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1414. b. 10.

A PLAINE
RELATION
OF MY

SUFFERINGS,

by that Miserable Combustion,
which happened in *Tower-street* through the un-
happy firing of a great quantity of Gun-
powder, there the 4. of *January* 1650.

Now Printed that the World may

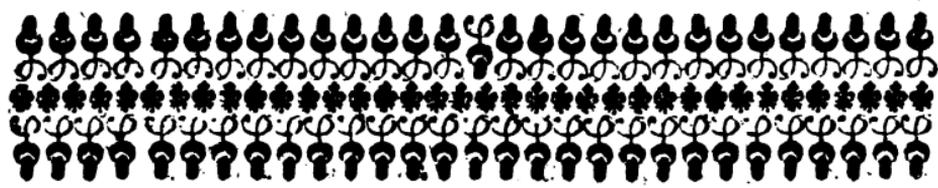
see what just Cause I had to complain of the injuries then done me, and how little reason Mr. *Glendon* Minister of that Parish had (especially after three years time and more) to defame me in Print as a malicious slanderer of him (who though I had strong reason to suspect, I did never positively charge with any thing.) Yet he with as much malice as impertinency, hath inserted his Vindication (as he calls it) into his Epistle to the Reader, put before a Sermon of his, lately printed, Entituled, *Justification justified*; wherein, however he hath justified his Doctrine, he hath condemned himself (as in reference to me) in the judgement of all rationally Persons.

John Selden (1653)

Prov. 18. 17. *He that is first in his own cause seemeth just, but his neighbour commeth and searcheth him.*

London Printed, 1653.





To the Reader.

I Am necessitated to publish this Narrative, in Answer to a Relation of my sufferings by that sad accident of Gunpowder which befell me and others the 4 of *January* 1650 made and set forth by Mr. *Thomas Glendon* Minister in that Parish. You may please to believe, I can have no pleasure in reviewing that direfull Tragedy ; wherein so many of my dear relations perished , together with the increase of above forty years toilesome gleaning in the way of my labourious Calling. But finding my self crowded into print with

A 2 calumny

calumny and reproach ; I was the rather prevailed upon by some of my best friends, not to be silent least mine innocency might thereby suffer. I have therefore according to my capacity, in the the plain stile of a weak woman (with all sincerity and meekness, however provoked) laid before you the grounds and reasons, why I have so frequently complained of that hard measure dealt me (before and after the fire happened) as well by the Magistrate as by my Minister and neighbour-hood ; Yee that have or may read Master *Glendons* charge against me, look also on my defence, and then judge as the Lord shall direct , for unto him have I alwayes left my cause;

Hester Shaw.



Long before that sad blow in *Tower* street by Gun-
 powder, (some years before the Fire in *Thames*
 street) I had intelligence given me of Gunpowder
 which was in that house, where the disaster after hap-
 pened, and that to a great quantity, so that the neigh-
 bourhood were much afraid of it. My house being next
 adjoining I went to my neighbour and told him what
 I had heard, nor could he deny it to be so; I did there-
 fore pray him, it might be removed speedily, which
 he pretended could not be done that night without in-
 creasing our danger, but promised to remove it the
 next morning betimes, and in the mean time to watch
 it all that night himself, but this his promise not being
 performed, I urged him to it again, withall telling him
 that otherwise I would acquaint a Magistrate therewith
 before whom said I, you cannot answer for it, it being
 prohibited any man to keep above six or eight pounds
 of Gunpowder at the most in his house, and that too,
 not allowed any where, but in an upper room: Thus
 not without divers hot words, I constrained him to re-
 move eighteen Barrells, which he said was all, but I,
 (suspending my belief) sent for a Constable to search
 his house, whereupon we found twelve barrells of
 powder more; I then understood that it had been long
 his custome to keep great store of powder in his house,
 notwithstanding he had often been warned thereof:

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Therefore

Therefore when the Wardmoot Enquest sate, I with the Constable, went and complained thereof unto them, telling them I went in danger of my life, and intreating them to take some order about it; afterwards also, I (being at home) seeing them when they came about their view, went out unto them, and bespake them to this effect; Gentlemen, I pray, search that house now, whereof I have complained unto you, and judge whether it be a fit storehouse for Gunpowder. I had fair promises of them, but nothing at all was done about it.

Afterwards when the fire broke out in *Thames-street*, this was complained off again to the Aldermen there present, who promised to take care about it, but yet nothing was done: wherefore *M. Singleton* who was then Constable, did (through mine instigation) make complaint thereof at the Sessions house divers times, from time to time, and by his continuall solicitation procured it to be taken into examination, but (as appears) it was laid aside againe, and no result (to any purpose) came thereof. Wherefore (for my part) I looked every night (when at home) to be blown up, and would say to my maid at my lying down, I am now laid fit for my Coffin, and it may be before to morrow morning, I shall be blown into the Churchyard for it.

It happened that the morning preceding that unhappy accident, I was sent for by my Lady *Brent* to come to her, she being very ill, and with her I continued untill that sad report came to mine ears, which was not untill two of the Clock in the morning after, for my Lady (being desirous to rest) had commanded all out of the Chamber, but my self, so that when first the messenger

messenger came, I could receive no intelligence, but yet my Ladies Gentlewoman, and *Mistress Terry* with her, commanded my Ladies Coach to be made ready, and went to the fire, and continued thereabout up and down, untill they could inform themselves how things went, and had seen my daughter carried wounded into *Mr. Loes* house in *Rood-Lane*; after which they returned, and came into my Ladies Chamber, telling her that she must needs let me go unto my daughter, which my Lady (as not knowing how soon she might have need of me) was very unwilling to suffer, untill they promised her to accompany me, and bring me back to her; then after they had brought me out of the Chamber, that a disaster had happened near my house; I answered them, that truly I thought what I feared was fallen upon me, and said, doubtlesse my next neighbour hath blown me up with Gunpowder, (which guesse of mine they confirming) said I, tis no more then I expected; and therefore (blessed be God) I am in some measure prepared for it, having laid up my treasure above the reach of Gunpowder, and being I had nothing, nor could have, but what I received from mine heavenly Father, I was most willing to suffer his righteous will, if to his onely wise providence it had seemed meet to call for away again, what he had once bestowed on me; and was desirous to lay mine hand upon my mouth, preventing all complaints with this Consideration, that the greatest evill on this side hell, was lesse then my demerit: by this time we took Coach, and then came to *Mr. Loe* the Chirurgion his house, where I met him coming from my daughter, he having newly dressed her wounds, who when she saw me, fell

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into a great passion, but I exhorted her to look up unto God, and to compose her self to take some rest, and leave the care of her children to me, for whom I would do mine endeavours. There were present there divers Friends, among whom was the Lady Mayoreffe that now is, whose courteous and charitable care I must ever acknowledge, for she lent my daughter of her own cloaths to cover her nakedness, and she with Mr. *Loe* and his wife were good Samaritanes to me in the time of my extremity. I went thence unto the Lord Mayor his house that now is, by whose advice Mr. *O'burn* the Bricklayer, and his workmen, and labourers, were employed to look after the materials of my house, and lay them up, whilst others of my friends enquired after my goods scattered by the powder, and also having taken order for that present concerning the Bodies of my son in Law, his three children and maid, whom I found all slain. I again returned to my Lady *Brent*, whom I found somewhat eased of her pain, therefore I again left her about 6 of the clock in the morning went to Mr. *Loe* his house, and sent for my Cousin *White*, and my Cousin *Dewit*, who (in convenient time) went with me, together with Mr. *Loe*, unto Mr. *Glendons* house, where we were desired to go into the Church, which we did, and Mr. *Glendon* came to us, to whom I said, that I was informed, that some bags of money had been brought into his house, and if any of them are mine, said I, they are sealed with mine own Seal (shewing him my ring, whereon was engraven the Arms of my Fathers house) or else with my sons seal (whereon was engraven the Arms of the *Doums*, quartered with the *Binghams* Arms) and then and there also

so Mr. *Abraham Parrot* (who also went with me unto Mr. *Glendon*) testified unto him, that but a little before, he had payed me nine hundred and fifty pounds of a Mortgage, all which said he was sealed up with Mr. *Donns* seal, and the best of the money marked with the figure of 8. Mr. *Glendon* answered, that what had been brought to him he had sent to Mr. *Ga-steels* house in *Crutched Friars*, which (said he) was but two bags, not once naming ought else, as my friends then present with me can witness. I did then presse him to let me have my money, because of my present necessity, but no argument would prevaile with him to supply me with one peny, nor did he expresse any sense of my affliction, nor give me any word of comfort, and this was the very next day after the fire; and not some dayes after, as Mr. *Glendon* hath falsely (though in Print) represented to the world.

When I came back to my daughter, she had (as I found) sent my Chamber maid to see if she could heare what was become of any of our goods, who hearing that great store of goods had been carried into Mr. *Glendon*s house (after she had gleaned up some things in the Church-yard, which she put into her apron) she went thither, where she was civilly admitted by *Mistis Glendon*, but when Mr. *Glendon* saw her, he was very angry, and would let her looke no longer, so she came back and told me of it, and also certified me that she saw a black Chest of Drawers of my Daughters, (where she put her wearing Linnen) and my silver Salt also in *M. Glendon*s house, this my Lady *Mayoresse*, *Mrs. Loe*, with divers others then present know; but when afterwards the Chest was brought home, all my daugh-

ters best Laces, and finest Linnen which lay at the bot-
tome were taken away, and the courser which were put
uppermost were only left, but who did it I know not, it
seems that they had time and place to pick and chuse.

My occasions for money increasing, I desired Mr. *Loe*
(at noon) to go for my money again to *Mr Glendon*, who
went but in vain, then Mr. *Hall* (at my desire) went for
it, after that Mr. *Gail*, then Mr. *Love* the Minister, and at
night Mr. *Loe* again; but no person, nor importunity,
nor argument, would prevail with Mr. *Glendon*.

The same day in the afternoon, came to me one Mi-
stresse *Hall* with her sonne *Henry*, and brought with them
Mr. Twiggs man, who informed me, that foure bags of
money had been carried into *Mr. Glendons* house; but
said I to him, *Mr Glendon* saith, he had but two bags,
to which *Mr. Twiggs* man replied againe, there were
four bags carried into *Mr. Glendons* house, for saith he,
two of them, I carried in my self, and then also I with o-
thers sealed up other bags and money besides in a blew
Apron, and delivered them at *Mr Glendons*; afterwards
finding a bunch of Keyes on a silver chain and this bag,
(shewing me a bag which he had in his hand, and asking
me if that were my seal on it) I put the money, said he,
that was in it, into a Napkin, and left it also at *Mr. Glen-
dons*; and after that also, seeing *Mr. Sanders* and his wife
in the Churchyard, I delivered the Keyes & bag to them,
praying *Mr. Sanders* to take care that the seal might not
be broken, and telling them I was glad to finde some
body that I knew, and as I was telling them, what I had
done, a young man that was by hearing me, said to us,
that he also had carried two bags into *Mr. Glendons*, and
said, he was a Gunsmiths man in East *Smithfield*, but be-
fore

fore we could question him further, he was suddenly gone.

On the Lords day after the fire, I being at supper with my Lord Mayor (that now is) at his house, took occasion to acquaint his Lordship with *Mr. Glendon's* hard usage of me, in detaining from me my moneys, though I had requested it of him my self, and also by divers of my friends, as *Mr. Love*, *Mr. Gayle*, *Mr. Hall*; and *Mr. Loe* who had been twice or thrice for it, and that for the supply of my present necessity: my Lord told me that he also had sent *M. Gayle* about it, but as yet, said he, *I have received no account of it*: Then said I to my Lord I perceive what is the reason of *M. Glendon's* evill dealing with me; It is because I have withdrawn my accustomed Benevolence from him: When he came first to our Parish, many of our parishoners were gone into the Country, whose houses were left empty; and because also I saw he had a charge of children, *I did over and above the accustomed Tythes of my house, paid for 60 years by my husband and his father, also pay unto him an additionall private Benevolence of eight pounds a year, at such times as I saw fit; and this I continued till after Mr. Graves the Gun-smith was chosen Churchwarden, with whose wife falling into discurse one day, as I went by, she told me from Mr. Glendon, that he would take it very kindly if I would subscribe what I had given him, because it might move other of the parishoners to a more liberall Contribution: I told her that Mr. Glendon shewed himself an unworthy man, in not being contented with what I had freely done, but also in seeking to make me his Lure to draw others on to it; and oblige us all by a publique Subscription to*

a thing

a thing which is but arbitrary ; but (said I) therefore I will withdraw my hand , and so I did : And this is the cause of his dealing thus with me ; but (said I) to morrow I will know whether the money be his or mine ; If his, tis fit he should keep it, if mine, I know no reason why he should detain it. I know moreover, that in all probability all the bags of money must be mine ; for none of my neighbours who suffered by that sad blow could lose much in money by it ; some of them being known to be necessitous persons, especially at that instant, for Mr. *Porter* in whose house, and by whose remisnesse it came, had purposely brought that Powder into his shop to send it away for moneys to be lent upon it ; the Shoemaker also next doore to him, confessed that he then wanted money to buy Leather for his shop, (being alwayes thought a poore man) and the other sufferers which were of quality (as Mr *Wormell* the Vine-tener at the Rose on the one side ; and Captain *Compton* on the other side, had their Closets quite backwards where the powder could have no such power : But I was neereft to the power of the powder, and had at that time unhappily drawn in my money for a purchase. I told my Lord also, what occasion I had for my money, saying, I was loath to borrow so long as I had any of mine own left me : And since I could not obtain it of Mr. *Glendon* by fair means, I was resolved to seek it by publique Justice ; My Lord then desired that he might first speak with Mr. *Glendon* before I took any other course : I said, if he pleased to do it from himself, he might, but not as from me. Then my Lord would have sent presently for Mr. *Glendon*, but said, I, tis the Lords day, and therefore no fit time, so after supper I went home to Mr. *Loes*.

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And the next day being the first *Munday* after the Fire, I went again to my Lord Mayors (that now is) who lent me a room to secure some of my goods preserved for me by some faithfull friends, and while I was there, my Lord came in, but some other occasion called him suddenly back again, so that I saw him no more that day; afterwards being in the Parlour, by and by, came in Alderman *Andrews*, and Mr *Glendon*, who stood by the Chimney, but the Alderman walked up and down the room, seemingly very angry, saying, it was no marvel that my name was up almost in every ones mouth, I asked for what, he said; for that I took upon me so plainly to blame the *Magistrate* for not preventing that sad accident. Sir (said I) I will own what I have said as to that businesse, having complained thereof in mine own person, severall times, and caused complaint thereof to be made to the *Enquest* of the Ward, to the Aldermen, and at the *Sessions* house; the Alderman then said, that he he marvelled that he had never heard of it. So after some more discourse (to that purpose) he went with me to *Mr Felgates* house, where he had secured some of my moneyes, which had been gathered up, and delivered to him in the time of that miserable combustion, but when we came there, we found a padlock upon the doore, and understood that the money was carried to *St. Katharines*, (so the Alderman gave me order to receive it there (which afterward I did accordingly) Then we came back to *Mr Glendons* house, where the Alderman whispered *Mr Glendon* in the ear, and so departed. After this the *blew Apron* was brought forth sealed up, and also the money in the *Napkin* with my name upon it (as *Mr Twigs* man had told

me) which Apron and Napkin, with two bags more also I received, and gave *Mr Glendon* my bond to save him harmlesse, which he needed not to have feared, the bags being sealed with my sons seal, and the other things all evidently appearing to be mine, and more also then I received; for whilst I was there, I saw one of my new green Aprons in the hands of one of *Mr Glendon's* daughters, who was stringing it with mine own strings, but being busie, talking with the Lieutenant of the Tower, and Colonel *Witchcot* (my very good friends) she was suddenly called away before I could challenge it. By and by, *Mrs Glendon* came in bringing two half Crowns in her hand, which she said her children had taken up on the Church Leads; I then told her I was informed, that great store of money was (by the powder) scattered there, but I would receive nothing, but what was marked with mine own name or mark, nor did I. So when I had given *Mr Glendon* my Bond for his security, I said to him, Sir, (as I understand) you have a silver Salt of mine in your house, which sure you cannot but know, it having my name on it, or had it not, you have been oft enough at my Table to take notice of it; at which words he went in, and fetched it to me; and I, taking it into my hand turned the mark towards him, (and shaking my head) said pray *Mr Glendon*, whose Salt is this; but he gave me never a word, as my friends then present can testify, for this was not done in a corner. I did expect that *Mr Glendon* would have invited me to look what Goods of mine might be in his house, which liberty he could allow unto strangers, but deny to me, which was not onely an unneighborly discourtesie, but great injustice,

and

and I think, had I fallen into the hands of heathens, I should have found more righteous dealing then I did from *Mr Glendon* and others. For besides the difficulties I met with, before I obtained that little remnant of money out of the Parsons hands, it pleased the Churchwardens of his Parish, to take from me the materials of mine house (unto the use of the Parish) which cost me unto *Mr Osburn* the Bricklayer (before named) 12 l. od money (as by his receipt appears) for his pains and his Labourers to lay them up in the Churchyard for me, yet this I suffered, being taken off from seeking to right my self, somewhat by the perswasion of my Lord Mayor (that now is) but more by the duties of my Calling, having the lives of divers under my care (at that time) whom my conscience did command me to wait upon, how evilly soever the world requited me. And thus I lost an estate of above three thousand pounds, without any remedy or recompence, but of my good God who hath kept me in my wits, given me strength to labour, and blessed me in my labours.

As for *Mr. Blackwells* comming to me from *Mr. Glendon*, I suppose it was thus occasioned; *Mr. Peck* a Minister (now deceased) met me at *Mr. Cutlers* childes baptizing; where falling into discourse of the fire, he told me, that he was one of the first that after came to *Mr. Glendon*, who told him that when the blow was given two bags of money were blown into his Study over the Table (he sitting at it) and twas a great mercy that they hit him not, (for said he) they would have killed me then: and *Mr Peck* told me also that he then went upon the Church-leads, and saw there much money lie scattered; I told him, sure he was mistaken, for *Mr. Glendon*,

dan (said I) hath no more then what others brought in his house, which he saith, are but two bags, and nothing was blown in; to which Mr. *Peck* answered, that he had told me nothing but the truth: I replied to him again, that I marvelled that Mr. *Glendon* would conceale the having of any thing that was not his own from me, who in all probability had right to it. Mr. *Peck* then willed me to call him in question about it; but then I must (said I) examine all his family; and there is one of them hath reported in the *Minories*, that there were two Gown-rows belonging to my Lady *Baker* (who once lay at my house) which Gown-rows were quilted with gold, blown up with the powder from my house, and that these rows lay in Mr. *Glendon's* Garrets, untill the Inventory of some cheif things which were lost, was printed, and then the gold was ript from the rows, and the rows were burnt which (said I) by the Law is Felony; yet though I loose all I have in the world, I will not endanger any mans life about; and though they get never so much unjustly, yet it wil do them no good in the end, but rather prove a Moath to them; and I know (said I) my heavenly father will provide things convenient for me; Mr. *Peck* then told me that he would speake with Mr. *Glendon* about it: and after this, Mr. *Blackwell* came to me from Mr. *Glendon*, to whom, when I had related, how jewishly Mr. *Glendon* had dealt with me, he seemed to be very sorry, and wished that the businesse might be taken up by some Ministers or others: But Sir, said I, a thing of this nature is more fit to be decided by a Magistrate, so Mr. *Blackwell* departed: And as for Mr. *Callamy* and Mr. *Cranford*, they never came to me from Mr. *Glendon*

Glendon, and believe them to be wiser men than to meddle with the matter.

Thus, as well as I could, and without injury to the truth, I have set down a review of that late unhappy blow by Gun-powder, with those circumstances which were necessary to vindicate mine own innocency, and make up a clear representation of Mr. *Glendon's* dealing towards me; For which, if any shall Judge him worthy of thanks, let them give credit unto what Mr. *Glendon* delivers in his printed Vindication (as he calls it) viz. That Mr. *Loe* came to him, to give him thanks in my name, for preserving so much of mine estate for me. Indeed, I sent Mr. *Glendon* twenty shilling by Mr. *Loe*, for the burying the bodies of my Children, and what Mr. *Loe* in way of Complement might say to him, I know not; but as for that particular, that I should give him thanks, &c. Since, I perceive, Mr. *Glendon* by the relation of that, would insinuate, that after I had found and was fully satisfied of his neighbourly and upright dealing towards me (for else sure none will think I gave him thanks) I should (being through malice & covetousnes inclined to give credit to every flying report) slander him and detract from his good name: I must out of love to the truth, and respect to mine credit, utterly deny, and professe, that I never sent him one word of thanks for preserving any of mine estate; and how he preserved it, these particulars may shew:

First, Neither he nor his Wife ever sent me word of mony or ought else that were brought into their house; and for ought, I know, I should never have known he had any, had I not heard of it by others; and those more than a few, who told me, that great store of money and

goods were carried into Mr. *Glendon's* house.

Secondly, he never permitted me to see what goods of mine were in this house, nor would he suffer my Maid to see, but chid her forth after his wife had let her in.

Thirdly, though Mr. *Glendon* had my silver Salt in his house (marked with my name) yet he never gave it me of himself, nor told me of it, no, though I had received other things of him, and given him my discharge and had not my maid told me, she saw it there, whereupon I challenged it, I think I should have lost it.

Fourthly, when I came with my friends to Mr. *Glendon's* and shewed him my Seal, and told him of my Sons; he then confessed but two bags he had, which he had sent to Mr. *Casteels* (as he said) though Mr. *Twigs* man told me of four bags, two which himself had carried in and two others which a Gun-smiths man had carried in: And also Mr. *Peck* the minister told me of two more which Mr. *Glendon* himself confessed were blown into his Study. Had others dealt no better with me, all the Evidences of my Land had been lost, but they were sent me home safe, and that by Strangers, who sought me out, when Mr. *Glendon*; whose wife I had laid of two Children, and one mischance freely, and done other courtesies besides to them both, would not easily let me have mine own with intreaty.

It now remains, that I make use of this opportunity, to clear the truth from that false report, which makes me a gainer by this blow, (if considering the losse of my Son, and three Grandchildren I may be said to be so) But abstracting that, compare three thousand pounds, (which is within the value of what I lost there) with all which I after received from others

(by

(by way of gift) whether in Money, Linnen, Woolen or Stoffe, whose utmost value amounts not to above fifteen pounds, (excepting a silver Tankard, which was given me by Alderman *Viner* (mine ever honoured friend) and I say, if this exceed 3000 l. I will then confesse my self a gainer by my losse. However *I* desire to be content and thankfull that God hath given me an honest Calling, and strength to follow it in mine old age, and doth continue his blessing to me in it, and as my long continued experience of his mercy doth encourage me, so also *I* desire to cast my self wholly upon him wth full confidence, that (as he hath said) so he will defend the widow & fatherles, and though men be unrighteous, *I* doubt not but God the righteous judge will plead my cause w^{ch} I leave to him, praying him to shew them more mercy then they did me; for their mercy to me was cruelty, and had my life (as my goods were) been in their hands, perhaps they would have taken that too; but all the powers of darknes *I* know are limited; Sathan could not touch *Jobs* substance, nor person without Commission; nor can all the world doe more to me then God hath appointed, who will (*I* hope) give me a willing mind to beare what he seeth good to lay upon me; and also sanctifie it unto me. By his grace, *I* not onely pray thy will be done, but also endeavour to do and suffer it, desiring so to be crucified to the world and it to me, that being loose from creature comforts and relations, *I* may with more freedome aspire unto him, and finish my cours here with joy to receive an inheritance hereafter with him, where *I* shall know no more sorrow, for which come Lord Jesus, come quickly.

FINIS.

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