

will be condemned by your Lordshipp, when for my defence in the first I shall allege my double attempt (since your return from Hinchingsbrooke) of doing it personally, in both of which your Lordships occasions, no doubtfulness of mine prevented me. And that being now fearful of a sudden summons to Portsmouth for the discharge of some ships there, I judge it very unbecoming the duty which (every bit of bread I eat tells me) I owe to your Lordshipp to expose the safety of your Honour to the uncertainty of my return. For the matter (my Lord), it is such as could I in any measure think safe to conceal from, or likely to be discovered to you by any other hand, I should not have dared so far to own what from my heart I believe is false, as to make myself but the relater of others discourse. But, Sir, your Lordships honour being such as I ought to value it to be, and finding both in City and Court that discourses pass to your prejudice, too generally for mine or any man's controlling but your Lordships, I shall (my Lord), without the least greatening or lessening the matter, do my duty in laying it shortly before you. People of all conditions (my Lord) raise matter of wonder from your Lordships so little appearance at Court – some concluding thence your disfavour there. To which purpose I have had Questions asked me; and endeavouring to put off such insinuations by asserting the contrary, they have replied that your Lordships living so beneath your Quality, out of the way and declining of Court attendance, hath been more then once discoursed about the King. Others (my Lord), when the chief Ministers of State, and those most active of the Council have been reckoned up (wherein your Lordship never use to want an eminent place), have said, touching your Lordshipp, that now your turn was served and the King had given you a good estate, you left him to stand or fall as he would. And, particularly in that of the Navy, have enlarged upon your letting fall all service there. Another sort (and those the most) insist upon the bad report of the house wherein your Lordship (now observed in perfect health again) continues to sojourn. And by name have charged one of the daughters for a common Courtizan, alleging both places and persons where and with whom she hath been too well known. And how much her wantonness occasions (though unjustly) scandal to your Lordship; and that as well to gratifying of some enemies as to the wounding of more friends, I am not able to tell. Lastly (my Lord), I find a general coldness in all persons towards your Lordship; such as, from my first dependence on you, I never yet knew. Wherein I shall not offer to interpose any