



*Upon the
Burning of Our House,
July 10th, 1666*

Anne Bradstreet

In silent night when rest I took
For sorrow near I did not look
I wakened was with thund'ring noise
And piteous shrieks of dreadful voice.
5 That fearful sound of "Fire!" and "Fire!"
Let no man know is my desire. **C**

I, starting up, the light did spy,
And to my God my heart did cry
To strengthen me in my distress
10 And not to leave me succorless.¹
Then, coming out, beheld a space
The flame consume my dwelling place.

And when I could no longer look,
I blest His name that gave and took,²
15 That laid my goods now in the dust:
Yea, so it was, and so 'twas just.
It was His own, it was not mine,
Far be it that I should repine;³

C CLARIFY MEANING

Paraphrase lines 1–6 to clarify their meaning. How does the poet use contrast to convey a sense of fear?

1. **succorless** (sŭk'ər-līs): without help or relief.

2. I . . . **took**: an allusion to Job 1:21 in the Bible—"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

3. **repine**: to complain or fret; to long for something.