On An Unsociable Family

By Elizabeth Hands

O what a strange parcel of creatures are we,
Scarce ever to quarrel, or even agree;
We all are alone, though at home altogether,
Except to the fire constrained by the weather;
Then one says, ‘Tis cold’, which we all of us know,
And with unanimity answer, ‘Tis so’;
With shrugs and with shivers all look at the fire,
And shuffle ourselves and our chairs a bit nigher;
Then quickly, preceded by silence profound,
A yawn epidemical catches around:
Like social companions we never fall out,
Nor ever care what one another’s about;
To comfort each other is never our plan,
For to please ourselves, truly, is more than we can.