his neck to heels did flow,
 Crys, "Damn ye, brock, I'm a' bepisht!"

1 lang: long snell: bitter

2 snaw wreaths: snow drifts ilka: every

5 tane up: occupied ("taken up")

6 alane: alone

7 On which: whereupon maun: had to

8 pigg: lie like pigs ae: one

9 Slee: sly sae: so

10 twae: two

12 claiths: bedclothes

14 fand: found

16 on flote: afloat

17 doughtna: dared not ganging forth:
getting up ("going away")

18 tine: lose

19 chuse: chose

20 stroan: piss neist: close by

21 hovan: spouting

23 brock: fool a' bepisht: soaked in piss

Says Sandy, “Be advis’d to whisht,
Ye’re right well off, sae never mind me,
I’m shyting on the chiel behind me.”

25

THE MORALL

THUS others view in more distress
Than us, makes ours appear the less.

Ed^r 1745

24 whisht: be silent

25 right well off: you’re just fine **sae**

never mind me: so don’t let me bother
you

26 chiel: fellow

27 others view: seeing others

28 ours: our own (distress)

Ed^r: Edinburgh