

A Tale of a Wife

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I'll tell you a tale of a Wife,
And she was a Whig and a Saunt;
She liv'd a most sanctify'd life,
But whyles she was fash'd wi' her...

chorus: Fal lal la etc.

Poor woman! she gaed to the Priest,
And till him she made her complaint;
"There's naething that troubles my breast
Sae sair as the sins o' my..."

"Sin that I was herdin' at hame,
"Till now I'm three score and ayont,
"I own it wi' sin and wi' shame
"I've led a sad life wi' my..."

He bade her to clear up her brow,
And no be discourag'd upon't;
For holy gude women enow
Were mony times waur't wi' their...

It's naught but Beelzebub's art,
But that's the mair sign of a saunt,
He kens that ye're pure at the heart,
Sae levels his darts at your...

What signifies Morals and Works,
Our works are no wordy a runt!
It's Faith that is sound, orthodox,
That covers the fauts o' your...

Were ye o'the Reprobate race
Created to sin and be brunt,
O then it would alter the case
If ye should gae wrang wi'your ...

But you that is Called and Free
Elekit and chosen a saunt,
Will't break the Eternal Decree
Whatever ye do wi' your...

And now with a sanctify'd kiss
Let's kneel and renew covenant:
It's this---and it's this---and it's this---
That settles the pride o' your...

Devotion blew up to a flame;
No words can do justice upon't;
The honest auld woman gaed hame
Rejoicing and clawin her...

Then high to her memory charge;
And may he who takes it affront,
Still ride in Love's channel at large,
And never make port in a...!!!

Note: A stanza quoted casually in a letter to Ainslie, 29 July 1787,
is apparently an alternative (or additional) final stanza:

Then hey, for a merry good fellow,
And hey, for a glass of good strunt;
May never we SONS OF APOLLO
E'er want a good friend add a...

From Merry Muses of Caledonia, Burns