

and heart. Whether war or peace, all fear the event will be bad. Thence home and with my brother to dinner, my wife being dressing herself against night. After dinner I to my closet all the afternoon, till the porter brought my vest back from the Taylors, and then to dress myself very fine, about 4 or 5 a-clock; and by that time comes Mr. Batelier and Mercer, and away by coach to Mrs. Pierces by appointment, where we find good company – a fair lady, my Lady Prettyman – Mrs. Corbet – Knipp. And for men, Capt. Downing – Mr. Lloyd, Sir W. Coventry's clerk – and one Mr. Tripp, who dances well. After some trifling discourse, we to dancing and very good sport, and mightily pleased I was with the company. After our first bout of dancing, Knipp and I to sing, and Mercer and Capt. Downing (who loves and understands music) would by all means have my song of *Beauty Retire* – which Knipp hath spread abroad, and he extols it above anything he ever heard. And without flattery, I think it is good in its kind. This being done, and going to dance again, comes news that Whitehall was on fire – and presently more particulars, that the Horse guard was on fire. And so we run up to the garret and find it so, a horrid great fire – and by and by we saw and heard part of it blown up with powder. The ladies begun presently to be afeared – one fell into fits. The whole town in an Alarne. Drums beat and trumpets, and the guards everywhere spread – running up and down in the street. And I begun to have mighty apprehensions how things might be at home, and so was in mighty pain to get home; and that that encreased all is that we are in expectation (from common fame) this night or tomorrow to have a Massacre – by the having so many fires one after another – as that in the City. And at the same time begun in Westminster by the Palace, but put out – and since in Southworke, to the burning down some houses; and now this, doth make all people conclude there is something extraordinary in it, but nobody knows what. By and by comes news that the fire is slackened; so then we were a little cheered up again, and to supper and pretty merry. After supper another dance or two, and then news that the fire is as great as ever, which put us all to our wit's end, and I mightily [eager] to go home; but the coach being gone, and it being about 10 at night and rainy dirty weather, I knew not what to do but to walk out with Mr. Batelier, myself resolving to go home on foot and leave the women there. And so did; but at the Savoy got a coach and came back and took up the women; and so (having by people come from the fire understood that the fire was overcome, and all