

The Crucible: A Guide and Abridged Text

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Connie Mannal

**The Crucible:
A Guide and
Abridged Text**

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Characters

Act I.....	5
Act II	15
Act III.....	40
Act III.....	72

Introduction

English language learners and other students struggle to meet curricular expectations in our schools. They are often expected to read literature that is well beyond their English proficiency levels. The challenge can be overwhelming. These students require appropriate resources; they need a bridge between the original texts and a text that they can comprehend.

The adapted version of *The Crucible, for ages 14-18*, provides the connection to the original text, permitting English language learners and students with special needs to perform in mainstream academic literature classes. Key passages of the original text appear beside the adapted version, promoting student comprehension. Throughout, vocabulary is highlighted in the original text and definitions are underlined in the adaptation. A summary of the plot, characters, and setting introduces each act. Page numbers of the edition published by Penguin, 1981 correspond to the adaptation, allowing students to keep pace with the class and later, to answer comprehension questions or to find quotations to augment writing assignments. The adapted version lends itself well to oral productions. In short, ELLs can learn reading, writing, speaking and thinking skills, in mainstream classes, by using adapted resources. What could be better motivation for students to actively participate in mainstream classes!

The Crucible

Setting:

- Salem, Massachusetts, 1692
- Puritan religious community
- Strict and serious way of life
- Almost no fun entertainment

Characters:

Girls who danced in the woods

Betty Parris – Reverend Parris’s daughter, in bed, delusional (acting strangely)

Abigail – Rev Parris’s niece, worked for Proctor family in the past

Ruth – Anne and Thomas Putnam’s daughter, in bed and delusional like Betty

Mercy – Putnam family maid

Mary Warren – Works for John Proctor family

Reverend Parris – Minister in the church, worries about his reputation, especially because his family could be accused of devil worship

John Proctor – Farmer, plain-spoken, does not believe in the devil, had a sexual relationship with Abigail

Elizabeth Proctor – John’s wife

Rebecca and Francis Nurse

Rebecca Nurse – Good person, does not like talk of the devil, nurses newborn babies. Anne Putnam accuses Rebecca of killing her babies

Francis Nurse – Rebecca’s husband, good person, owns a lot of land

Putman family

Ann Putnam – Seven of her babies died and she wants to know why (Devil or a witch?)

Ruth Putnam – Anne’s daughter, in bed like Betty

Thomas Putnam – Anne’s husband, jealous of other people, accuses others of being witches so he can take their land

Reverend Hale – Witch expert, from Beverly

Tituba – Black slave from Barbados, where Voodoo (devil worship) is practiced

Giles Corey – Older man, owns a lot of land, not very smart

Characters

Good	Court	Bad
John/Elizabeth Proctor Rebecca/Francis Nurse Giles Corey/wife Goody Osborne Sarah Good Tituba	Rev Hale (Witch Expert) Judge Danforth Judge Hawthorne John Cheever (Jailer)	Rev Parris Anne Putnam Thomas Putnam Abigail
	<u>Girls who identify witches</u> Abigail Mary Warren Betty Parris Ruth Putnam	

Act I

Plot summary

In Salem, in 1692, life was difficult and many people believed that witches caused their problems. Accused witches could be jailed or put to death. People could accuse each other of witchcraft, in order to get vengeance, a way to “get back” at people that caused difficulty. In addition, the accused person’s land could be bought at a low price.

The play begins with **Betty Parris** in bed, not moving or talking. Her father, **Reverend Parris**, is praying beside her. Last night, Rev Parris saw Betty and other girls dancing in the woods and he is afraid that people will think that his daughter, Betty, and his niece, **Abigail**, are worshipping the devil or practicing witchcraft. He worries that he will lose his job as minister of the church. For help, he has sent for an “expert” on witchcraft, **Reverend Hale**.

Rebecca Nurse and **John Proctor** do not like talk about the devil and they are not happy that Parris sent for **Hale**. At the same time, **Anne and Thomas Putnam** are happy Rev Parris sent for Hale. Anne wants to blame the death of her seven babies on a witch and Thomas wants to take the land of people accused of witchcraft.

Abigail fell in love with **John Proctor** when she worked in the Proctor home. They had an affair. John says the affair is finished but Abigail does not agree

Abigail says that Parris’s black slave from Barbados, **Tituba**, taught the girls how to “conjure (call) spirits”, using the Voodoo religion. Characters conjure spirits for different purposes but their main motive is vengeance. Anne and Thomas Putnam conjure spirits to discover who killed the Putnam babies. Abigail conjures spirits to kill Mrs. Proctor so that Abigail can become John Proctor’s wife. Innocent people suffer.

Setting: Small bedroom in Reverend Parris’s house. Rev Parris is praying beside his daughter, Betty. Betty is not hearing, talking or eating.

Original text

8 Parris – Betty. Child. Dear child. Will you wake, will you open us your eyes! Betty, little one...No—no. there be no unnatural cause here...I have sent for Reverend Hale of Beverly, and Mr. Hale will surely confirm that.

8, 9, 10 Abigail – Uncle, the rumor of witchcraft is all about; I think you'd best go down and deny it yourself. The parlor's packed with people, sir. I'll sit with her.

Parris – And what will I say to them: That my daughter and niece I discovered dancing like heathen in the forest?

Abigail – We did dance, uncle, and when you leaped out of the bush so suddenly, Betty was frightened and then she fainted. And there's the whole of it.

Parris – But if you trafficked with the spirits in the forest I must know it now, for surely my enemies will, and they will run me with it.

Abigail – But we never conjured spirits.

Parris – Then why can she not move herself since midnight?... Let me know what you done there. Abigail, do you understand that I have enemies?...there is a faction that is sworn to drive me from my pulpit. Do you understand that?... Abigail, if you know something that may help the doctor, for God's sake tell it to me. I saw Tituba waving her arms over the fire when I came on you. Why was she doing that? And I heard the screeching and the gibberish coming from her mouth. She was swaying like a dumb beast over that fire!...And I thought I saw - someone naked running through the trees!...Abigail I have fought here three long years to bend these stiff-necked people to me, now, just now when some good respect is rising for me in the parish, you compromise my very character. I have given you a home, child, I have put clothes upon your back – now give me upright answer.

Abridged text

8 Parris - Betty, child, wake up and open your eyes. There is no witchcraft here. I have asked Rev. Hale, the witch expert, from Beverly, to come and say that Betty is not possessed by the Devil.

8, 9,10 Abigail – Uncle, church people think Betty is not moving because she is possessed by the Devil. You need to tell people that this is not true. I'll stay with Betty.

Parris – Can I tell people that my daughter and niece were dancing in the woods, worshipping the devil?

Abigail – OK, we danced in the woods, Uncle, but when you surprised us, you really scared Betty. That's the whole story!

Parris - Abigail, if you worshipped the devil, I must know now. There are people who don't like me and want me out of the church. If they find out about you and the girls, I am out of a job.

Abigail –But we never conjured spirits with the Devil.

Parris – *does not believe Abigail.* Then why doesn't Betty wake up?! You need to tell me the truth. Abigail, do you understand that there are people who don't like me? There is a group of people who want me out of the church! Do you understand me? Abigail, if you know something that can help, you need to tell me now! I saw Tituba moving her arms over the fire. Why was she doing that? I heard her saying words I didn't understand. She was moving like a crazy person. I saw the girls dancing in the woods, one girl naked. Abigail, for three long years, I have tried so hard to make the church people like me and now, just when they begin to respect me, you cause them to disrespect me! Abigail, I have given you a good home. Now, tell me the truth!

12 Parris - Your name in the town – it is entirely white, is it not?

Abigail – I am sure it is, sir. There be no blush on my name.

Parris – Abigail, is there any other cause than you have told me, for your being discharged from Goody Proctor’s service?...she comes rarely to the church for she will not sit so close to something soiled. What signified that remark?

Abigail – She hates me, uncle, she must, for I would not be her slave. It’s a bitter woman, a lying, cold, sniveling woman, and I will not work for such a woman!

Parris – She may be. And yet it has troubled me that you are now seven month out of their house, and in all this time no other family has ever called for your service.

Abigail – My name is good in the village! I will not have it said that my name is soiled! Goody Proctor is a gossiping liar!

12, 13 Mrs. Putnam – *Enters room* It is a marvel. It is surely a stroke of hell upon you. How high did she fly, how high?

Rev Parris – No, no, she never flew—

Mrs. Anne Putnam – Why, sure she did. Mr. Collins saw her goin’ over Ingersol’s barn...

Rev Parris – Goody Putnam, she never—

Mr. Thomas Putnam – *Enters* ...the thing is out now! *Looks at Betty*. Her eyes are closed! Look, Anne!

Anne Putnam – Why, that’s strange. Ours (our daughter, Ruth’s eyes) is open.

Parris – Your Ruth is sick?

Mrs. Putnam – I’d not call is sick; the Devil’s touch is heavier than sick. It’s death, y’know, it’s death drivin’ into them, forked and hooped. ... she never waked this morning, but her eyes open and she walks, and hears **naught** (not), sees naught, and cannot eat. Her soul is taken, surely.

Mr. Putnam – They say you’ve sent for Reverend Hale of Beverly?

12 Parris – Do people say you are a good girl? Do you have a good name?

Abigail – I am sure it is, sir. People have no reason to think I am not a good girl.

Parris – Abigail, have you told me everything about why you were fired from Goody Proctor’s service? She says that she almost never comes to church because she doesn’t want to sit near a bad girl like you. What does she mean?

Abigail – She hates me! She is a mean woman who wants me to work too hard! I will not work for her!

Parris – Maybe that’s true. But something bothers me. After seven months, no other families have given you a job. *He is asking if Mrs. Proctor had a good reason for kicking Abigail out of her house.*

Abigail – I am a good girl! I have a good reputation in this town! Mrs. Proctor lies about me!

12, 13 Mrs. Putnam – *Enters room:* Amazing! How high did Betty fly? *Flying was part of devil worship.*

Rev Parris – No, no, she never flew—

Mrs. Anne Putnam – Why, sure she did. Mr. Collins saw her flying over Ingersol’s barn...

Rev Parris – Goody Putnam, she never—

Mr. Thomas Putnam – *Enters* ...Everyone knows the girls were worshipping the devil! Look, Betty has her eyes closed but our Ruth’s eyes are open! *Both girls are acting strangely after dancing in the woods.*

Anne Putnam – Why, that’s strange. Our daughter, Ruth’s eyes are open.

Parris – Is Ruth sick too?

Mrs. Putnam – It’s more than being sick. They have been touched by the Devil! It’s like death! Ruth didn’t wake up this morning. Her eyes were open and she walks, but she doesn’t see, hear, or eat. The work of the Devil!

Mr. Putnam – They say you’ve sent for Reverend Hale of Beverly?

14, 15, 16 Parris – A precaution only. He (Hale) has much experience in all demonic arts, and I—

Mrs. Putnam – He...found a witch in Beverly last year...

Parris – I am certain there be no element of witchcraft here....I pray you, leap not to witchcraft... We cannot leap to witchcraft. They will howl me out of Salem for such corruption in my house.

Mr. Putnam is a hateful man. He does not like Parris. Putnam's brother was not given the job of minister, Parris was. Also, Putnam and his brother put an innocent man in prison.

Mr. Putnam – There are hurtful, vengeful spirits layin' hand on these children. ...Anne, tell Rev Parris what you have done.

Mrs. Putnam - Rev Parris, I have laid seven babies in the unbaptized earth...And now, this year, my Ruth my only—I see her turning strange... And so I thought to send her to your Tituba—Tituba knows how to speak to the dead, Rev Parris...

Rev Parris – Goody Ann, it is a formidable sin to conjure up the dead!

Mrs. Putnam – ...who else tell us what person murdered my babies? They (babies) were murdered, Mr. Parris! Mark this proof!...Last night my Ruth were ever so close to their little spirits; how else is she struck dumb now except some power of darkness would stop her mouth?

Rev Parris – *to Abigail*: Then you were conjuring spirits last night.

Abigail – No I, sir---Tituba and Ruth.

Parris – Oh, Abigail, what proper payment for my charity! Now I am undone!

Mr. Putnam - ...You are not undone! You have discovered witchcraft—

Parris- In my house? In my house, Thomas? They will topple me for this!

14, 15, 16 Parris – I'm only being careful. Hale is an expert on witches and the devil.

Mrs. Putnam – He...found a witch in Beverly last year...

Parris – There are no witches here. We can not think there are witches here! People will kick me out of Salem if they think my family is connected to witchcraft!

Mr. Putnam is a hateful man. He does not like Parris. Putnam's brother was not given the job of minister, Parris was. Also, Putnam and his brother put an innocent man in prison.

Mr. Putnam – But Parris, there are people who hurt our children! Anne, tell Rev Parris what you did.

Mrs. Putnam – Rev Parris, seven of my babies died and my Ruth seems to be acting strangely. I asked Tituba for help. Tituba knows how to speak to the dead, Rev Parris.

Rev Parris – Goody Ann, it is a terrible sin to conjure up the dead!

Mrs. Putnam – ...Tituba can tell how my babies died! They were murdered! My poor daughter, Ruth, is proof! Last night, she was so close to learning how my babies died. Now, she is sick, unable to eat, talk or walk! Only the devil could do that!

Rev Parris – *to Abigail*: Then you were conjuring dead spirits last night.

Abigail – No, not me, sir. It was Tituba and Ruth.

Parris – Oh, Abigail, is this the way you thank me for giving you a place to live? People will run me out of town because of you! I'm finished!

Mr. Putnam – People will not run you out of town! You only found witchcraft. It wasn't you who did it!

Parris- Oh, sure, it was only my family who did it! They will run me out of town for this!

To Abigail: If she starts for the window, cry for me at once.

Putnams and Rev Parris leave to speak to the people in church.

18-21 *Enter Mercy, the girl who was watching Ruth.*

Abigail – Listen now; if they be questioning us, tell them we danced – I told him as much already.

Mercy – Aye. And what more?

Abigail – He knows Tituba conjured Ruth's sister to come out of the grave. He saw you naked.

Mercy *claps her hands together and says*, Oh, Jesus!

Enter Mary Warren – What'll we do?! The village is out! I just come from the farm; the whole country's talkin' witchcraft! They'll be callin' us witches, Abby!

Betty, on the bed, whimpers. Abigail turns to her at once.

Abigail - Betty! I'll beat you, Betty! *Betty whimpers.* I talked to your Papa and I told him everything. So there's nothing to-

Betty *darts off the bed, frightened of Abigail and flattens herself against the wall.* I want my mama!

Abigail – Your mama's dead and buried.

Betty – I'll fly to Mama. Let me fly! *She raises her arms as though to fly, and streaks for the window, gets one leg out.*

Abigail – *pulling Betty away from the window,* I told him everything

Betty – You drank blood, Abby! You didn't tell him that!... You drank a charm to kill John Proctor's wife! You drank a charm to kill Goody Proctor!

Abigail – Shut it! Now shut it!... Now look you. All of you. We danced. And Tituba conjured Ruth Putnam's dead sisters. And that is all. And mark this. Let either of you breathe a word, or the edge of a word, about the other thinks, and I will come to you in the black of some terrible night and I will bring a pointy reckoning that will shudder you. Any you

To Abigail: If Betty moves near the window to jump, call me immediately.

Anne and Thomas Putnam and Rev Parris leave to speak to the people in church.

18-21 *Enter Mercy, the girl who is taking care of Ruth for the Putnams.*

Abigail – Listen everybody, they will be questioning us. Tell what I have told them already; we danced.

Mercy – What else did you tell?

Abigail – He knows about Tituba conjuring Ruth's dead spirits. He also saw you dancing naked.

Mercy *claps her hands together and says*: Oh, Jesus!

Enter Mary Warren – What'll we do?!

Everybody knows we were practicing witchcraft! They will call us witches, Abby!

Betty cries. Abigail turns to her at once.

Abigail - Betty! I'll beat you, Betty! *Betty cries.* I talked to your Papa and I told him everything. So there's nothing to-

Betty *jumps off the bed, frightened of Abigail and is against the wall.* I want my mama!

Abigail – Your mama's dead and buried.

Betty – I'll fly to Mama. Let me fly! *She raises her arms as though to fly, and runs for the window, gets one leg out.*

Abigail – *pulling Betty away from the window,* I told him everything

Betty – You drank blood, Abby! You didn't tell him that! You drank a charm to kill John Proctor's wife! You drank a charm to kill Goody Proctor!

Abigail – Shut up! Now shut up! Now look you; all of you. We danced. And Tituba conjured Ruth Putnam's dead sisters. And that is all. And remember this. If any of you says one word about this, I will come to you in the black of some terrible night and I will bring a knife like none you have ever seen.. You all know I can do it. I saw Indians smash my dear

know I can do it; I saw Indians smash my dear parent's head on the pillow next to mine, and I have seen some reddish work done at night, and I can make you wish you had never seen the sun go down! *Betty sits up roughly.* Now you, sit up and stop this!

20- 24 *Enter John Proctor, a farmer in his mid thirties. He is powerful in body, even-tempered and not easily led. He is a sinner, not measured by the mores of the time but of his own vision of decent conduct. He sees Mary Warren, who works in his house.*

John Proctor - Be you foolish, Mary Warren? Be you deaf? I forbid you leave the house, did I not? Why shall I pay you? I am looking for you more often than my cows!

Mary Warren – I only come to see the great doings in the world.

John Proctor – *looking at Abigail:* What's the **mischief** here?

Abigail – *nervous* Oh, she's only gone silly somehow.

Proctor – The town's **mumbling** witchcraft.

Abigail –Oh, posh! *Winningly she comes a little closer, with a confidential, wicked air.* We were dancin' in the woods last night, and my uncle leaped in on us. She took fright, is all.

Proctor – *widening smile.* Ah, you're wicked yet, aren't y'! *A trill of expectant laughter escapes her, and she dares come closer, feverishly looking into his eyes.* You'll be clapped in the stocks before you're twenty. *He takes a step to go but she springs into his path.*

Abigail – Give me a word, John. A soft word. *Her concentrated desire destroys his smile.*

Proctor – No, no, Abby. That's done with.

Abigail – *tauntingly:* You come five mile to see a silly girl fly? I know you better.

Proctor – *setting her firmly out of his path:* I come to see what mischief your uncle's brewin' now. *With a final emphasis:* Put it out of your mind, Abby.

parents' heads on the pillow next to mine, and I have seen some bloody work done at night, and I can make you afraid of the night! *Abby forces Betty up roughly.* Now you, sit up and stop this!

20- 24 *Enter John Proctor, He is about 35 years old and he is strong. He thinks for himself. He knows he has done some bad things but he decides for himself what is right and wrong. He does not let others decide. He sees Mary Warren, who works in his house.*

John Proctor – Are you stupid, Mary Warren? Did you hear me tell you not to leave the house? I look for you more than I look for my cows!

Mary Warren – I only came to hear about exciting witchcraft!

John Proctor – *looking at Abigail:* What **bad actions** are you girls doing here?

Abigail – *nervously looking at Betty:* Oh, she's only playing.

Proctor – The town's **talking quietly** about witchcraft.

Abigail –Oh, that's silly. *Coming closer to John, flirting and giving him a look:* We were dancing in the woods last night. Uncle Parris surprised us and Betty got scared. That's all.

Proctor – *big smile:* Ah, you're still a bad girl. *Abigail laughs and comes even closer to John, looking into his eyes, wanting to kiss him.*

You'll be in jail before you're twenty! *John tries to leave but Abigail jumps in front of him.*

Abigail – Tell me you love me, John. *He stops smiling.*

Proctor – No, no, Abby. Our relationship is finished!

Abigail – *smiling in a flirting way:* You came all this way just to see Betty fly? I know you better than that!

Proctor – *pushing her out of his way:* I came to see what stupid actions your Uncle Parris is doing. *He adds this so she understands:* Stop thinking about us. It's over.

Abigail – *grasping his hand before he can release her*: John, I am waitin’ for you every.

Proctor – Abby I never give you hope to wait for me.

Abigail – *angry and not believing it*: I have something better than hope, I think!

Proctor – Abby, you’ll put it out of mind. I’ll not be coming for you more.

Abigail – I know how you clutched my back behind your house and sweated like a stallion whenever I come near! Or did I dream that? It’s she put me out, you cannot pretend it were you. I saw your face when she put me out, and you loved me then and you do now!

Proctor – Abby, that’s a wild thing to say –

Abigail – ...not so wild, I think... I have sense for heat, John, and yours has drawn me to my window, and I have seen you looking up, burning in your loneliness. Do you tell me you’ve never looked up at my window?

Proctor – I may have looked up.

Abigail – ...I know you, John. I know you. *She is weeping*. I cannot sleep for dreamin’; I cannot dream but I wake and walk about the house as though I’d find you comin’ through some door. *She clutches him desperately*.

Proctor – *gently pressing her from him, with great sympathy but firmly*: Child –

Abigail – *with a flash of anger*: How do you call me child!

Proctor – Abby, I may think of you softly from time to time. But I will cut off my hand before I’ll ever reach for you again. Wipe it out of your mind. We never touched, Abby.

Abigail – Aye, but we did.

Proctor – Aye, but we did not.

Abigail – *with a bitter anger*: Oh, I marvel how such a strong man may let such a sickly wife be –

Proctor – *angered – at himself as well*: You’ll speak nothin’ of Elizabeth!

Abigail – She is blackening my name in the village! She is telling lies about me! She is a cold, sniveling woman, and you bend to her! Let her turn you like a –

Abigail – *grabbing his hand before he can stop her*: John, I wait for you every night.

Proctor – Abby, I never gave you hope that I would come to you.

Abigail – *angry and not believing him*: I have more than hope to think you will come.

Proctor – Forget it, Abby. I’m not coming any more!

Abigail – You grabbed me behind your house and got excited when I came near you. Your wife made me leave, not you. I saw your face when I left. You loved me then and you love me now.

Proctor – Abby, what a crazy think to say...

Abigail – Not so crazy, I think. I sense your love, John. Your love has pulled me to my window and I have seen you looking up, wanting me. Do you tell me you have never looked up at my window?

Proctor – Maybe I looked up.

Abigail – I know you, John. I know you. *Crying*. I can not sleep because I dream. I wake up and walk around the house, expecting you to come through a door. *She grabs him*.

Proctor – *gently pushing her away from him*: Child –

Abigail – *angry!* How can you call me ‘child’!

Proctor – There are times I want to be with you but I will cut off my hands before I will reach for you again. Forget it, Abby. We never touched!

Abigail – But we did.

Proctor – Yes, but we did not.

Abigail – *angry*: I ask myself how such a strong man can let such a sickly wife be –

Proctor – *angry at himself, as well as Abby*: Don’t say anything about Elizabeth!

Abigail – She is telling everybody I am a bad girl! She lies about me! She is a cold, mean woman, and you do what she tells you to do. You let her control you!

Proctor – *shaking her*: Do you look for a whippin’?

A Psalm is heard being sung below.

Abigail – *in tears*: I look for John Proctor that took me from my sleep and put knowledge in my heart! I never knew what **pretense** Salem was, I never new the lying lessons I was taught by all these Christian women and their covenanted men! And now you bid me tear the light out of my eyes? I will not, I cannot! You loved me, John Proctor, and whatever sin it is, you love me yet! *He turns abruptly to go out. She rushes to him.* John, pity me, pity me!

24-26 *The words “going up to Jesus” are heard in the psalm, and Betty claps her ears suddenly and whines loudly.*

Abigail – Betty? *She hurries to Betty who is now sitting up and screaming. Proctor goes to Betty as Abigail is trying to pull her hands down, calling, “Betty!”*

Proctor – *growing unnerved*: What’s she doing? Girl, what ails you? Stop that wailing! *Parris rushes in.*

Parris – What’s happened?...No, God forbid. Mercy, run for the doctor!

Mrs. Putnam – *rushes in*: The Psalm! The Psalm! She cannot bear to hear the Lord’s name!...Mark it for a sign, mark it!

Rebecca Nurse enters, 72, white-haired, walks with a cane.

Giles Corey enters, 83, still powerful.

Rebecca – there is a hard sickness here, Giles Corey, so please to keep the quiet.

Rebecca walks across the room to the bed.

Gentleness exudes from her. Betty ... gradually quiets.

A word about Rebecca and Francis Nurse: They have 300 acres of land and their children each have a homestead. Francis paid for it and raised his social status, there were those who resented his rise. There was a land war and Putnam was one who participated. In addition, Francis Nurse voted against Putnam’s man for the church ministry. Nurses and Putnams are enemies.

Proctor – *shaking her*: Do you want me to beat you?

Singing is heard downstairs, in the church.

Abigail – *crying*: I want the John Proctor who taught me how to make love. I never knew people in Salem were **false**. I didn’t know Christian women and men lie. Now, you tell me I can’t love you? I can not stop loving you! I can not! You loved me, John Proctor, and you still love me! *John starts to leave and she goes after him.* John, feel sorry for me! Pity me!

24-26 *Music comes from the church below, “going up to Jesus.” Betty cries loudly.*

Abigail – Betty? Betty? *She hurries to Betty who is now sitting up and screaming. Proctor goes to Betty as Abigail is trying to pull her hands down, calling, “Betty!”*

Proctor – *nervous*: What’s she doing? Girl, what hurts you? Stop that crying! *Parris comes in.*

Parris – What happened?...What was the loud cry? No, God, no. Mercy, run for the doctor!

Mrs. Putnam *runs in*: The church music! She does not like to hear Jesus’ name! Notice that!

Rebecca Nurse enters, 72, white hair, walks with a cane.

Giles Corey enters, 83, still strong.

Rebecca – There is a serious sickness here, Giles Corey, so please be quiet.

Rebecca walks to the bed. Rebecca is gentle.

Betty... slowly quiets.

Information about Rebecca and Francis Nurse and the Putnams: Nurses and Putnams are enemies. Putnams are jealous of Nurses’ 300 acres of land. Also, the Putnams hate the Nurses because they stopped a Putnam family member from becoming minister of the church. Anger and jealousy make the Putnams dangerous people. See how the Putnams look for witches but the Nurses don’t believe in witches.

Mrs. Putnam – *to Rebecca*: What have you done? ... *as if Rebecca had special powers over Betty. Rebecca, in thought, now leaves the bedside and sits.*

Goody Nurse, will you go to my Ruth and see if you can wake her?

27, 28 Rebecca – *sitting*: I think she'll wake in time. Pray calm yourselves. I have eleven children, and I am twenty-six times a grandma, and I have seen them all through their silly seasons, and when it come on them they will run the Devil bowlegged deeping up with their mischief. I think she'll wake when she tires of it. A child's spirit is like a child, you can never catch It by running after it; you must stand still, and, for love, it will soon itself come back.

Proctor – Aye, that is the truth of it, Rebecca.

Mrs. Putnam – This is no silly season, Rebecca. My Ruth is bewildered, Rebecca; she cannot eat.

Rebecca – Perhaps she is not hungered yet. *To Parris*: I hope you are not decided to go in search of loose spirits, Mr. Parris. I've heard promise of that outside.

Parris – A wide opinion's running in the parish that the Devil may be among us, and I would satisfy them that they are wrong.

Proctor – Then come out and call them wrong. Did you consult the wardens before you called this minister to look for devils?

Parris – He is not coming to look for devils!

Proctor – Then what is he coming for?

Putnam – There be children dyin' in the village, mister!

Proctor – I seen none dyin'. This society will not be a bag to swing around your head, Mr. Putnam. *To Parris*: Did you call a meeting before you—?

Rebecca – Pray, John, be calm. *John defers to her.* I think you'd best send Reverend Hale back as soon as he come... I think we ought to rely on the doctor now, and good prayer... There is a prodigious danger in seeking of loose spirits. I feel it, I fear it. Let us rather

Mrs. Putnam – *to Rebecca*: What have you done? How did you make Betty quiet?

Rebecca does not answer such a dumb question. Rebecca doesn't have special powers! Rebecca leaves Betty and sits quietly.

Goody Nurse, will you go to my Ruth and see if you can wake her?

27, 28 Rebecca – *sitting*: I think they will wake up soon. Relax everyone. I have eleven children, and I have twenty-six grandchildren, and I know they all act stupidly sometimes. They can drive you crazy! I think she'll wake when she is tired of acting this way. A child's spirit is like a child, you can never catch it by running after it; you must wait until it comes back to you for love.

Proctor – Very true, Rebecca.

Mrs. Putnam – I can not relax. This is no ordinary sickness. My Ruth cannot eat!

Rebecca – *to Mrs. Putnam*: Maybe she isn't hungry yet. *To Rev Parris*: I hope you are not thinking this is witchcraft, Rev Parris. I heard other people say that you are.

Parris – Many church people think the Devil is with us and I want to show them that he isn't!

Proctor – Then just tell them they are wrong! Did you ask for permission from church people before you invited the witch expert to look for devils? *Proctor does not like Parris.*

Parris – He is not coming to look for devils!

Proctor – Then why is he coming?

Putnam – There are children dying in the village, mister!

Proctor – I don't see dying children. You can't lie about what is happening, Mr. Putnam. *To Parris*: Did you call a meeting before you—?

Rebecca – Please, John, be calm. *To Parris*: You better send Reverend Hale back to Beverly as soon as he comes. God and the doctor will help us more that a witch expert. Looking for the devil is dangerous. I'm frightened. We should look at ourselves for the answers.

blame ourselves, and

Putnam – *to Parris*: When Rev Hale comes, you will proceed to look for signs of witchcraft here.

Proctor – *to Putnam*: You cannot command Rev Parris. We vote by name here, not by acreage

Putnam – I never heard you worried so on this society, Mr. Proctor. I do not think I saw you at Sabbath meeting since snow flew.

Proctor - I have trouble enough without I come five mile to hear him preach only hellfire and bloody damnation. Take it to heart, Mr. Parris. There are many others who stay away from church these days because you hardly ever mention God any more.

Putnam – *to Parris*: When Rev Hale comes, you should look for witchcraft here.

Proctor – *to Putnam*: You cannot command Rev Parris. Your money does not put you in control.

Putnam – I didn't know you cared about this village, Mr. Proctor. I have not seen you in church since last winter.

Proctor – I have more important things to do than listen to Parris talk about Hell. Seriously, Rev Parris, there are many other people who stay away from church too because you don't talk about God.

Act II

Vocabulary

1. Poppet – doll
2. Proof – evidence,
3. Suspicion – to think someone possibly did something wrong
4. Confess – to say you did something wrong
5. Fraud – not true, a lie
6. Warrant – permission to arrest a person
7. Vengeance – revenge, to get back at someone, to treat badly in return for bad treatment

Setting (Where and When)

John and Elizabeth Proctor talk in their family home.

Plot (What happens)

John and Elizabeth are talking in their home. They argue about John's relationship with Abigail. Elizabeth is afraid that Abigail will try to kill her so that Abigail can have John. Their servant, Mary Warren, comes home and explains that she was in a Salem court, helping Abigail identify witches. Mary brings Elizabeth a gift: a poppet or doll. Reverend Hale, the witch expert, visits Elizabeth and John. Rev Hale finds a needle in the poppet, which makes Elizabeth look like a witch. Elizabeth is taken to jail.

The scene opens with John coming in the house late. He and Elizabeth talk.

Original Text

49 Elizabeth - What keeps you so late?
It's almost dark.

50 John Proctor – I were planting far out to the forest edge...If the crop is good I'll buy George Jacob's heifer. How would that please you?
Eliz – Aye, it would.
John – I mean to please you, Elizabeth.
Eliz – *it is hard to say*: I know it, John. *He gets up, goes to her, kisses her. She receives it. With a certain disappointment, he returns to the table.*
John – *drinks a long draught, then putting the glass down*: You ought to bring some flowers in the house.
Eliz – Oh! I forgot! I will tomorrow.

51 John – It's winter in here yet! On Sunday let you come with me and we'll walk the farm together; I never see such a

Abridged Text

49 Eliz - Why are you so late?

50 John – I was planting (working on the farm). If the farm does well, I'll buy George Jacob's cow. Would that make you happy?
Eliz – Yes, it would
John – I try to please you, Elizabeth.
Eliz – I know, John.
John kisses Elizabeth but it is not a happy kiss. They are both disappointed.

John – You should bring flowers into the house.

Eliz – Oh! I forgot! Tomorrow.

51 John – On Sunday, let's walk the farm together. There are so many flowers! Massachusetts is beautiful in the spring!

load of flowers on the earth....Massachusetts is a beauty in the spring!

Eliz – Aye, it is.

There is a pause...there is a sense of their separation.

John – I think you’re sad again. Are you?

Eliz – You come so late I thought you’d gone to Salem this afternoon.

John – Why? I have no business in Salem. *He’s lying.*

52 Eliz – Mary Warren is there today.

John – Why’d you let her? You heard me forbid her go to Salem any more!

Eliz – I couldn’t stop her.

John - ...you’re the mistress here, not Mary Warren.

Eliz – She frightened all my strength away.

John – How may that mouse frighten you, Elizabeth?

Eliz – It is a mouse no more. I forbid her go and she raises up her chin like the daughter of a prince and says to me, “I must go to Salem, Goody Proctor; I am an official of the court!”

John – Court! What court!

Eliz – Aye, it is a proper court they have now. They’ve sent four judges out of Boston, she says, weighty magistrates of the General Court, and at the head sits the Deputy Governor of the Providence.

John – *astonished*: why, she’s mad.

Eliz – I would to God she were. There be fourteen people in the jail now, she says. *Proctor simply looks at her, unable to grasp it.* And they’ll be tried, and the court have power to hang them too, she says.

John – *scoffing, but without conviction*: Ah, they’d never hang –

Eliz – The deputy Governor promise hangin’ if they’ll not **confess**, John. The town’s gone wild, I think. She speak of Abigail, and I thought she were a saint, to hear her. Abigail brings the other girls into the court, where she walks the crowd will part like the sea for Israel. And folks are

Eliz – Yes, it is.

Silence. There is a separation between them.

John – I think you are sad again. Are you?

Eliz – You came home so late that I thought you went to Salem this afternoon.

John – Why would you think that? I have no reason to go there. *He is lying.*

52 Eliz – Mary Warren is there today.

John - Why did you let her go? You heard me tell her never go to Salem!

Eliz – I could not stop her!

John – You make the decisions here, Elizabeth, not Mary Warren!

Eliz – She scared me!

John – How could a little mouse, like Mary Warren, scare you?

Eliz – She is not a mouse any more! She raises her chin and speaks to me like she is a princess! She says, “I must go to Salem, Goody Proctor; I am an official of the court!”

John – Court! What court?

Eliz – They have a real court, now. There are four judges from Boston and the Deputy Governor from Providence!

John – *surprised*: She is crazy!

Eliz – I wish she were crazy! There are 14 people in jail now! *John looks like he can’t understand what Elizabeth is saying.* The court can hang these people!

John – *as if he doesn’t believe this*: Ah, they would never hang-

Eliz – These people will hang if they don’t say they are witches. The whole town is crazy with worry! Mary talks about Abigail as if she is a very good girl but Abigail brings other girls to the court to tell lies. Abigail makes the other girls scream and fall on the floor so that the court will

brought before them, and if they scream and howl, and fall to the floor – the person’s clapped in the jail for bewitchin’ them.

53 John – Oh, it is black mischief.

Eliz – I think you must go to Salem, John. *He turns to her.* I think so. You must tell them it is a fraud.

John – *thinking beyond this:* Aye, it is, it is surely.

Eliz – Let you go to Ezekiel Cheever – he knows you well. And tell him what she said to you last week in her uncle’s house. She said it had naught to do with witchcraft, did she not?

John – *in thought* – Aye, she did, she did. *Now a pause.*

Eliz – God forbid you keep that from the court, John. I think they must be told.

John – *quietly, struggling with his thought:* Aye, they must, they must. It is a wonder they do believe her.

Eliz – I would go to Salem now, John – let you go tonight.

John – I’ll think on it.

Eliz – You cannot keep it, John.

John – *angering:* I know I cannot keep it. I say I will think on it!

Eliz – *hurt, and very coldly:* Good, then, let you think on it. *She stands and starts to walk out of the room.*

John – I am only wondering how I may prove what she told me, Elizabeth. If the girl’s a saint now, I think it is not easy to prove she’s fraud, and the town gone so silly. She told it to me in a room alone – I have no proof for it.

Eliz – You were alone with her?

54 John – *stubbornly:* For a moment alone, aye.

Eliz – Why, then it is not as you told me.

John – *his anger rising:* For a moment, I say. The others come in soon after.

Eliz – *quietly – she has lost faith in him:* Do as you wish, then. *She starts to turn.*

think that the “witches” use their powers to hurt the girls. These poor people are put in jail for being witches!

53 John – Oh, this is bad!

Eliz – You should go to Salem tonight, John. You must say the girls are lying.

John – *thinking:* Yes.

Eliz – Go to Ezekiel Cheever, the sheriff. He knows you well. Tell him what Abigail told you in her uncle’s house. She said that that there is no witchcraft, right?

John – *thinking:* Yes, she did, she did. *Pause, short silence.*

Eliz – You must tell the court, John.

John – *quiet, thinking:* Yes, the court must know the truth. I’m surprised they believe her.

Eliz – Go to Salem tonight, John – go tonight.

John – I’m thinking about it.

Eliz – You must tell them, John.

John – *angry:* I know I must tell them! I said I am thinking!

Eliz – *sad and angry:* Good, then, think about it. *She starts to leave the room.*

John – I’m just thinking how I can prove what she said is true. If everyone thinks she is a good person, it won’t be easy to prove she is lying in court. She told me when we were alone so I have no proof.

Eliz – You were alone with her?

54 John – One moment alone, yes.

Eliz – Then, you lied to me.

John –: *angry:* One moment alone, I said. The others came in soon after.

Eliz – *quietly, doesn’t believe him:* Do what you want. *She turns away.*

John – Woman. *She turns to him.* I'll not have your suspicion any more.

Eliz – *a little loftily:* I have no –

John – I'll not have it!

Eliz – Then let you not earn it.

John – *with a violent undertone:* You doubt me yet?

Eliz – *with a smile to keep her dignity:*

John, if it were not Abigail that you must go to hurt, would you falter now? I think not.

John – Now, look you –

Eliz – I see what I see, John.

John – *with solemn warning:* You will not judge me more, Elizabeth. I have good reason to think before I charge fraud on Abigail, and I will think on it. Let you look to your own improvement before you go to judge your husband any more. I have forgot Abigail, and –

Eliz – And I.

John – Spare me! You forget nothin' and forgive nothin'. Learn charity, woman. I have gone tiptoe in this house all seven month since she is gone. I have not moved from there to there without I think to please you, and still an everlasting funeral marches round your heart. I cannot speak but I am doubted, every moment judged for lies, as though I come into a court when I come into this house!

55 Eliz – John, you are not open wit me. You saw her with a crowd, you said. Now, you –

John – I'll plead me honesty no more, Elizabeth...No more! I should have roared you down when first you told me your suspicion. But I wilted, and, like a Christian, I confessed. Confessed! Some dream I had must have mistaken you for God that day. But you're not, you're not, and let you remember it! Let you look sometimes for the goodness in me, and judge me not.

John- Woman! You have to believe me!

Eliz – *without passion:* I do –

John – You must believe me, trust me!

Eliz – Then you must earn my trust.

John – *angry:* You still don't believe me?

Eliz – John, are you afraid to go because you might hurt Abigail? If it were not Abigail, would you wait so long? I don't think so.

John – Now look here –

Eliz – I see what I see, John.

John – *angry:* Don't be so fast to think the worst of me, Elizabeth. I have a good reason for not saying Abigail is lying! I need to think about it! And, before you say I need to be a better person, you better think about yourself! I have forgotten Abigail, and –

Eliz – And I.

John – Please! You forget nothing and forgive nothing. You have no kindness, woman! Since Abigail left seven months ago, I have been trying so hard to please you but you are still unhappy! You never believe me. This house is like a court!

55 Eliz – John, you lied to me. You told me you saw her in a group of other people. Now, you –

John – I am not going to try to explain any more! No more! I should have lied to you when you first suspected me. But I told you the truth! Confessed! I thought you were God! But you're not God and don't forget it! Why can't you look for the good in me? Why do you always judge me?

Eliz – I do not judge you. The magistrate sits in your heart that judges you. I never thought you but a good man, John – with a smile – only somewhat bewildered.

John – *laughing bitterly*: Oh, Elizabeth, your justice would freeze beer! **Mary Warren** enters. *As soon as he sees her, he goes directly to her and grabs her by the cloak, furious.* How do you go to Salem when I forbid it? Do you mock me? *Shaking her.* I'll whip you if you dare leave this house again!

Mary Warren – I am sick, I am sick, Mr. Proctor. Pray, pray, hurt me not. *Her strangeness throws him off...He frees her.* My insides are all shuddery; I am in the proceedings all day, sir.

John – *with draining anger*: And what of these proceedings here? When will you proceed to keep this house, as you are paid nine pound a year to do – and my wife not wholly well?

56 *As though to compensate, Mary Warren goes to Elizabeth with a small rag doll.*

Mary Warren – A gift for you today, Goody Proctor. I had to sit long hours in a chair, and passes the time with sewing.

Eliz – *perplexed, looking at the doll*: Why, thank you, it's a fair popper.

Mary – *with a trembling voice*: We must all love each other now, Goody Proctor.

Eliz – *Amazed at her strangeness*: Aye, indeed we must.

Mary – I'll get up early in the morning and clean the house. I must sleep now.

John – Mary. *She halts.* Is it true? There be fourteen women arrested?

Mary – No, sir. There be thirty-nine now – *She suddenly breaks off and sobs and sits down, exhausted...*Goody Osborne -- will hang!

There is a shocked pause, while she sobs.

John – Hang! *He calls into her face:* Hang, y'say?

Eliz – I don't judge you, John. You judge yourself!

John – *angry laugh*: Oh, Elizabeth, your justice would freeze beer! **Mary Warren** enters. *Angry, John grabs her.* Didn't I tell you not to go to Salem?! Are you laughing at me? I'll hit you if you leave this house again!

Mary – I am sick, sick, Mr. Proctor! Please don't hurt me! *He lets her go.* I'm so tired. I've been in court all day, sir.

John – *less angry*: Who cares about the court proceedings? When will you clean this house, which we pay you to do? And my wife still sick!

56 *Mary gives Elizabeth a small rag doll.*

Mary – A gift for you, Goody Proctor. I had to sit a long time so I made this for you.

Eliz – *Surprised and confused*: Why, thank you, Mary. It's a nice doll!

Mary – *Shaking*: We must all love each other now, Goody Proctor.

Eliz – *Surprised at Mary's acting strangely*: Yes.

Mary – I'll clean tomorrow. I must sleep now. *She gets up to go.*

John – Mary! *She stops.* Is it true? Are fourteen women arrested?

Mary – No, sir. There are thirty-nine now. *She starts to cry and sits down, very tired.* Goody Osborne –will hang!

There is silence while she cries.

John – Hang! You said hang?!

Mary – *through her weeping*: Aye. But not Sarah Good. For Sarah Good confessed, y’see.

John – Confessed! To what?

Mary - That she – *in horror at her memory* – she sometimes made a compact with Lucifer, and wrote her name in his black book – with her blood – and bound herself to torment Christians till God’s thrown down and we all must worship Hell forevermore.

57John – But – surely you know what a jabberer she is. Did you tell them that?

Mary – Mr. Proctor, in open court she near to choked us all to death.

John – How, choked you?

Mary – She sent her spirit out.

Eliz – Oh, Mary, Mary, surely you –

Mary – *with an indignant edge*: She tried to kill me many time, Goody Proctor!

Eliz – Why, I never heard you mention that before.

Mary – I never knew it before...I say to myself, I must not accuse this woman, for she sleep in ditches, and so very old and poor. But then –...I feel a misty coldness climbing’ up my back, and the skin on my skull begin to creep, and I feel a clamp around my neck and I cannot breathe air; and then – *entranced* – I hear a voice, a screamin’ voice, and it were my voice – and all at once I remember everything she done to me!

John – Why? What did she do to you?

Mary – *like one awakened to a marvelous secret insight*: So many time, Mr. Proctor, she come to this very door, beggin’ bread and a cup of cider – mark this: whenever I turned her away empty, she **mumbled**.

Eliz – Mumbled! She may mumble if she’s hungry.

Mary – *Crying*: But not Sarah Goode. She confessed, saying she made a compact with the devil. She said she wrote in his black book – with her blood. She promised the devil that she would hurt Christians until God is dead and we all follow the devil.

57John – But you know how crazy and old she is. Did you tell them that?

Mary - Mr. Proctor, she almost choked us all to death.

John – How did she choke you?

Mary – With her spirit.

Eliz – Oh, Mary, Mary, you don’t believe—

Mary – *angry that Eliz doesn’t believe her* – She tried to kill me many times!

Eliz– But you never said this before!

Mary – I never knew before! I told myself I should not accuse this poor, old woman. She sleeps outside, poor thing.. But then, I feel cold climbing up my back and my neck. Then, I can’t breathe! *Like in a dream*: I hear a voice, and it was my own screaming voice! And then, I remember everything she has done to me!

John – What has the poor old woman done to you?

Mary – *Like she understands something for the first time*: Many times, she came here, asking for bread and a drink. But remember this: whenever I said no, she spoke so quietly, I couldn’t understand her.

Eliz - Mumbled! She may mumble if she’s hungry.

58 Mary – But *what* does she mumble? You must remember, Goody Proctor. Last month – a Monday, I think – she walked away, and I thought my guts would burst for two days after. Do you remember it?

Eliz – Why – I do, I think, but –

Mary – And so I told that to Judge Hathorne, and he asks her so. “Sara Good,” says he, “what curse do you mumble that this girl must fall sick after turning you away?” And then she replies – *Mimicking an old crone* – “Why, your excellence, no curse at tall. I only say my commandments; I hope I may say my commandments,” says she!

Eliz – And that’s an upright answer.

Mary – Aye, but the then Judge Hathorne, say, “Recite for us your commandments!” – *leaning avidly toward them* – and of all the ten she could not say a single one. She never knew no commandments, and they had her in a flat lie!

John – And so condemned her?... but the proof, the proof!

Mary – *with great impatience with him*: I told you the proof. It’s hard proof, hard as rock, the judges said.

John – *pauses an instant, then*: You will not go to court again, Mary Warren.

Mary – I must tell you, sir, I will be gone every day now. I am amazed you do not see what weighty work we do.

John – What work you do! It’s strange work for a Christian girl to hang old women!

59 Mary – But, Mr. Proctor, they will not hang them if they **confess**. Sarah Good will only sit in jail some time – *recalling* – and here’s a wonder for you; think on this. Goody Good is pregnant!

Eliz – Pregnant! Are they mad? The woman’s near to sixty!

58 Mary – But *what* does she mumble? You must remember, Goody Proctor. Last month – a Monday, I think – she walked away, mumbling. I was sick for two days, do you remember?

Eliz – Why – I do, I think, but –

Mary – Then Judge Hawthorne asked her, “Sara Good, what curse did you mumble to make Mary sick?” And Sara Good says, “No curse at all! I was only saying my commandments.”

Eliz – That was a good answer!

Mary – Yes, but when the judge asked her to say her commandments, she couldn’t say one! She never knew any! She was lying!

John – They sent her to jail for this?! Where is the proof? The proof!

Mary – I told you the proof! She made me sick! It’s hard proof, the judges said.

John – *stops to think*: You will not go to court again, Mary Warren!

Mary – I will be gone every day, sir! I’m surprised you don’t understand how important my work is!

John – Important work! Hanging old women?!

59 Mary – But Mr. Proctor, the woman will not hang if they **admit they did bad things**. Sarah Good will be in jail only a short time. *Thinking and remembering*: Oh, I almost forgot: Goody Good is pregnant!

Eliz – Pregnant! Are they crazy? She’s almost sixty years old!

Mary – They had Doctor Griggs examine her, and she’s full to the brim! And smokin’ a pipe all these years, and no husband either! But she’s safe, than God, for they’ll not hurt the innocent child. But be that no a marvel? You must see it, sir, it’s God’s work we do. So I’ll be gone every day for some time. I’m – I am an official of the court, they say, and I – *she has been edging toward offstage.*

John – I’ll official you! *He strides to the mantel, takes down the whip hanging there.*

Mary – *terrified, but coming erect, striving for her authority:* I’ll not stand whipping any more!

Eliz – *hurriedly, as Proctor approaches:* Mary, promise now you’ll stay at home –

Mary – *backing from him, but keeping her erect posture...*: The Devil’s loose in Salem, Mr. Proctor; we must discover where he’s hiding!

John – I’ll whip the Devil out of you! *With the whip raised he reaches out for her...*

Mary - *pointing at Elizabeth:* I saved her life today!

Silence. His whip comes down.

Eliz – *softly:* I am accused?

Mary – Somewhat mentioned. But I said I never see no sign you ever sent your spirit out to hurt no one, and seeing I do live so closely with you they dismissed it.

Eliz – Who accused me?

60 Mary – ...I can not tell it. *To Proctor:* I only hope you’ll not be so sarcastical no more... I – I would have you speak civilly to me, from this out.

John – *in horror, muttering in disgust at her:* Go to bed.

Mary – *with a stamp of her foot:* I’ll not be ordered to bed no more, Mr. Proctor! I am eighteen and a woman, however single!

John – Do you wish to sit up? Then sit up.

Mary – I wish to go to bed!

John – Good night, then!

Mary – Doctor Griggs examined her said she is very pregnant! A witch for sure! Goody Good has no husband either! She doesn’t have to worry though. They won’t hurt the child. Now, you must understand how important my work is. I’ll go every day. I’m an official of the court!

John – I’ll official you! *Angrily, he reaches for a stick.*

Mary – *scared, but standing tall and straight:* You will not hit me any more!

Eliz – *fast, protecting Mary from John:*

Mary, promise me now you’ll stay at home.

Mary – *moving backwards:* The Devil is in Salem, Mr. Proctor and we must find him!

John – I’ll whip the Devil out of you! *He reaches for the whip.*

Mary – *pointing at Elizabeth:* I saved her life today!

Silence. Slowly, his whip comes down.

Eliz – *quietly:* I am accused?

Mary – A little. But I said I never saw you send your spirit out to hurt any one, and they believed me because I live with you and know you well.

Eliz – Who accused me?

60 Mary – I can’t tell. *To Proctor:* I only hope you won’t disrespect me any more... I – I would like you to speak politely to me, now that I’m part of the court.

John – *angry:* Go to bed!

Mary – *stamps her foot:* I won’t be ordered to bed, Mr. Proctor! I am eighteen and a woman, even if I’m not married!

John – Do you want to sit up? Then sit up.

Mary – I want to go to bed!

John – Good night, then!

Mary – Good night! ...*John and Elizabeth stand staring.*

Eliz – *quietly*: Oh, the noose is up!

John – There'll be no noose!

Eliz – She wants me dead. I knew all week it would come to this!

John – *without conviction*: They dismissed it. You heard her say –

Eliz – And what of tomorrow? She will cry me out until they take me! She wants me dead, John, you know it!

61 John – Fear nothing. I'll find Ezekiel Cheever. I'll tell him she said it were all sport.

Eliz – John, with so many in jail, more than Cheever's help is needed now, I think. Would you favor me with this? Go to Abigail.

John – *his soul hardening as he senses*: What have I to say to Abigail?

Eliz – *delicately*: John – grant me this. You have a faulty understanding of young girls. There is a promise made in any bed –

John – *striving against his anger*: What promise!

Eliz – Spoke or silent, a promise is surely made. And she may dote on it now – I am sure she does – and thinks to kill me, then take my place.

Proctor's anger is rising; he cannot speak.

Eliz – It is her dearest hope, John, I know it. There be a thousand names; why does she call mine? There be a certain danger in calling such a name – I am no Goody Good that sleeps in ditches, nor Osburn, drunk and half-witted. She'd dare not call out such a farmer's wife but there be monstrous profit in it. She thinks to take my place, John.

John – She cannot think it! *He knows it is true.*

Mary – Good night! ...*John and Elizabeth looking at each other.*

Eliz – *quietly*: Oh, the hangman's rope



is up!

John – There will be no noose!

Eliz – Abigail wants me dead.

John – They don't believe it. You heard Mary say she told them you never put out your spirit –

Eliz – And what of tomorrow? Abigail will lie about me until they take me! She wants me dead, John! You know it!

61 John – Don't be afraid. I'll find Ezekiel Cheever and tell him she was just kidding.

Eliz – John, with so many people in jail, I think we need more help that Ezekiel Cheever can give. Please, go to Abigail.

John – What can I say to Abigail?

Eliz – John, let me help you to understand young girls: There is a promise made in any bed –

John – *trying to control his anger*: What promise!

Eliz – ... A promise is made: she thinks that you will marry her. She plans to kill me, and be your new wife.

John is so angry, he cannot speak.

Eliz – I know she hopes to take my place. I know it. Thousand of people are accused. Why does she say my name? It is dangerous to say my name. I'm a respected farmer's wife, not Goody Good who sleeps in ditches and mumbles, nor Goody Osburn, drunk and crazy. Abigail plans to take my place, John.

John – She cannot think it! *But he knows it is true.*

Eliz – “*reasonably*”: John, have you ever shown her somewhat of contempt? She cannot pass you in the church but you will **blush** –

John – I may blush for my sin.

Eliz – I think she sees another meaning in that blush.

John - And what see you? What see you, Elizabeth?

62 Eliz – I think you be somewhat ashamed, for I am there, and she so close.

John – When will you know me, woman? Were I stone I would have cracked for shame this seven month!

Eliz – Then go and tell her she’s a whore. Whatever promise she may sense – break it, John. Break it!

John – *between his teeth*: Good then. I’ll go. *He starts for his rifle.*

Eliz – *trembling, fearfully*: Oh, how unwillingly!

John – *turning on her, rifle in hand*: I will curse her hotter than the oldest cinder in hell. But pray, begrudge me not my anger!

Eliz – Your anger! I only ask you –

John – Woman, am I so base? Do you truly think me **base**?

Eliz – I never called you base.

John – Then how do you charge me with such a promise? The promise that a stallion gives a mare I gave to that girl!

Eliz – Then why do you anger with me when I bid you break it?

John – Because it speaks deceit, and I am honest! But I’ll plead no more! I see now your spirit twists around the single error of my life, and I will never tear it free!

Eliz – *crying out*: You’ll tear it free – when you come to know that I will be your only wife, or no wife at all! She has an arrow in you yet John Proctor, and you know it well!

Eliz – John, she cannot pass you in the church but you will turn red in the face–

John – I blush because of my sin.

Eliz – I think she sees a different meaning in your blush.

John - And what do you see? What do you see, Elizabeth?

62 Eliz – I think you turn red when she and I are so near to you. You are ashamed.

John – Of course, I’m ashamed.

Eliz – Then go and tell her she’s a whore. Make sure she understands that you make no promise of marriage to her. End it!

John – *between his teeth, angry*: Good. I’ll go. *He gets his rifle.*

Eliz – *shaking* – Oh, sure, go to her! I can see how you hate to go!

John – I will tell her she is no good. But you make me so angry.

Eliz – Your anger! I only ask you –

John – Woman, Do you really think I go to her because I want to? Do you think I’m such a bad, evil person?

Eliz – I never called you evil.

John – Then why do you think I made her a promise? The promise one animal gives to another is the promise I gave to that girl!

Eliz – Then, why are you so angry with me when I ask you to break the promise?

John – Because you think I’m lying but I’m honest! I made no promise! I won’t ask you to stop thinking the worst of me anymore. I understand that you will never get over the one mistake of my life.

Eliz – *crying loudly* – I’ll get over it when you understand I am your only wife, or no wife at all! She still attracts you, John Proctor and you know it!

Quite *suddenly*, as though from the air, a figure appears in the doorway. They start slightly. It is **Mr. Hale**. He is different now – *drawn* a little, and there is a quality of deference, even of *guilt*, about his manner now.

63 Hale – Good evening.

John – *still in shock*: Why, Mr., Hale! Good evening to you, sir. Come in, come in.

Hale – You are Goodwife Proctor.

John – Aye, Elizabeth.

Hale – I will not keep you long, but I have some business with you.

John – business of the court?

Hale – No—no, I come of my own, without the court’s authority. Hear me. *He wets his lips*. I know not if you are aware, but your wife’s name is – mentioned in the court.

John – We know it, sir. Our Mary Warren told us. We are entirely amazed.

Hale – I am a stranger here, as you know. And in my ignorance I find it hard to draw a clear opinion of them that come accused before the court. And so this afternoon, and now tonight, I go from house to house – I come now from Rebecca Nurse’s house and –

64 Eliz – *Shocked*: Rebecca charged!

Hale – God forbid such a one be charged. She is, however – mentioned somewhat.

Eliz – *with an attempt to laugh*: You will never believe, I hope, that Rebecca trafficked with the Devil.

Hale – Woman, it is possible.

John – *taken aback*: Surely you cannot think so.

Hale – This is a strange time, Mister. No man may longer *doubt* the powers of the dark are gathered in monstrous attack upon this village. There is too much *evidence* now to deny it. You will agree, sir?

Very *fast*, *quickly*, a man comes through the door. Elizabeth and John are surprised. It is **Mr. Hale**, the expert on witches. He has changed – *tired*, and looks as if he is *sorry for doing something wrong*. John and Eliz are afraid of him.

63 Hale – Good evening.

John – *very surprised and nervous*: Why, Mr., Hale! Good evening to you, sir. Come in, come in!

Hale – Are you Goodwife Proctor?

John – Yes, I am Elizabeth.

Hale – I will not keep you long, but I have some business with you.

John – business of the court?

Hale – No—no, I come by myself, without the court knowing. Listen to me, please. *He wets his lips*. I don’t know if you know, but your wife’s name is – mentioned in the court.

John – We know it, sir. Our Mary Warren told us. We are completely amazed.

Hale – I don’t know people here, and it is difficult for me to form an opinion of the people accused of witchcraft. Today, I have been visiting, house to house. – I just came from Rebecca Nurse’s house and –

64 Eliz – *Surprised and afraid*: Rebecca!

Hale – Please, God would not let such a good woman be charged. But, her name was said in court, a little.

Eliz – *with an attempt to laugh*: You will never believe, I hope, that Rebecca trafficked with the Devil.

Hale – Woman, it is possible

John – *surprised*: Surely you cannot think so.

Hale – This is a strange time, Mister. What person can *not believe* that witches are not in this village. There is too much *proof that something is true*! Don’t you agree, sir?

John – I – have no knowledge in that line. But it’s hard to think so pious a woman be secretly a Devil’s bitch after seventy year of such good prayer.

Hale – Aye, but the Devil is a wily one, you cannot deny it. However, she is far from accused, and I know she will not be. *Pause.* I thought, sir, to put some questions as to the Christian character of this house, if you’ll permit me.

John – *coldly, resentful:* Why, we – have no fear of questions, sir.

Hale – Good, then. *He makes himself more comfortable.* In the book of record that Mr. Parris keeps, I note that you are rarely in the church on Sabbath Day. Twenty-six time in seventeen month, sir. I must call that rare. Will you tell me why you are so absent?

65 John – Mr. Hale, I never knew I must account to that man for I come to church or say home. My wife were sick this winter.

Hale – So I am told. But you, Mister, why could you not come alone?

John – I surely did come when I could, and when I could not, I prayed in this house.

Hale – Mr. Proctor, your house is not a church; your theology must tell you that.

John – It does, sir, it does; and it tells me that a minister may pray to God without he have golden candlesticks upon the altar.

Hale – What golden candlesticks?

John – Since we built the church there were pewter candlesticks upon the altar; Francis Nurse made them, y’know, and a sweeter hand never touched the metal. But Parris came, and for twenty week he preach nothin’ but golden candlesticks until he had them. I labor the earth from dawn of day to blink of night, and I tell you true, when I look to heaven and see my money glaring at this elbows, it hurt me prayer, sir, it hurt my prayer. I think, sometimes, the man dreams cathedrals, not clapboard meetin’ houses.

John – I – have no knowledge of witchcraft. But I can’t believe that, after 70 years of a good life, Rebecca could work for the Devil.

Hale – Aye, but the Devil is a smart one, as you know. But, she is not accused, and I know she will not be. *Pause.* I thought, sir, to ask some questions about the Christian character of this house, if you’ll let me.

John – *not liking this:* Why, we – are not afraid of questions, sir.

Hale – Good, then. *He makes himself more comfortable.* I notice that you are almost never in the church on Sunday. Twenty-six times in seventeen months, sir. I must call that rare, almost never. Will you tell me why you are so absent?

65 John – Mr. Hale, I didn’t know there was a record of my church attendance. My wife was sick this winter.

Hale – People have told me. But you, Mister, why couldn’t you come alone?

John – I came when I could, and when I could not, I prayed in this house.

Hale – Mr. Proctor, your house is not a church.

John – I know that but I also know that a minister may pray to God without golden candlesticks on the altar.

Hale – What golden candlesticks?

John – When we built the church there were metal candlesticks on the altar; Francis Nurse made them, and a nicer hand never touched the metal. But Parris came, and for twenty weeks he asked for golden candlesticks until he got them.

I work the earth from morning to night, and I tell you, when I see those golden candlesticks, I see my money shining, it hurts my prayer, sir, I can’t pray. I think, sometimes, the man dreams large, fancy European churches, not small, simple New England churches.

Hale – *thinks, then:* And yet, Mister, a Christian or Sabbath Day must be in church. *Pause.* Tell me – you have three children?

John – Aye, boys.

Hale – How comes it that only two are baptized?

John – *starts to speak, then stops, then as though unable to restrain this:* I like it not that Mr. Parris should lay his hand upon my baby. I see no light of God in that man. I'll not conceal it.

66 Hale – I must say it, Mr. Proctor; that is not for you to decide. The man's ordained; therefore the light of God is in him.

John – *flushed with resentment but trying to smile:* What's your suspicion, Mr. Hale? I nailed the roof upon the church, I hung the door –

Hale – Oh, did you! That's a good sign, then.

Elizabeth: I think, maybe, we have been too hard with Mr. Parris. I think so. But sure we never loved the Devil here.

Hale – *nods, deliberating this. Then, with the voice of one administering a secret test:* Do you know your commandments, Elizabeth?

Eliz – I surely do. I am a covenanted Christian woman.

Hale: And you, Mister?

John, a trifle unsteadily: I – am sure I do, sir.

Hale – Let you repeat them, if you will.

John – The commandments.

Hale – Aye.

John – *looking off, beginning to sweat:* Thou shalt not kill, *counting on his fingers,* Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods, not make unto thee any graven image. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain; thou shalt have no other gods before me. With some hesitation: Then: Thou shalt honor thy father and mother. Thou shalt not bear false

Hale – You can think that, Mister, but on Sunday, you should be in church. Tell me – do you have three children?

John – Yes, three boys.

Hale – Why are only two taken into the Christian church?

John – *Starts to answer, stops, and then decides he must say this:* I don't like Mr. Parris putting his hands on my baby. I don't see a light of God in this man.

66 Hale – I must say it, Mr. Proctor; that is not for you to decide. The man's chosen by the church, therefore the light of God is in him.

John – *angry, but trying to smile:* I support the church, Mr. Hale. I nailed the roof on the church, I hung the door –

Hale – Oh, you did! That's good.

Elizabeth: I think we have been too hard with Mr. Parris. But we don't love the Devil here.

Hale – *nods his head, thinking. Then, asks a question that could be a secret test:* Do you know your commandments, Elizabeth?

Eliz – Yes, I do. I am a Christian woman.

Hale: And you, Mister?

John - *not sure:* I – I do, sir.

Hale – Please say them.

John – Say the commandments?

Hale – Yes.

John – *nervous:* Do not kill, *counting on his fingers,* Do not steal, Do not want your neighbor's things, Do not make graven images of other gods. Do not take the name of the Lord in vain; Have no other gods. *Slowly, thinking hard:* Honor thy father and mother. Do not lie. *He stops. He counts back on his fingers, knowing he is forgetting one.* Do not make graven images of other gods.

witness. He is stuck. He counts back on his fingers, knowing one is missing. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.

Hale – You have said that twice, sir.

John – *lost*: Aye. *He is flailing for it.*

Elizabeth – *delicately*: Adultery, John.

John – *as though a secret arrow pained his heart*: Aye. You see, sir, between the two of us we do know them all. *Hale only looks at Proctor. Proctor grows uneasy.* I think it be a small fault. There be no love of Satan in this house, Mister.

Hale – I pray it, his misgivings are clear. Well, then – I'll bid you good night.

Eliz – Mr. Hale. I do think you are suspecting me somewhat? Are you not?

Hale – Goody Proctor, I do not judge you. My duty is to add what I may to the godly wisdom of the court.

68 *He starts out.*

Eliz – *with a note of desperation*: I think you must tell him, John.

Slight pause. Hale looks questioningly at John.

John – *with difficulty*: I – I have no witness and cannot prove it, except my word be taken. But I know the children's sickness had naught to do with witchcraft.

Hale – *stopped, struck*: Naught to do – ?

John – Mr. Parris discovered them sportin' in the woods. They were startled and took sick.

Pause

Hale – Who told you this?

John – *hesitates then*: Abigail Williams.

Hale – Abigail!

John – Aye.

Hale – *his eyes wide*: Abigail Williams told you it had naught to do with witchcraft!

John – She told me the day you came, sir.

Hale – *suspiciously*: Why – why did you keep this?

John – I never knew until tonight that the world is gone daft with this nonsense.

Hale – You have said that two times, sir.

John – *not knowing*: Yes. *He thinks hard, trying to remember.*

Elizabeth – *quietly*: Adultery, John.

John – *like he is in pain*: Oh yes. Between the two of us we do know them all. *Hale only looks at Proctor. Proctor is nervous.* I only missed one. There is no love for the Devil in this house.

Hale – I hope not. Well, – I'll bid you good night.

Eliz – Mr. Hale. I think you are suspecting me a little? Are you?

Hale – Goody Proctor, I do not judge you. My job is to help the court.

68 *He starts to leave.*

Eliz – *nervous*: I think you must tell him, John.

Slight pause. Hale looks questioningly at John.

John – *with difficulty*: I – I can not prove it. But I know the children's sickness has nothing to do with witchcraft.

Hale – *stopped, surprised*: Nothing to - ?

John – Mr. Parris discovered the girls dancing in the woods. They were surprised and got sick.

Silence.

Hale – Who told you this?

John – *waits, then*: Abigail Williams.

Hale – Abigail!

John – Yes.

Hale – *his eyes wide open*: Abigail Williams told you it had nothing to do with witchcraft!

John – She told me the day you came, sir.

Hale – *not believing John*: Why – why didn't you tell someone?

John – I never knew until tonight that the world has gone crazy about witchcraft.

Hale – Nonsense! Mister, I have myself examined Tituba, Sarah Good, and numerous others that have confessed to dealing with the devil. They have confessed it.

John – And why not, if they must hang for denyin' it?

Hale – *It is his own suspicion, but he resists it.* And you – would you testify to this in court?

John – I will if I must.

Hale – Do you falter here?

John – I falter nothing, but I may wonder if my story will be credited in such a court. I do wonder on it, when such a steady-minded minister as you will suspicion such a woman that never lied, and cannot, and the world knows she cannot! I may falter somewhat, Mister; I am no fool.

Hale – *quietly – it has impressed him:*

Proctor, let you be open with me now, for I have heard a rumor that troubles me. It's said you hold no belief that there may even be witches in the world. Is that true, sir?

John – I know not what I have said, I may have said it. I have wondered if there be witches in the world – although I cannot believe they come among us now.

Hale – Then you do not believe –

John – I have no knowledge of it; the Bible speaks of witches, and I will not deny them.

Hale – And you, woman?

Eliz – I – cannot believe it.

Hale – *shocked:* You cannot!

70 John – Elizabeth, you bewilder him!

Eliz – I cannot think the devil may own a woman's soul, Mr. Hale, when she keeps an upright way, as I have. I am a good woman, I know it; and if you believe I may do only good work in the world, and yet be secretly bound to Satan, then I must tell you, sir, I do not believe it.

Hale – But, woman, you do believe there are witches in –

Hale – Crazy talk! I have examined Tituba, Sarah Good myself, and many others have confessed to working with the devil. They have said it is true!

John – Of course they say it's true. They will hang if they don't say it's true!

Hale – *he thinks the same thing but doesn't let other people know.* And you – would you tell this in court?

John – I will if I have to.

Hale – Are you unsure here?

John – I'm unsure of nothing! I only wonder if the court will believe me! If a smart person like you thinks a woman like Rebecca Nurse is a witch, Rebecca, who never told a lie, and cannot, and everybody knows it...How can I think the court will believe me? I am not stupid, Mr. Hale.

Hale – *quietly thinking that John makes a lot of sense:* Proctor, tell me the truth, because I heard a rumor that bothers me. I hear that you don't believe in witches. Is it true?

John – I'm not sure what I said in the past. I have wondered if there are witches in the world – but I can't believe they are here with us, now.

Hale – Then you don't believe –

John – I don't know of any witches, myself, but I know the Bible speaks of witches.

Hale – And you, Elizabeth?

Eliz – I – cannot believe in witches.

Hale – *shocked* – You cannot!

70 John – *worried:* Elizabeth, you confuse him!

Eliz – I cannot believe that the devil can take control of a woman's soul, Mr. Hale, if she lives a good Christian life. I am a good woman and I know it. If you know that I do only good work in the world but you still think I am a witch, then, I must tell you, sir, I don't believe in witches.

Hale – But woman, do you believe there are witches in –

Eliz – If you think that I am one, then I say there are none.

Hale – You surely do not fly against the Gospel –

John – She believes in the Gospel, every word!

Eliz – Question Abigail Williams about the Gospel, not myself!

Hale stares at her.

John – This be a Christian house, sir, a Christian house.

Hale – God keep you both; let the third child be quickly baptized, and go you without fail each Sunday in to Sabbath prayer; and keep a solemn, quiet way among you. I think –

Giles Corey appears in doorway.

Giles – John!

John – Giles! What’s the matter?

Giles – They take my wife.

Francis Nurse enters.

Giles – and his Rebecca!

John – *to Francis*: Rebecca’s in the jail!

Francis: Aye, Cheever come and take her in his wagon. We’ve only now come from the jail, and they’ll not even let us into see them.

71 Eliz – They’ve surely gone wild now, Mr. Hale!

Francis – *going to Hale*: Reverend Hale! Can you not speak to the Deputy Governor? I’m sure he mistakes these people –

Hale – Pray calm yourself, Mr. Nurse.

Francis: My wife is the very brick and mortar of the church, Mr. Hale – *indicating Giles* – and Martha Corey, there cannot be a woman closer yet to God than Martha.

Hale – How is Rebecca charged, Mr. Nurse?

Eliz – If you think that I am a witch, then I say there are none.

Hale – You don’t believe in the Bible?!!

John – *worried about what Eliz is saying*: She believes in the Gospel, every word!

Eliz – You should question Abigail Williams about the Gospel! Not me!!!

Hale stares at her.

John - This is a Christian house, sir, a Christian house.

Hale – *Hale believes John and Eliz but he advises them how to behave so they are not suspected of being witches*: God keep you both; get your third child baptized quickly, and go to church every Sunday; and be serious and quiet in your actions. I think – *Giles Corey appears in doorway.*

Giles – John!

John – Giles! What’s the matter?

Giles – They take my wife.

Francis Nurse enters.

Giles – and his Rebecca!

John – *to Francis*: Rebecca’s in the jail!?

Francis: Yes, Cheever came and took her in his wagon. We just left the jail but they won’t let us in to see them.

71 Eliz – They’ve surely gone crazy now, Mr. Hale!

Francis – *going to Hale*: Reverend Hale! Can’t you speak to the Deputy Governor? He’s making a big mistake with these people –

Hale – Pray calm yourself, Mr. Nurse.

Francis: My wife is one of the strongest members of the church, Mr. Hale – *pointing to Giles* – and Martha Corey, there cannot be a woman closer to God than Martha.

Hale – How is Rebecca charged; what do they say she did, Mr. Nurse?

Francis – *with a mocking, half-hearted laugh*: For murder, she’s charged!
Mockingly quoting the warrant: “For the marvelous and supernatural murder of Goody Putnam’s babies.” What am I to do, Mr. Hale?

Hale – *turns from Francis, deeply troubled, then*: Believe me, Mr. Nurse, if Rebecca Nurse be tainted, then nothing’s left to stop the whole green world from burning. Let me rest upon the justice of the court; the court will send her home, I know it.

Francis: You cannot mean she will be tried in court!

Hale – *pleading*: Nurse, though our hearts break, we cannot flinch; these are new times, sir. There is a misty plot afoot so subtle we should be criminal to cling to old respects and ancient friendships. I have seen too many frightful proofs in court – the Devil is alive in Salem, and we dare not quail to follow wherever the accusing finger points!

Proctor – *angered*: How may such a woman murder children?

Hale – *in great pain*: Man, remember until an hour before the Devil fell, God thought him beautiful in Heaven.

Giles – I never said my wife were a witch, Mr. Hale; I only said she were reading books!

72 Hale – Mr. Corey, exactly what complaint were made on your wife?

Giles – That bloody mongrel Walcott charge her. Y’see, he buy a pig off my wife four or five year ago, and the pig died soon after. So he come dancin’ in for his money back. So my wife, Martha, she says to him, “Walcott, if you haven’t the wit to feed a pig properly, you’ll not live to own many,” she says. Now he goes to court and claims that from that day to this he cannot keep a pig alive for more than four weeks because my Martha bewitch them with her books!

Francis – *with a sarcastic laugh*: For murder, she’s charged! *Making fun of the warrant*: “For the marvelous and supernatural murder of Goody Putnam’s babies.” What am I to do, Mr. Hale?

Hale – *turns from Francis, deeply troubled, and worried, then*: Believe me, Mr. Nurse, if Rebecca Nurse is a bad person, then the whole world is going to Hell. We must trust the court; the court will send her home, I know it.

Francis: You cannot mean she will be tried in court!

Hale – *asking strongly*: Nurse, I know we’re tested but we need to stay strong; these are new times, sir. There is evil all around us and we can’t think our old friends are normal. I have seen scary proof in court – the Devil is alive in Salem, and we must investigate wherever the accusing finger points!

Proctor – *angered*: How can such a woman murder children?

Hale – *in great pain*: Man, remember, an hour before the Devil fell, God thought him beautiful in Heaven.

Giles – I never said my wife were a witch, Mr. Hale; I only said she was reading books!

72 Hale – Mr. Corey, exactly what complaint was made about your wife?

Giles – That bloody mongrel Walcott charged her. You see, he bought a pig from my wife four or five years ago, and the pig died soon after. So he came back for his money. So my wife, Martha, says to him, “Walcott, if you aren’t smart enough to feed a pig correctly, you won’t own many.” After that, he said in court that Martha stopped him from keeping a pig alive for more than four weeks. He said that Martha bewitched the pigs with her books!

Enter Ezekiel Cheever. A shocked silence.

Cheever – Good evening to you, Proctor.

Proctor – Why, Mr. Cheever. Good evening.

Cheever – Good evening, all. Good evening, Mr. Hale.

Proctor – I hope you come not on business of the court.

Cheever – I do, Proctor, aye. I am clerk of the court now, y’know.

Enter Marshal Herrick, a man in his early thirties, who is somewhat shamefaced at the moment.

Giles – It’s a pity, Ezekiel, that an honest tailor might have gone to Heaven must burn in Hell. You’ll burn for this, do you know it?

Cheever – You yourself know I must do as I’m told. You surely know that, Giles. And I’d as like you’d not be sending me to Hell. I like not the sound of it, I tell you; I like not the sound of it. *He fears Proctor, but starts to reach inside his coat.* Now believe me, Proctor, how heavy be the law, all its tonnage I do carry on my back tonight. *He takes out the paper.* I have a **warrant** for your wife.

Proctor – to Hale: You said she were not charged!

73 Hale – I know nothin’ of it. *To Cheever:* When were she charged?

Cheever – I am given sixteen warrant tonight, sir, and she is one.

Proctor – Who charged her?

Cheever – Why, Abigail Williams charge her.

Proctor – On what proof, what proof?

Cheever – *looking about the room:* Mr. Proctor, I have little time. The court bid me search your house, but I like not to search a house. So will you hand me any poppets that your wife may keep here?

Proctor – Poppets?

Enter Ezekiel Cheever. A shocked silence.

Cheever – Good evening to you, Proctor.

Proctor – *Nervous and surprised:* Why, Mr. Cheever. Good evening.

Cheever – Good evening, everyone. Good evening, Mr. Hale.

Proctor – I hope you’re not here on business of the court.

Cheever – Yes, Proctor, I do. I am a clerk of the court now.

Enter Marshal Herrick, a man in his early thirties, who is somewhat ashamed at the moment.

Giles – *Angry that Ezekiel Cheever is taking women to jail:* It’s a shame, Ezekiel. A good man like might have gone to heaven but now, you’ll burn in hell. You’ll burn for this, do you know that?

Cheever – You know I must do my job. You surely know that, Giles. And I don’t like you sending me to Hell. I don’t like the sound of it, I tell you; I don’t like the sound of it. *He fears Proctor, but starts to reach inside his coat.* Now believe me, Proctor, I don’t want to do this but I have to. *He takes out the paper that says Elizabeth is under arrest.* I have a **court paper that says your wife is under arrest.**

Proctor – *to Hale:* You said she was not charged!

73 Hale – This is the first time I’ve heard about it! *To Cheever:* When was she charged?

Cheever – I have sixteen warrants tonight, sir, and she is one.

Proctor – Who charged her?

Cheever – Why, Abigail Williams charged her.

Proctor – On what proof, what proof?

Cheever – *looking around the room:* Mr. Proctor, I have little time. I don’t want to but the court asked me to search your house. So will you give me any of your wife’s poppets or dolls?

Proctor – *Confused:* Poppets?

Eliz – I never kept no poppets, not since I were a girl.

Cheever – *embarrassed, glancing toward the mantel where sits Mary Warren's poppet*: I spy a poppet, Goody Proctor.

Eliz – Oh! *Going for it*: Why, this is Mary's.

Cheever – *shyly*: Would you please to give it to me?

Eliz – *handing it to him, asks Hale* : Has the court discovered a text in poppets now?

Cheever – *carefully holding the poppet*: Do you keep any others in the house?

Proctor – No, nor this one either till tonight. What signifies a poppet?

Cheever – Why a poppet – *he gingerly turns the poppet over* – a poppet may signify – now, woman, will you please to come with me?

Proctor – she will not! To Elizabeth: Fetch Mary here.

Cheever – *ineptly reaching toward Elizabeth*: No, no, I am forbid to leave her from my sight.

74 Proctor – *pushing his arm away*: You'll leave her out of sight and out of mind, Mister. Fetch Mary, Elizabeth. *Elizabeth goes upstairs.*

Hale – What signifies a poppet, Mr. Cheever?

Cheever – *turning the poppet over in his hands*: Why they say it may signify that she – *He has lifted the poppet's skirt, and his eyes widen in astonished fear*. Why, this, this –

Proctor – *reaching for the poppet*: What's there?

Cheever – Why—*He draws out a long needle from the poppet* – it is a needle! Herrick, Herrick, it is a needle!

Herrick comes forward to him.

Eliz – I haven't had a poppet since I was a young girl.

Cheever – *embarrassed, glancing toward the mantel where sits Mary Warren's poppet*: I see a poppet, Goody Proctor.

Eliz – Oh! *Going for it*: Why, this is Mary's.

Cheever – *shyly*: Would you please to give it to me?

Eliz – *hands the poppet to Cheever. Joking, Eliz asks Hale* : Does the court use poppets to discover the truth now?

Cheever – *carefully holding the poppet*: Do you keep any other poppets in the house?

Proctor – No. Mary brought this one tonight. What is a poppet's importance?

Cheever – Why a poppet – *he quickly turns the poppet over* – a poppet may signify – *suddenly very surprised*: now, woman, will you please to come with me?

Proctor – She will not! To Elizabeth: Get Mary!

Cheever – *reaching for Elizabeth*: No, no, I am not allowed to leave her from my sight.

74 Proctor – *pushing his arm away*: You'll leave her out of sight and out of mind, Mister. Bring Mary, Elizabeth. *Elizabeth goes upstairs.*

Hale – What signifies a poppet, Mr. Cheever?

Cheever – *turning the poppet over in his hands*: Why they say it may signify that she – *He has lifted the poppet's skirt, and his eyes widen in astonished fear*. Why, this, this –

Proctor – *reaching for the poppet*: What's there?

Cheever – Why—*He draws out a long needle from the poppet* – it is a needle!

Herrick, Herrick, it is a needle!



Herrick comes forward.

Proctor –*angrily, bewildered*: And what signifies a needle!

Cheever – *his hands shaking*: Why, this go hard with her, Proctor, this – I had my doubts, Proctor, I had my doubts, but here’s calamity. *To Hale, showing the needle*: You see it, sir, it is a needle!

Hale – Why? What meanin’ has it?

Cheever – *wide-eyed, trembling*: The girl, the Williams girl, Abigail Williams, sir. She sat to dinner in Reverend Parris’s house tonight, and without word nor warnin’ she falls to the floor. Like a struck beast, she says, and screamed a scream that a bull would weep to hear. And he goes to save her, and, stuck two inches in the flesh of her belly, he draw a needle out. And demandin’ of her how she come to be so stabbed she – to Proctor now – testify it were your wife’s familiar spirit pushed it in.

Proctor – why, she done it herself! *To Hale*: I hope you’re not takin’ this for proof, Mister!

Hale, struck by the proof, is silent.

75 Cheever – “Tis hard proof! *To Hale*: I find here a poppet Goody Proctor keeps. I have found it, sir. And in the belly of the poppet a needle’s stuck. I tell you true, Proctor, I never warranted to see such proof of Hell, and I bid you obstruct me not, for I –

Enter Elizabeth with Mary Warren.

Proctor, *seeing Mary Warren, draws her by the arm to Hale.*

Proctor – Here now! Mary, how did this poppet come into my house?

Mary Warren – *frightened for herself, her voice very small*: What poppet’s that, sir?

Proctor – *impatiently, pointing at the doll in Cheever’s hand*: This poppet, this poppet.

Mary – *evasively, looks at it*: Why, I – I think is mine.

Proctor – It is your popper, is it not?

Proctor –*angrily*: And why is a needle so important?!

Cheever – *his hands shaking*: Why, this is bad for her, Proctor, this – I had my doubts, Proctor, I had my doubts, but this is really bad. *To Hale, showing the needle*: You see it, sir, it is a needle!

Hale – So? What is the meaning?

Cheever – *wide-eyed, shaking*: The girl, the Williams girl, Abigail Williams, sir. She sat at dinner in Reverend Parris’s house tonight, and suddenly, she falls to the floor. Like a struck beast, she screamed loudly. When Parris goes to save her, he finds a needle stuck two inches in the flesh of her belly. Parris asked her how the needle got there, and *looking at Proctor*: Abigail says it was Proctor’s wife, Elizabeth who pushed it in.

Proctor – Abigail did it to herself! *To Hale*: I hope you’re not taking this for proof, Mister!

Hale, thinking this really is proof, is silent.

75 Cheever – This is hard proof! *To Hale*: I found a poppet Goody Proctor keeps. I have found it, sir. And in the belly of the poppet, I found a needle. I tell you true, Proctor, I never wanted to see such proof of Hell, but I did! I tell you not to stop me from taking her because I – *Enter Elizabeth with Mary Warren.*

Proctor, *seeing Mary Warren, pulls her by the arm to Hale.*

Proctor – Here now! Mary, how did this poppet come into my house?

Mary Warren – *frightened for herself, her voice very small*: What poppet, sir?

Proctor – *impatiently, pointing at the doll in Cheever’s hand*: This poppet, this poppet!

Mary – *not wanting to explain, looks at it*: Why, I – I think is mine.

Proctor – It is your popper, right?

Mary – *not understanding the direction of this:* It – is, sir.

Proctor: And how did it come into this house?

Mary – *glancing about at the avid faces:* Why – I made it in the court, sir, and – give it to Goody Proctor tonight.

Proctor – *to Hale:* Now, sir, do you have it?

Hale – Mary Warren, a needle have been found inside this poppet.

Mary – *bewildered:* Why, I meant no harm by it, sir.

Proctor – *quickly:* You stuck that needle in yourself?

Mary – I – I believe I did, sir, I –

76 Proctor – *to Hale:* What say you now?

Hale – *watching Mary Warren closely:* Child, you are certain this be your natural memory? May it be, perhaps, that someone conjures you even now to say this?

Mary – Conjures me: Why, no, sir, I am entirely myself, I think. Let you ask Susanna Walcott – she saw me sewin' it in court. Or better still: Ask Abby, Abby sat beside me when I made it.

Proctor – *To Hale, of Cheever:* Bid him begone. Your mind is surely settled now. Bid him out, Mr. Hale.

Eliz – What signifies a needle?

Hale – Mary – you charge a cold and cruel murder on Abigail.

Mary – Murder! I charge no -

Hale – Abigail were stabbed tonight; a needle were found stuck into her belly -

Eliz – And she charges me?

Hale – Aye.

Eliz – *her breath knocked out:* Why--! The girl is murder! She must be ripped out of the world!

Cheever – *pointing at Elizabeth:* You've heard that, sir! Ripped out of the world! Herrick, you heard it!

Mary – *not understanding the direction of this:* It – is, sir.

Proctor: And how did it come into this house?

Mary – *looking around at the others' faces:* Why – I made it in the court, sir, and – give it to Goody Proctor tonight.

Proctor – *to Hale:* Now, sir, do you understand it?

Hale – Mary Warren, a needle have been found inside this poppet.

Mary – *Confused:* I didn't mean to hurt anybody, sir.

Proctor – *quickly:* You stuck that needle in yourself?

Mary – I – I believe I did, sir, I –

76 Proctor – *to Hale:* What do you say now?

Hale – *watching Mary Warren closely:* Child, you are certain this be your natural memory? Is it possible that someone conjures you to say this?

Mary – Conjures me: Why, no, sir, I am entirely myself, I think. You can ask Susanna Walcott – she saw me making the poppet in court. Or ask Abby, Abby who sat beside me when I made it.

Proctor – *Thinking Mary has explained that Abigail put the needle in the poppet, To Hale, of Cheever:* Tell Cheever to leave, Mr. Hale, you must understand know. Tell him to leave, Mr. Hale.

Eliz – What signifies a needle?

Hale – Mary – you charge Elizabeth with the cold and cruel murder of Abigail.

Mary – Murder! I charge no -

Hale – Abigail was stabbed tonight; a needle was found stuck into her belly -

Eliz – And she charges me?

Hale – Yes.

Eliz – *not able to breath:* Why--! The girl is murder! She must be ripped out of the world!

Cheever – *pointing at Elizabeth:* You've heard that, sir! Ripped out of the world! Herrick, you heard it!

Proctor – *suddenly snatching the warrant out of Cheever’s hands:* Out with you.

Cheever – Proctor, you dare not touch the warrant.

Proctor – *ripping the warrant:* out with you!

Cheever – You’ve ripped the Deputy Governor’s warrant, man!

77 Proctor – Damn the Deputy Governor! Out of my house!

Hale – Now, Proctor, Proctor!

Proctor – Get y’gone with them! You are a broken minister!

Hale – Proctor, if she is innocent, the court—

Proctor – If she is innocent! Why do you never wonder if Parris be innocent, or Abigail? Is the accuser always holy now? Were they born this morning as clean as God’s fingers? I’ll tell you what’s walking Salem – *****vengeance** is walking Salem. We are what we always were in Salem, but now **the little crazy children are jangling the keys of the kingdom**, and common vengeance writes the law! This warrant’s vengeance! I’ll not give my wife to vengeance!

Eliz – I’ll go, John.

Proctor – You will not go!

Herrick – I have nine men outside. You cannot keep her. The law binds me, John, I cannot budge.

Proctor – *to Hale, ready to break him:* Will you see her taken?

Hale – Proctor, the court is just –

Proctor – Pontius Pilate! **God will not let you wash your hands of this!**

Eliz – John – I think I must go with them. *He cannot bear to look at her.* Mary, there is bread enough for the morning; you will bake, in the afternoon. Help Mr. Proctor as you were his daughter – you owe me that, and much more. *She is fighting her weeping.* *To Proctor:* When the children wake, speak nothing of witchcraft – it will frighten them. *She cannot go on.*

Proctor – *suddenly snatching the warrant out of Cheever’s hands:* Out with you.

Cheever – Proctor, you can’t touch the warrant.

Proctor – *ripping the warrant:* Out with you!

Cheever – You’ve ripped the Deputy Governor’s warrant, man!

77 Proctor – Damn the Deputy Governor! Out of my house!

Hale – Now, Proctor, Proctor!

Proctor – You get out too! You are a broken minister!

Hale – Proctor, if she is innocent, the court—

Proctor – If she is innocent! Why don’t you wonder if Parris is innocent, or Abigail? Is the accuser always telling the truth? Were they born this morning as clean as God’s fingers? I’ll tell you what’s walking Salem – *****vengeance** is walking Salem. **People wrong others in return for a wrong.** We are what we always were in Salem, but now **the crazy children are in control** and the law allows vengeance! This warrant’s vengeance! I won’t give my wife to vengeance!

Eliz – I’ll go, John.

Proctor – You will not go!

Herrick – I have nine men outside. You cannot keep her. The law forces me, John, I cannot change this.

Proctor – *to Hale, ready to punch him:* Will you see her taken?

Hale – Proctor, the court is just –

Proctor – Pontius Pilate! Traitor! **God will not let you stay innocent in this!**

Eliz – John – I think I must go with them. *He cannot look at her.* Mary, there is bread enough for the morning; you will bake, in the afternoon. Help Mr. Proctor like you were his daughter – you owe me that, and much more. *She is trying not to cry.* *To Proctor:* When the children wake, don’t talk of witchcraft – it will scare them. *She can not continue.*

Proctor – I will bring you home.

Eliz – Oh, John, bring me soon!

78 Proctor - I will fall like an ocean on that court! Fear nothing, Elizabeth.

Eliz – *with great fear*: I will fear nothing. *She looks about the room, as though to fix it in her mind.* Tell the children I have gone to visit someone sick.

She walks out the door, Herrick and Cheever behind her. For a moment, Proctor watches from the doorway. The clank of chain is heard.

Proctor – Herrick! Herrick! Don't chain her! *He rushes out the door.*



From outside: Damn you, man, you will not chain her! Off with them! I'll not have it! I will not have her chained!

There are other men's voices against his. Hale, in a fever of guilt and uncertainty, turns from the door to avoid the sight; Mary Warren bursts into tears and sits weeping. Giles Corey calls to Hale.

Giles – And yet silent, minister? It is fraud, you know it is fraud! What keeps you, man?

Proctor is half braced, half pushed into the room by two deputies and Herrick.

Proctor – I'll pay you, Herrick, I will surely pay you!

Herrick – *panting*: In God's name, John, I cannot help myself. I must chain them all. Now let you keep inside this house till I am gone! *He goes out with his deputies.*

Proctor stands there, gulping air. Horses and a wagon creaking are heard.

Hale – *in great uncertainty*: Mr. Proctor –

Proctor – Out of my sight!

Hale – Charity, Proctor, charity. What I have heard is her favor, I will not fear to testify in court. Good help me, I cannot

Proctor – I will bring you home.

Eliz – Oh, John, bring me soon!

78 Proctor - I will fall on the court like an ocean! Fear nothing, Elizabeth.

Eliz – *with great fear*: I will fear nothing. *She looks about the room so she can remember it in jail.* Tell the children I have gone to visit a sick person.

She walks out the door, Herrick and Cheever behind her. For a moment, Proctor watches from the door. The clank of chain is heard.

Proctor – Herrick! Herrick! Don't chain her! *He rushes out the door.*



From outside: Damn you, man, you will not chain her! Take them off! I'll not have it! I will not chain her!

There are other men's voices. Hale, very sad and not sure he made the right decision, turns away from the door so he can't see the chained women; Mary Warren bursts into tears and sits crying.

Giles – *Giles Corey calls to Hale.* You say nothing, minister? It's not true, and you know it! Why don't you say it, man?!

Proctor is pushed into the room by two deputies and Herrick.

Proctor – I'll get you, Herrick, I will surely get you!

Herrick – *out of breath*: In God's name, John, I cannot help myself. I must chain them all. Now stay inside this house until I am gone! *He goes out with his deputies.*

Proctor stands there, gulping air. Horses and a wagon creaking are heard.

Hale – *worried he has made a mistake*: Mr. Proctor –

Proctor – Out of my sight!

Hale – Charity, Proctor, charity. If Elizabeth tells the court everything she said tonight, she will be OK. Good help me, I

79 judge her guilt or innocent – I know not. Only this consider: the world goes mad, and it profit nothing you should lay cause to the vengeance of a little girl.

Proctor – You are a coward! Though you be ordained in God’s own tears, you are a coward now!

Hale – Proctor, I cannot think God be provoked so grandly by such a petty cause. The jails are packed – our greatest judges sit in Salem now – hangin’s promised. Man, we must look to cause proportionate. Were there murder done, perhaps, and never brought to light? Abomination? Some secret blasphemy that stinks to Heaven? Think on cause, man and let you help me to discover it. For there’s your way, believe it, there is your only way, when such confusion strikes upon the world. *He goes to Giles and Francis.* Let you counsel among yourselves; think on your village and what may have drawn from heaven such thundering wrath upon you all. I shall pray God open up our eyes. *Hale goes out.*

Francis – *struck by Hale’s mood:* I never heard no murder done in Salem.

Proctor – *he has been reached by Hale’s words:* Leave me, Francis, leave me.

Giles – *shaken:* John—tell me, are we lost?

Proctor – Go home now, Giles. We’ll speak on it tomorrow.

Giles – Let you think on it. We’ll come early, eh?

Proctor – Aye. Go now, Giles.

Giles – Good night, then.

Giles Corey goes out. After a moment:

Mary – *in a fearful squeak of a voice:* Mr.

80 Proctor, very likely they’ll let her come home once they’re given proper evidence.

Proctor – You’re coming to the court with me, Mary. You will tell it in the court.

79 cannot judge if she did wrong or didn’t do wrong – I don’t know. Just think about this: the world has gone crazy, but blaming the vengeance of a little girl will get you nowhere! Who would believe you!

Proctor – You are a person who is afraid to do the right thing! You are ordained by God but you are a coward!

Hale – Proctor, something has made God angry. The jails hold so many people, waiting to be hanged – our greatest judges sit in Salem now. Man, we must try to understand the cause! Was there a secret murder, some secret disrespect for God? We have to think about the cause, man! That’s the only way out of this horrible confusion, believe it! *He goes to Giles and Francis.* Think among yourselves; think about your village and what may have caused God’s anger at all of you. I will pray that God helps you to understand. *Hale goes out.*

Francis – *surprised by Hale:* I never heard of murder done in Salem.

Proctor – *he understands what Hale is saying and he knows why God is angry at him and others. He knows he sinned against God:* Leave me, Francis, leave me.

Giles – *scared:* John—tell me, will we be ok?

Proctor – Go home now, Giles. We’ll talk tomorrow

Giles – Think about it, John. We’ll come back, early tomorrow, ok?

Proctor – Yeah, sure. Go now, Giles.

Giles – Good night, then.

Giles Corey goes out. After a moment:

Mary – *in a squeaky voice:* Mr. Proctor,

80 I’m sure they’ll let her come home when she explains everything.

Proctor – You’re coming to the court with me, Mary. You will tell the court the truth.

Mary – I cannot charge murder on Abigail.

Proctor – *moving menacingly toward her:*

You will tell the court how that poppet come here and who stuck the needle in.

Mary – She’ll kill me for sayin’ that!

Proctor continues toward her. Abby’ll charge lechery on you, Mr. Proctor!

Proctor – *halting:* She’s told you!

Mary – I have known it, sir. She’ll ruin you with it, I know she will.

Proctor – *hesitating, and with deep hatred of himself:* Good. Then her saintliness is done with. *Mary backs from him.* We will sink together into our pit; you will tell the court what you know.

Mary – *in terror:* I cannot, they’ll turn on me!

Proctor strides and catches her, and she is repeating: “I cannot, I cannot!”

Proctor – *grasping her by the throat as though he would strangle her:* Make your peace with it! Now Hell and Heaven grapple on our backs, and all our old pretense is ripped away – make you peace! *He throws her to the floor, where she sobs,* “I cannot, I cannot...” *And now, half to himself, staring, and turning to the open door:* Peace. It is a providence, and no great change; we are only what we always were, but naked now. *He walks as though toward a great horror, facing the open sky.* Aye, naked! And the wind, God’s icy wind, will blow!

And she is over and over again sobbing, “I cannot, I cannot, I cannot,” as

The curtain falls.

Mary – I cannot charge Abigail with murder.

Proctor – *angry, moving toward her:* You will tell the court how that poppet got here and who stuck the needle in.

Mary – She’ll kill me for saying that!

Proctor continues toward her. Abby will charge you with sexual lust, Mr. Proctor!

Proctor – *stopping:* She told you!

Mary – I always knew, sir. She’ll ruin you with it, I know she will.

Proctor – *stopping to think, with deep hatred of himself:* Good. Then everyone will know she is not a good person; she is no saint! *Mary backs away from him.* We will sink together into our pit; you will tell the court what you know.

Mary – *in terror:* I cannot, the girls and the court will turn on me! They’ll kill me!

Proctor grabs her, and she is repeating: “I cannot, I cannot!”

Proctor – *grabbing her by the throat:* Get used to the idea! We will help Hell and Heaven fight, and all our old pretending to be what we are not is ripped away – make your peace!

He throws her to the floor, she cries, “I cannot, I cannot...” *And now, half to himself, looking out the open door:* Peace. It is decided by God, and no great change. We are what we always were, but now, not covered. Everyone will know the truth (that he and Abigail had a sexual relationship and that the girls are lying.) *As he walks toward the open sky, his face looks like he sees something horrible.* Yes, naked! And the wind, God’s icy wind, will blow!

And again and again, Mary cries, “I cannot, I cannot, I cannot,” as

The curtain falls.

Act III

Plot: John Proctor brings Mary Warren to tell the court that Abigail and the other girls lie about witches. Giles Corey and Francis Nurse also come to court to present a testament signed by many people. The testament says that the accused people are not witches. By the end of the act, the judge does not believe Mary, Giles Corey, or Francis Nurse. In addition, Mary is not strong enough to go against the other girls and she joins them. John Proctor is angry and he accuses Abigail of trying to kill his wife so that Abigail can become his wife. He is put in jail because he admits that he had a relationship with Abigail.

Setting: The vestry room of the Salem meeting house, now the general court. The room is empty, and scary. There are two doors, one that leads into the court and the other to the outside. Through the wall, we hear voices in the court. Judge Hawthorne is asking Martha Corey, an accused witch, a question.

Original Text

83 Hawthorne's voice – Now, Martha Corey, there is **abundant** evidence in our hands to show that you have given yourself to the reading of fortunes. Do you **deny** it?
Martha Corey's voice – I am innocent to a witch. I know not what a witch is.
84 Hathorne's voice – How do you know, then, that you are not a witch?
Martha – If I were, I would know it.
Hathorne's voice – Why do you hurt these children?
Martha Corey's voice – I do not hurt them. I **scorn** it!
Giles Corey's voice – *roaring*: I have evidence for the court!
Voices of townspeople rise in excitement.
Danforth's voice – You will keep your seat!
Giles' voice – Thomas Putnam is reaching out for land!
Danforth's voice – Remove that man, Marshal!
Giles' voice – You're hearing lies, lies!
A roaring goes up from the people.
Hathorne's voice – Arrest him, Excellency!
Giles' voice – I have **evidence**. Why will you not hear my evidence?
The door opens and Giles is half carried into the vestry room by Herrick.
Giles – Hands off, damn you, let me go!

Adapted Version

83 Hawthorne's voice – Now, Martha Corey, we have a lot of evidence that you read fortunes. Do you say no?
Martha Corey's voice – I am innocent of being a witch. I don't know what a witch is.
84 Hathorne's voice – How do you know, then, that you are not a witch?
Martha – If I were, I would know it.
Hathorne's voice – Why do you hurt these children?
Martha Corey's voice – I do not hurt them. I hate witchcraft!
Giles Corey's *loud voice*: I have evidence for the court!
Voices of townspeople rise in excitement.
Danforth's voice – You will keep your seat!
Giles' voice – Thomas Putnam wants more land!
Danforth's voice – Remove that man, Marshal!
Giles' voice – You're hearing lies, lies!
Loud voices from the people.
Hathorne's voice – Arrest him, Excellency!
Giles' voice – I have proof. Why will you not hear my evidence?
The door opens and Giles is half carried into the vestry room by Herrick.
Giles – Hands off, damn you, let me go!

Herrick – Giles, Giles!

Giles – Out of my way, Herrick! I bring evidence –

Herrick – You cannot go in there, Giles; it's a court!

Enter Hale from the court.

Hale – Pray be calm a moment.

Giles – You, Mr. Hale, go in there and demand I speak.

Hale – A moment, sir, a moment.

85 Giles – They'll be hangin' my wife!

Judge Hathorne enters. He is in his sixties, a bitter, remorseless Salem judge.

Hathorne – How do you dare come roarin' into this court! Are you gone daft, Corey?

Giles – You're not a Boston judge yet, Hathorne. You'll not call me daft!

Enter Deputy Governor Danforth and behind him, Ezekiel Cheever and Parris. On his appearance, silence falls. Danforth is a grave man in his sixties, of some humor and sophistication that does not, however, interfere with an exact loyalty to his position and his cause. He comes down to Giles, who awaits his wrath.

Danforth – looking directly at Giles: Who is this man?

Parris – Giles Corey, sir, and a more contentious –

Giles – to Parris: I am asked the question, and I am old enough to answer it! To Danforth: who impresses him and to whom he smiles through his strain: My name is Corey, sir, Giles Corey. I have six hundred acres, and timber in addition. It is my wife you be condemning now. *He indicates the courtroom.*

Danforth – And how do you imagine to help her cause with such contemptuous riot? Now be gone. Your old age alone keeps you out of jail for this.

Giles – beginning to plead: They be tellin' lies about my wife, sir, I –

Danforth – Do you take it upon yourself to determine what **this** court shall believe and what it shall set aside?

Herrick – Giles, Giles!

Giles – Out of my way, Herrick! I bring evidence –

Herrick – You cannot go in there, Giles; it's a court!

Enter Hale from the court.

Hale – Please be calm a moment.

Giles – You, Mr. Hale, go in there and tell them I will speak.

Hale – A moment, sir, a moment.

85 Giles – They'll be hangin' my wife!

Judge Hathorne enters. He is in his sixties, a bitter, remorseless Salem judge.

Hathorne – You can't come into this court! Are you gone crazy, Corey?

Giles – You're not a Boston judge yet, Hathorne. You'll not call me crazy!

Enter Deputy Governor Danforth, Ezekiel Cheever and Parris. Everyone is silent when they see Giles. Danforth, sixty years old, takes his job seriously. Angry, he comes to Giles.

Danforth – looking directly at Giles: Who is this man?

Parris – Giles Corey, sir, and he loves to argue –

Giles – to Parris: I am asked the question, and I am old enough to answer it! To Danforth: nervous but smiling: My name is Corey, sir, Giles Corey. I have six hundred acres of land and trees. You put my wife in jail for witchcraft.

Danforth – How does your loud disruption of the court help her? Leave! If you were not so old, I would put you in jail!

Giles – emotionally: They are telling lies about my wife, sir, I –

Danforth – Are you telling this court how to act?

Giles – Your Excellency, we mean no disrespect for –

Danforth – Disrespect indeed! It is disruption,

86 Mister. This is the highest court of the supreme government of this province, do you know it?

Giles – *beginning to weep*: Your Excellency, I only said she were readin’ books, sir, and they come and take her out of my house for –

Danforth – *mystified*: Books! What books!

Giles – *through helpless sobs*: It is my third wife, sir; I never had no wife that be so taken with books, and I thought to find out the cause of it, d’y’see, but were no witch I blamed her for. *He is openly weeping.* I have broke charity with the woman, I have broke charity with her. *He covers his face, ashamed.*

Danforth is respectfully silent.

Hale – Excellency, he claims hard evidence for his wife’s defense. I think that in all justice you must –

Danforth – Then let him submit this evidence in proper affidavit. You are certainly aware of our procedure here, Mr. Hale. *To Herrick*: clear this room.

Herrick – Come now, Giles. *He gently pushes Corey out.*

Francis Nurse – We are desperate, sir; we come here three days now and cannot be heard.

Danforth – Who is this man?

Francis – Francis Nurse, Your Excellency.

Hale – His wife’s Rebecca that were condemned this morning.

Danforth – Indeed! I am amazed to find you in such uproar. I have only good report of your character, Mr. Nurse.

Hathorne – I think they must both be arrested in contempt, sir.

Danforth – *to Francis*: Let me write your plea, and in due time I will –

87 Francis – Excellency, we have proof for your eyes; God forbid you shut them to it. The girls, sir, the girls are frauds.

Danforth – What’s that?

Francis – We have proof of it, sir. They are all deceiving you.

Giles – Your Excellency, I show no disrespect.

Danforth – Disrespect indeed! It is disruption,

86 Mister. This is the highest court in this province, do you know?

Giles – *beginning to cry*: Your Excellency, I only said she was reading books, sir, and they came and took her out of my house for –

Danforth – *interested*: Books! What books!

Giles – *crying*: She is my third wife, sir; I never had a wife that liked books so much, and I wanted to find out why she likes to read so much. But I never thought her reading made her a witch! *He is openly crying.* I have let her down, I have betrayed her! *He covers his face, ashamed.*

Danforth is respectfully silent.

Hale – Excellency, he has evidence to prove his wife’s innocence. I think in justice you must –

Danforth – He can give this evidence in the correct way. You know our procedure here, Mr. Hale. *To Herrick*: clear this room.

Herrick – Come, Giles. *He gently pushes Giles Corey out.*

Francis Nurse – We are desperate, sir; We have come for three days but you have not heard us.

Danforth – Who is this man?

Francis – Francis Nurse, Your Excellency.

Hale – His wife is Rebecca Nurse. This morning, the court said she is a witch.

Danforth – Oh! I am surprised you are causing so much trouble! I have heard you are a good person, Mr. Nurse.

Hathorne – I think Giles Corey and Francis Nurse should be arrested, sir.

Danforth – *to Francis*: Let me get back to you, and–

87 Francis – Excellency, we have proof that the girls are lying.

Danforth – What’s that?

Francis – We have proof of it, sir. They are all lying to you.

Danforth *is shocked, but studying Francis.*

Hathorne – This is contempt, sir, **contempt!**

Danforth – Peace, Judge Hathorne. Do you know who I am, Mr. Nurse?

Francis – I surely do, sir, and I think you must be a wise judge to be what your are.

Danforth – And do you know that near to four hundred are in the jails from Marblehead to Lynn, and upon my signature?

Francis – I –

Danforth – And seventy-two condemned to hang by that signature?

Francis – Excellency – I never thought to say it to such a weighty judge, but you are deceived.

Enters Giles Corey from left. All turn to see as he beckons in Mary Warren with Proctor. Mary is keeping her eyes to the ground. Proctor has her elbow as though she were near collapse.

Parris – *on seeing her, in shock:* Mary Warren! *He goes directly to bend close to her face.* What are you about here?

Proctor – *pressing Parris away from her with a gentle but firm motion of protectiveness:* She would speak with the Deputy Governor.

Danforth – *shocked by this, turns to Herrick:* Did you not tell me Mary Warren were sick in bed?

88 Herrick – She were, Your Honor. When I go to fetch her to the court last week, she said she were sick.

Giles - She comes now to tell the truth for this to you. She has been strivin' with her soul all week, Your Honor

Danforth – Who is this?

Proctor – John Proctor, sir. Elizabeth Proctor is my wife.

Parris – Beware this man, Your Excellency, this man is mischief.

Hale – *excitedly:* I think you must hear the girl, sir, she –

Danforth – *who has become interested in Mary Warren and only raises a hand to Hale:* Peace. What would you tell us, Mary Warren? *Proctor looks at her, but she cannot speak.*

Danforth - *surprised, but studying Francis.*

Hathorne – You show disrespect for this court!

Danforth – Be quiet, Judge Hathorne. Do you know who I am, Mr. Nurse?

Francis – I do, sir.

Danforth – And do you know that I put four hundred people in the jails from Marblehead to Lynn?

Francis – I –

Danforth – And seventy-two will hang?

Francis – Excellency – I hate to say it, but you are deceived.

Enters Giles Corey with Mary Warren and John Proctor. Mary is keeping her eyes down. Proctor is helping her walk because she looks like she might fall down. She is scared!

Parris – *worried that Mary will tell Danforth the girls are lying:* Mary Warren! Why are you here?

Proctor – *pushing Parris away from Mary:* She wants to talk to Danforth.

Danforth – *surprised to see Mary, turns to Herrick:* Didn't you tell me Mary Warren was sick in bed?

88 Herrick – Yes, she was, Your Honor. When I tried to bring her to the court last week, she said she was sick.

Giles - She comes to tell the truth. She is trying to be strong, Your Honor

Danforth – Who is this?

Proctor – John Proctor, sir. Elizabeth Proctor is my wife.

Parris – *Nervous because Proctor can make him look bad by proving the girls lie:* Be careful of this man, Your Excellency, this man is trouble.

Hale –*happy, hoping Proctor will prove the girls lie:* I think you must hear the girl, sir.

Danforth– *very interested in Mary Warren:* What would you tell us, Mary Warren? *Proctor looks at her, but she cannot speak.*

Proctor – She never saw no spirits, sir.

Danforth – *with great alarm and surprise, to Mary:* Never saw no spirits!

Giles – *eagerly:* Never.

Proctor – *reaching into his jacket:* She has signed a deposition, sir—

Danforth – *instantly:* No, no, I accept no depositions. *He is rapidly calculating this; he turns from her to Proctor.* Tell me, Mr. Proctor, have you given out this story in the village?

Proctor – We have not.

Parris – They’ve come to overthrow the court, sir! This man is –

Danforth – I pray you, Mr. Parris. Do you know, Mr. Proctor, that the entire contention of the state in these trials is that the voice of heaven is speaking through the children?

Proctor – I know that, sir.

89 Danforth – *thinks, staring at Proctor, then turns to Mary Warren:* And you, Mary Warren, how came you to cry out people for sending their spirits against you?

Mary Warren – It were pretense, sir.

Danforth – I cannot hear you.

Proctor – It were pretense, she says.

Danforth – Ah? And the other girls? Susanna Walcott, and the others? They are also pretending?

Mary Warren – Aye, sir.

Danforth – *wide-eyed:* Indeed. *Pause. He baffled by this. He turns to study Proctor’s face.*

Parris – *in a sweat:* Excellency, you surely cannot think to let so vile a lie be spread in open court!

Danforth – Indeed not, but it strike hard upon me that she will dare come here with such a tale. Now, Mr. Proctor, before I decide whether I shall hear you or not, it is my duty to tell you this. We burn a hot fire here; it melts down all concealment.

Proctor – She and the girls never saw spirits in court, sir.

Danforth – *can’t believe it:* Never saw spirits!

Giles – *eagerly:* Never.

Proctor – *reaching into his jacket:* Here is a paper with her signed statement, saying she never saw spirits.

Danforth – *quickly:* No, no, I accept no depositions. *Thinking about this; he turns to Proctor.* Tell me, Mr. Proctor, have you told this story in the village?

Proctor – No.

Parris – *Worried that Proctor will prove the girls are lying:* They’ve come to overthrow the court, sir! This man is –

Danforth – Please, Mr. Parris, I’ll do this. Do you know, Mr. Proctor, that the court believes that God is speaking through the girls?

Proctor – I know that, sir.

89 Danforth – *thinks, staring at Proctor, then turns to Mary Warren:* And you, Mary Warren, why did you tell the court that people sent spirits against you?

Mary Warren – It was a lie sir.

Danforth – I cannot hear you.

Proctor – It were pretense, she says.

Danforth – Ah? And the other girls? Susanna Walcott, and the others? They are also pretending?

Mary Warren – Yes, sir.

Danforth – *wide-eyed:* Wow! *He is confused. He studies Proctor’s face.*

Parris – *very, very nervous:* Excellency, you can not believe him!

Danforth – No, I’m really surprised that she comes here with such a story. Now, Mr. Proctor, before I decide whether I shall hear you or not, I must tell you this. We burn a hot fire here; it melts anything you are trying to hide.

Proctor – I know that, sir.

Danforth – Let me continue. I understand well, a husband's tenderness may drive him to extravagance in defense of a wife. Are you certain in your conscience, Mister, that your evidence is the truth?

Proctor – It is. And you will surely know it.

Danforth – And you thought to declare this revelation in the open court before the public?

Proctor – I thought I would, aye – with your permission.

Danforth – *his eyes narrowing*: Now. Sir, what is your purpose in so doing?

90 Proctor – Why, I – I would free my wife, sir.

Danforth – There lurks nowhere in your heart, nor hidden in your spirit, any desire to undermine this court?

Proctor – *with the faintest faltering*: Why, no sir.

Cheever – *clears his throat, awakening*: I – Your Excellency.: When we come to take his wife, he damned the court and ripped your warrant.

Parris – Now you have it!

Danforth – He did that, Mr. Hale?

Hale – *takes a breath*: Aye, he did.

Proctor – I were a temper, sir. I knew not what I did.

Danforth – *studying him*: Mr. Proctor.

Proctor – Aye, sir.

Danforth – *straight into his eyes*: Have you ever seen the Devil?

Proctor – No, sir.

Danforth – You are in all respects a Gospel Christian?

Proctor – I am, sir.

Parris – Such a Christian that will not come to church but once a month!

Danforth – *restrained – he is curious*: Not come to church?

Proctor – I – I have no love for Mr. Parris. It is not secret. But God I surely love.

Cheever – He plow on Sunday, sir.

Proctor – I know that, sir.

Danforth – Let me continue. I know how a man's love for his wife would make him want to help her. Are you sure your evidence is the truth?

Proctor – It is. And you will know it.

Danforth – And you will tell this in the open court before the public?

Proctor – Yes – with your permission.

Danforth – *his eyes narrow*: Now. Sir, why are you doing this?

90 Proctor – to free my wife, sir.

Danforth – Are you sure you don't want to weaken this court?

Proctor – *hiding his real feelings*: Why, no sir.

Cheever – Excuse me, Your Excellency. When we took his wife, he damned the court and ripped your warrant.

Parris – Now you know about him!

Danforth – He did that, Mr. Hale?

Hale – *takes a deep breath, not wanting to say*: Yes, he did.

Proctor – I was angry, sir. I didn't know what I was doing.

Danforth – *studying him*: Mr. Proctor.

Proctor – Yes, sir?

Danforth – *straight into his eyes*: Have you seen the Devil?

Proctor – No, sir.

Danforth – Are you a good Christian?

Proctor – I am, sir.

Parris – Yeah, right! A Christian who only comes to church once a month!

Danforth – *thinking*: Not come to church?

Proctor – I – I have no love for Mr. Parris. Everyone knows that. But I love God.

Cheever – He digs the earth on the farm on Sunday, sir.

91 Danforth – Plow on Sunday!

Cheever – *apologetically*: I think it be evidence, John. I am an official of the court, I cannot keep it.

Proctor – I – I have once or twice plowed on Sunday. I have three children, sir, and until last year my land give little.

Giles – You’ll find other Christians that do plow on Sunday if the truth be known.

Hale – Your Honor, I cannot think you may judge the man on such evidence.

Danforth – I judge nothing. *Pause. He keeps watching Proctor, who tries to meet his gaze.* I tell you straight, Mister – I have seen marvels in this court. I have seen people choked before my eyes by spirits. I have seen them stuck by pins and slashed by daggers. I have until this moment not the slightest reason to suspect that the children may be deceiving me. Do you understand my meaning?

Proctor – Excellency, does it not strike upon you that so many of these women have lived so long with such upright reputation, and –

Parris - Do you read the Gospel, Mr. Proctor?

Proctor – I read the Gospel.

Parris - I think not, or you should surely know that Cain were an upright man, and yet he kill Abel.

Proctor – Aye, God tell us that. *To Danforth:* But who tell us Rebecca Nurse murdered seven babies by sending out her spirit on them? It is the children only, and this one will swear she lied to you.

Danforth considers. Then beckons Hathorne to him. Hathorne leans in, and he speaks in his ear. Hathorne nods.

92 Hathorne – Aye, she’s the one.

Danforth – Mr. Proctor, this morning, your wife send me a claim in which she states that she is pregnant now.

Proctor – My wife pregnant!

Danforth – There be no sign of it - we have examined her body.

Proctor – But if she say she is pregnant, then she must be! That woman will never lie, Mr. Danforth.

91 Danforth – Plow on Sunday!

Cheever – *Sorry he has to tell*: I think it is evidence, John. I am an official of the court, I must tell.

Proctor – I – I have once or twice plowed on Sunday. I have three children, sir, and until last year my land gave little.

Giles – Truth is, other Christians plow on Sunday too.

Hale – Your Honor, you can’t judge a man by the number of times he goes to church or plows on Sunday.

Danforth – I judge nothing. *Pause. He keeps watching Proctor, who tries to look back.* I tell you, Mister – I have seen amazing things in this court. I have seen people choked by spirits. I have seen them stuck by pins and cut by knives. I have no reason to think these girls are lying. Do you understand me?

Proctor – Excellency, aren’t you surprised that so many of these women, that you call witches, have lived good lives for so long –

Parris - Do you read the Bible, Mr. Proctor?

Proctor – Yes.

Parris – Then you know that Cain was a good man an upright man, and yet he killed Abel.

Proctor – Yes, God tells us that. *To Danforth:* But who tells us Rebecca Nurse murdered seven babies by sending out her spirit on them? Only the children, and this child, Mary, will swear she lied to you.

Danforth thinks. Then he talks to Hathorne.

92 Hathorne – Yes, she’s the one.

Danforth – Mr. Proctor, this morning, your wife told me that she is pregnant now.

Proctor – My wife is pregnant!

Danforth – She doesn’t show yet - we have examined her body.

Proctor – But if she says she is pregnant, then she must be! That woman never lies, Mr. Danforth.

Danforth – She will not?

Proctor – Never, sir, never.

Danforth – We have thought it too convenient to be credited. However, if I should tell you now that will let her be kept another month; and if she begin to show her natural signs, you shall have her living yet another year until she is delivered – what say you to that? *John Proctor is struck silent.* Come now, she is saved at least this year, and a year is long. What say you, sir? It is done now. *In conflict, Proctor glances at Francis and Giles.* Will you drop the charge?

Proctor – I – I think I cannot.

Danforth – *now an almost imperceptible hardness in his voice:* Then your purpose is somewhat larger.

Parris – He comes here to overthrow this court, Your Honor.

Proctor – These are my friends. Their wives are also accused—

Danforth – *with a sudden briskness of manner:* I judge you not, sir. I am ready to hear your evidence.

Proctor – I come not to hurt the court; I only –

Danforth – *cutting him off:* Marshall, go into the court and bid **93** Judge Stoughton and Judge Sewall declare recess for an hour. And let them go to the tavern, if they will. All witnesses and prisoners are to be kept in the building.

Herrick – Aye, sir. *Very deferentially:* If I may sir it, sir, I know this man all my life. It is a good man, sir.

Danforth – *it is the reflection on himself he resents:* I am sure of it, Marshall. *Herrick nods, then goes out.* Now, what deposition do you have for us, Mr. Proctor? And I beg you be clear, open as the sky, and honest.

Proctor – *as he takes out several papers:* I am no lawyer, so I'll —

Danforth – Never?

Proctor – Never, sir, never.

Danforth – We were afraid she told us she was pregnant so that she would not hang. But, if I tell you that we will watch her for another month; and if she begins to show her pregnancy, we will let her live another year until she has her baby – what do you say to that? *John Proctor is struck silent.* Come on, she is saved at least this year, and a year is a long time. What do you say, sir? It is done now. *No knowing what to do, Proctor looks at Francis and Giles.* Will you drop the charge and say the girls are not lying?

Proctor – I – I think I cannot.

Danforth – *angry:* Then you have other reasons for saying the girls are lying.

Parris – He comes here to stop this court, Your Honor.

Proctor – These are my friends (*Giles Corey and Francis Nurse*). Their wives are also accused—

Danforth – *with no emotion:* I judge you not, sir. I am ready to hear your evidence.

Proctor – I don't come to hurt the court; I only –

Danforth – *stopping him:* Marshall, go into the court and ask **93** Judge Stoughton and Judge Sewall to take a break for an hour. And let them go to the tavern, if they want. All witnesses and prisoners must stay in the building.

Herrick – Yes, sir. *Very politely:* If I may sir it, sir, I have known this man all my life. He is a good man, sir.

Danforth – *thinks Herrick is questioning his judgment:* I am sure of it, Marshall. *Herrick nods his head and goes out.* Now, Mr. Proctor, what deposition do you have for us? And I beg you to be clear, tell everything you know, and be honest.

Proctor – *as he takes out several papers:* I am no lawyer, so I'll —

Danforth – The pure in heart need no lawyers. Proceed as you will.

Proctor – *handing Danforth a paper:* Will you read this first, sir? It's a sort of testament. The people signing it declare their good opinion of Rebecca, and my wife, and Martha Corey. *Danforth looks down at the paper.*

Parris – *to enlist Danforth's sarcasm:* Their good opinion! *But Danforth goes on reading, and Proctor is heartened.*

Proctor – These are all landholding farmers, members of the church. *Delicately, trying to point out a paragraph:* If you'll notice, sir – they've known the women many years and never saw no sign they had dealings with the Devil.

Parris nervously moves over and reads over Danforth's shoulder.

Danforth – *glancing down a long list:* How many names are here?

Francis – Ninety-one, Your Excellency.

Parris – *sweating:* These people should be summoned. *Danforth looks up at him questioningly.* For questioning.

94 Francis – *trembling with anger:* Mr. Danforth, I gave them all my word no harm would come to them for signing this.

Parris – This is a clear attack upon the court!

Hale – *to Parris, trying to contain himself:* Is every defense an attack upon the court? Can no one –

Parris – All innocent and Christian people are happy for the courts in Salem! These people are gloomy for it. *To Danforth directly:* And I think you will want to know, from each and every one of them, what discontents them with you!

Hathorne – I think they ought to be examined, sir.

Danforth – It is not necessarily an attack, I think. Yet, –

Francis – These are all covenanted Christians, sir.

Danforth – Good people need no lawyers. Go ahead.

Proctor – *handing Danforth a paper:* Will you read this first, sir? It's a kind of evidence; other people's opinions, that my wife, Rebecca and Martha are good people. These people have signed their names. *Danforth looks down at the paper.*

Parris – *sarcastically making fun of Proctor:* Their good opinion! *But Danforth goes on reading, and Proctor thinks Danforth likes it.*

Proctor – These are all landholding farmers, members of the church. *Politely, trying to point out a paragraph:* If you'll notice, sir – they've known the women many years and never saw any reason to think they worked with the Devil.

Parris nervously moves over and reads over Danforth's shoulder.

Danforth – *glancing down a long list:* How many names are here?

Francis – Ninety-one, Your Excellency.

Parris – *nervous:* These people should be called into court for questioning.

94 Francis – *shaking with anger:* Mr. Danforth, please don't summon them! I promised them no harm would come to them for signing this.

Parris – This is a clear attack upon the court!

Hale – *trying not to show his anger at Parris:* Is every helpful argument an attack upon the court? Can no one –

Parris – *hoping all the people will be summoned:* These are the only people who are not happy with the court of Salem. *To Danforth directly:* I think you need to know, from each and every one of them, why they are unhappy with you!

Hathorne – I think they should be questioned, sir.

Danforth – It may not be an attack, I think. But, –

Francis – These are all good Christians, sir.

Danforth – Then I am sure they may have nothing to fear. *Hands Cheever the paper.* Mr. Cheever, have warrants drawn for all of these –arrest for examination.. *To Proctor:* Now, Mister, what other information do you have for us? *Francis is still standing, horrified.* You may sit, Mr. Nurse.

Francis – I have brought trouble on these people; I have –

Danforth – No, old man, you have not hurt these people if they are of good conscience. But you must understand, sir, that a person is either with this court or he must be counted against it, there be no road between. This is a sharp time, now, a precise time – we live no longer in the dusky afternoon when evil mixed itself with good and befuddled the world. Now, by God’s grace, the shining sun is up, and them that fear not light will surely praise it. I hope you will be one of those. *Mary Warren suddenly sobs.* She’s not hearty, I see –

Proctor – No, she’s not, sir. *To Mary, bending to her, holding her hand, quietly:* Now remember what the angel Raphael said to the boy Tobias. Remember it.

95 Mary Warren – *hardly audible:* Aye.

Proctor – “Do that which is good, and no harm shall come to thee.”

Mary Warren – Aye.

Danforth: Come, man, we wait you. *Marshal Herrick returns, and takes his post at the door.*

Giles – John, my deposition, give him mine.

Proctor – Aye. *He hands Danforth another paper.* This is Mr. Corey’s deposition.

Danforth – Oh? *He looks down at it.* Now *Hathorne comes behind him and reads with him.*

Hathorne – *suspiciously:* What lawyer drew this, Corey?

Giles – You know I never hired a lawyer in my life, Hathorne.

Danforth – Then they have nothing to be afraid of. *Hands Cheever the paper.* Mr. Cheever, write warrants for all these people – arrest them. *To Proctor:* Now, Mister, what other information do you have for us? *Francis is still standing, very, very upset.* You may sit, Mr. Nurse.

Francis – I have brought trouble on these people! I have –

Danforth – No, old m man, you have not hurt these people if they are good. But you must understand, sir, that a person is either with this court or against it, there is no in between. We need to be exact; right or wrong, no mixing of good and evil. Good people will be happy to be questioned. I hope you will be one of those. *Mary Warren starts to cry.* *She knows she could be in trouble.* She’s not strong, I see –

Proctor – No, she’s not, sir. *To Mary, bending to her, holding her hand, quietly:* Now remember the story in the Bible; what the angel Raphael said to the boy Tobias. Remember it. Don’t be afraid.

95 Mary Warren – *quietly:* Yes.

Proctor – “Do good, and no harm will come to you.”

Mary Warren – Yes.

Danforth: Come, man, we wait for you. *Marshal Herrick returns, and takes his post at the door.*

Giles – John, my deposition, give him mine.

Proctor – Aye. *He hands Danforth another paper.* This is Mr. Corey’s deposition.

Danforth – Oh? *He looks down at it.* Now *Hathorne comes behind him and reads with him.*

Hathorne – *not believing:* What lawyer drew this, Corey?

Giles –I never had a lawyer in my life, Hathorne, and you know it!

Danforth – *finishing the reading* : It is very well phrased. My compliments. Mr. Parris, if Mr. Putnam is in the court, will you bring him in? *Hathorne takes the deposition, and walks to the window with it. Parris goes into the court.* You have no legal training, Mr. Corey?

Giles, *very pleased*: I have the best, sir – I am thirty-three times in court in my life. And always plaintiff, too.

Danforth – Oh, then you're much put-upon.

Giles – I am never put-upon: I know my rights, sir, and I will have them. You, your father tried a case of mine – might be thirty-five years ago, I think.

Danforth – Indeed.

Giles – He never spoke to you of it?

Danforth – No, I cannot recall it.

96 Giles – That's strange, he give me nine pound damages. He were a fair judge, your father. Y'see, I had a white mare that time, and this fellow come to borrow the mare – *Enter Parris with Thomas Putnam. When he sees Putnam, Giles' ease goes; he is hard.* Aye, there he is.

Danforth – Mr. Putnam, I have here an accusation by Mr. Corey against you. He states that you coldly prompted your daughter to cry witchery upon George Jacobs that is now in jail.

Putnam – It is a lie.

Danforth – *turning to Giles*: Putnam states your charge is a lie. What say you to that?

Giles – *furious, his fists clenched*: A fart on Thomas Putnam; that is what I say to that!

Danforth – What proof do you submit for your charge, sir?

Giles – My proof is there! *Pointing to the paper.* If Jacobs hangs for a witch he **forfeit** up his property – that's law! And there is none but Putnam with the coin to buy so great a piece. This man is killing his neighbors for their land!

Danforth – But proof, sir, proof.

Danforth – *finishing the reading* : It is very well written. Mr. Parris, if Mr. Putnam is in the court, will you bring him in? *Hathorne takes the deposition, and walks to the window with it. Parris goes into the court.* You have no legal training, Mr. Corey?

Giles, *very pleased*: I have the best, sir – I have been in court thirty-two times in my life. And always the person complaining, too.

Danforth – Oh, then you have many problems.

Giles – No, I know my rights, sir, and I will have them. Your father was my judge once – thirty-five years ago, I think.

Danforth – Indeed.

Giles – He never told you?

Danforth – No, I don't remember it.

96 Giles – That's surprising, he gave me nine pound damages. He was a fair judge, your father. You see, I had a white female horse, and a man came to borrow her. *Enter Parris with Thomas Putnam. When he sees Putnam, Giles gets angry.* And, there is the same man!

Danforth – Mr. Putnam, I have a complaint from Mr. Corey against you. He says that you told your daughter to say George Jacobs is a witch. Jacobs is now in jail.

Putnam – It is a lie.

Danforth – *turning to Giles*: Putnam says you lie. What do you say to that?

Giles – *angry, hands ready to fight*: A fart on Thomas Putnam; that is what I say to that!

Danforth – What proof do you have, sir?

Giles – My proof is there! *Pointing to the paper.* If Jacobs hangs for being a witch, he **loses** his property – that's the law! And Putnam is the only man with enough money to buy it! This man is killing his neighbors for their land!

Danforth – But proof, sir, proof.

Giles – *pointing at his deposition*: The proof is there! I have it from an honest man who heard Putnam say it! The day his daughter cried out on Jacobs, he said she'd given him a fair gift of land.

Hathorne – And the name of this man?

Giles – *taken aback*: What name?

Hathorne – The man that give you this information.

Giles – *hesitates, then* : why, I – I cannot give you his name.

Hathorne – And why not?

97 Giles – *hesitates, then bursts out*: You know well why not! He'll lay in jail if I give his name!

Hathorne – This is contempt of the court, Mr. Danforth!

Danforth – *to avoid that*: You will surely tell us the name.

Giles - I will not give you no name. I mentioned my wife's name and I'll burn in hell long enough for that. I stand mute.

Danforth – In that case, I have no choice but to arrest you for contempt of this court, do you know that?

Giles – This is a hearing; you cannot clap me for contempt of a hearing.

Danforth – Oh, it is a proper lawyer! Do you wish me to declare the court in full session here? Or will you give me good reply?

Giles – *faltering*: I cannot give you no name, sir, I cannot.

Danforth – You are a foolish old man. Mr. Cheever, begin the record. The court is now in session. I ask you, Mr. Corey –

Proctor – *breaking in*: Your honor – he has the story in confidence, sir, and he –

Parris – the Devil lives on such confidences! *To Danforth*: Without confidences there could be no conspiracy, Your Honor!

Hathorne – I think it must be broken, sir.

Giles – *pointing at his deposition*: The proof is there! An honest man says he heard Putnam say it! Putnam told his daughter that when she named Jacob a witch, she had given him Jacob's land.

Hathorne – And the name of this man?

Giles – *taken aback*: What name?

Hathorne – The man that give you this information.

Giles – *waits, then* : why, I – I cannot give you his name.

Hathorne – And why not?

97 Giles – *waits, then yells*: You know why not! He'll go to jail if I give his name!

Hathorne – This is disrespect for the court, Mr. Danforth!

Danforth – You will surely tell us the name.

Giles - I will not give you the name. I told you my wife's name and I'll burn in hell for that! I am silent.

Danforth – In that case, I arrest you for contempt of this court, do you know that?

Giles – This is a hearing; not a trial! You cannot charge me for contempt of a hearing.

Danforth – Oh, you think you are a lawyer! Do you want me to call the court in full session? Or will you answer me?

Giles – *afraid, but can't answer*: I cannot give you a name, sir, I cannot.

Danforth – You are a foolish old man. Mr. Cheever, begin writing the record. The court is now in session. I ask you, Mr. Corey –

Proctor – *breaking in*: Your honor – he promised not to tell the story, sir, and he –

Parris – the Devil lives on such confidences! *To Danforth*: with no confidences there could be no secret illegal group working with the devil, Your Honor!

Hathorne – I think he must tell, sir.

Danforth – *to Giles*: Old man, if your informant tells the truth let him come here openly like a decent man. But if he hide in anonymity I must know why. Now sir, the government and central church demand of you the name of him who reported Mr. Thomas Putnam a common murderer.

Hale – Excellency –

Danforth – Mr. Hale.

98 Hale – We cannot blink it more. There is a prodigious fear of this court in the country –
Danforth – Then there is a prodigious guilt in the country. Are you afraid to be questioned here?

Hale – I only fear the Lord, sir, but there is fear in this country, nevertheless.

Danforth – *angered now*: Reproach me not with the fear in the country; there is fear in the country because there is a moving plot to topple Christ in the country!

Hale – But it does not follow that everyone accused is part of it.

Danforth – No uncorrupted man may fear this court, Mr. Hale! None! *To Giles*: You are under arrest in contempt of this court. Now sit you down and take counsel with yourself, or you will be set in the jail until you decide to answer all questions.

Giles Corey makes a rush for Putnam. Proctor lunges and holds him.

Proctor – No, Giles!

Giles – *over Proctor's shoulder at Putnam*: I'll cut your throat, Putnam, I'll kill you yet!

Proctor – *forcing him into a chair*: Peace, Giles, peace. *Releasing him*. We'll prove ourselves. Now we will. *He starts to turn to Danforth*.

Giles – Say nothin' more, John. *Pointing at Danforth*: He's only playin' you! He means to hang us all!

Mary Warren bursts into sobs.

Danforth – This is a court of law, Mister. I'll have no effrontery here!

Danforth – *to Giles*: Old man, if your man tells the truth, let him come here. But if he hides, I must know why. Now sir, tell me the name of the man who called Mr. Thomas Putnam a murderer.

Hale – Excellency –

Danforth – Mr. Hale.

98 Hale – We cannot pretend we don't know any longer. People are afraid of this court.

Danforth – *angry*: Then there is great guilt in the country. This is a fair court. If people are afraid, they must be doing bad things. Are you afraid to be questioned here?

Hale – I only fear the Lord, but there is a fear in this country!

Danforth – *angered now*: Don't talk to me about fear in the country; there is fear in the country because people want to stop Christ in the country!

Hale – But it makes no sense that everyone accused of being a witch is a witch!

Danforth – No good man should fear this court, Mr. Hale! None! *To Giles*: You are under arrest for contempt of this court. Now sit down and think about this, or you will be in the jail until you decide to answer questions.

Giles Corey runs toward Putnam. Proctor stops him.

Proctor – No, Giles!

Giles – *at Putnam*: I'll cut your throat, Putnam, I'll kill you yet!

Proctor – *forcing him into a chair*: Peace, Giles, peace. *Letting him go*: Don't worry, we'll prove we are telling the truth. *He starts to turn to Danforth*.

Giles – Say nothin' more, John. *Pointing at Danforth*: He's tricking you! He wants to hang us all!

Mary Warren cries loudly when she hears she could hang.

Danforth – This is a court of law, Mister. I'll have no insults here!

Proctor – Forgive him, sir, for his old age. Peace, Giles, we'll prove it all now. *He lifts up Mary's chin.* You cannot weep, Mary.

99 Remember the angel, what he say to the boy. Hold to it, now; there is your rock. *Mary quiets. He takes out a paper, and turns to Danforth.* This is Mary Warren's deposition. I – I would ask you remember, sir, while you read it, that until two week ago, she were no different than the other children are today. *He is speaking reasonably, restraining all his fears, his anger, his anxiety.* You saw her scream, she howled, she swore familiar spirits chided her; she even testified that Satan, in the form of women now in jail, tried to win her soul away, and then when she refuse –

Danforth – We know all this.

Proctor – Aye, sir. She swears now that she never saw Satan; nor any spirit, vague or clear, that Satan may have sent to hurt her. And she declares her friends are lying now.

Proctor starts to hand Danforth the deposition and Hale comes up to Danforth in a trembling state.

Hale – Excellency, a moment. I think this goes to the heart of the matter.

Danforth – *with deep misgivings:* It surely does.

Hale – I cannot say he is an honest man; I know him little. But in all justice, sir, a claim so weighty cannot be argued by a farmer. In God's name, sir, stop here; send him home and let him come again with a lawyer—

Danforth – *patiently:* Now look you, Mr. Hale—

Hale – Excellency, I have signed seventy-two death warrants; I am a minister of the Lord, and I dare not take a life without there be a proof so immaculate no slightest qualm of conscience my doubt it.

Danforth – Mr. Hale, you surely do not doubt my justice.

Hale – I have this morning signed away the soul of Rebecca Nurse.

Proctor – Forgive him, sir, for his old age. Peace, Giles, we'll prove it all now. *He lifts up Mary's chin.* You cannot cry, Mary. Be strong.

99 Remember the angel, what he said to the boy. The story makes you strong. *Mary quiets. He takes out a paper, and turns to Danforth.* This is Mary Warren's deposition. I – I would ask you to remember that two weeks ago, she was just like the other girls are today. *He is trying to be brave and calm.* Just like the other girls, she screamed and she said spirits hurt her; she even said that the Devil, in the form of women now in jail, tried to take her soul away –

Danforth – We know all this.

Proctor – Yes, sir. But now, she says that she never saw Satan; or any spirit. And she says her friends are lying.

Proctor starts to hand Danforth the deposition but Hale runs to Danforth, very worried.

Hale – Excellency, a moment. This is very important. I think this goes to the heart of the matter.

Danforth –It does.

Hale – I don't know John Proctor well enough to say he is honest. But in all justice, sir, a farmer can not do this job. In God's name, sir, stop here; he needs a lawyer—

Danforth – *patiently:* Mr. Hale—

Hale – Excellency, I have let seventy-two die; I am a minister of the Lord, and I must be completely sure a person is in the wrong before I let another person die.

Danforth – Mr. Hale, you think my court does justice, don't you?

Hale – This morning I signed for the death of Rebecca Nurse.

100 Your Honor. I'll not conceal it, my hand shakes yet as with a wound! I pray you, sir, this argument let lawyers present to you.

Danforth – Mr. Hale, believe me; for a man of such terrible learning you are most bewildered – I hope you will forgive me. I have been thirty-two year at the bar, sir, and I should be confounded were I called to defend these people. Let you consider, now – *To Proctor, and the others:* And I bid you all do likewise. In an ordinary crime, how does one defend the accused? One calls up witnesses to prove his innocence. But witchcraft is ipso facto, on its face and by its nature, an invisible crime, is it not? Therefore, who may possibly be witness to it? The witch and the victim. None other. Now we cannot hope the witch will accuse herself; granted? Therefore, we must rely upon her victims – and they do testify, the children certainly do testify. As for the witches, none will deny that we are most eager for all their confessions. Therefore, what is left for a lawyer to bring out? I think I have made my point. Have I not?

Hale – But this child claims the girls are not truthful, and if they are not –

Danforth – That is precisely what I am about to consider, sir. What more may you ask of me? Unless you doubt my probity?

Hale – *defeated:* I surely do not, sir. Let you consider it, then.

Danforth – And let you put your heart to rest. Her deposition, Mr. Proctor.

Proctor hands it to him. Hathorne rises, goes beside Danforth, and starts reading. Parris comes to his other side. Danforth looks at John Proctor, then proceeds to read. Hale gets up, finds position near the judge, reads too. Proctor glances at Giles. Francis prays silently, hands pressed together. Cheever waits placidly, the sublime official, dutiful. Mary Warren sobs once. John Proctor touches her head reassuringly. Presently Danforth

100 Your Honor. I won't lie to you, my hand still shakes! Please, sir, this man needs a lawyer!

Danforth – Mr. Hale, believe me; I know what I'm doing. I have been doing this for thirty-two years, sir. Let us think about this. In most court cases, people can tell what they have heard or seen; they can be witnesses. But witchcraft is different. The fact is, it is invisible. The only witness is the witch herself or the victims. The witch will not say she is a witch so we must learn from the victims. In our case, the children are the victims. The children tell us what the witches do, and we wait for the witches to confess. What can a lawyer add to this?! I think you understand me, right?

Hale – But this child claims the girls are lying, and if they are not –

Danforth – That is what I am about to consider, sir. What more can you ask of me? Do you think I can't do my job?

Hale – *defeated:* I surely do not, sir. Please continue.

Danforth – And you can relax. Her deposition, Mr. Proctor.

Proctor gives it to him. Hathorne, Parris, and Hale read the deposition too. Proctor looks at Giles. Francis prays silently, hands pressed together. Cheever waits. Mary Warren cries once. John Proctor touches Mary's head to help her.

Presently Danforth

101 lifts his eyes, stands up, takes out a kerchief and blows his nose. The others stand aside as he moves in thought toward the window.

Parris – hardly able to contain his anger and fear: I should like to question –

Danforth – his first real outburst, in which his contempt for Parris is clear: Mr. Parris, I bid you be silent! He stands in silence, looking out the window. Now, having established that he will set the gait: Mr. Cheever, will you go into the court and bring the children here? Cheever gets up and goes out up-stage. Danforth now turns to Mary. Mary Warren, how came you to this turnabout? Has Mr. Proctor threatened you for this deposition?

Mary Warren – No, sir.

Danforth – Has he ever threatened you?

Mary – weaker: No, sir.

Danforth – sensing a weakening: Has he threatened you?

Mary – No, sir.

Danforth – Then you tell me that you sat in my court, callously lying, when you knew that people would hang by your evidence? She does no answer. Answer me!

Mary – almost inaudibly: I did, sir.

Danforth – How were you instructed in your life? Do you no know that God damns all liars? She cannot speak. Or is it now that you lie?

Mary – No, sir, –I am with God now.

Danforth – You are with God now.

Mary – Aye, sir.

102 Danforth – containing himself: I will tell you this – you are either lying now, or you were lying in the court, and in either case you have committed **perjury** and you will go to jail for it. You cannot lightly say you lied, Mary. Do you know that?

Mary – I cannot lie no more. I am with God, I am with God.

But she breaks into sobs at the thought of it, and the right door opens and ever Susanna Walcott, Mercy Lewis, Betty Parris, and finally Abigail. Cheever comes to Danforth.

101 lifts his eyes, stands up and blows his nose.

Parris – worried that Danforth will believe the girls are lying:: I should like to question –

Danforth – not liking Mr. Parris: Mr. Parris be silent! He stands in silence, looking out the window. Mr. Cheever, will you go into the court and bring the children here? Cheever leaves. Danforth now turns to Mary. Mary Warren, how did you decide that the girls are lying? Has Mr. Proctor bullied you into this deposition?

Mary Warren – No, sir.

Danforth – Has he ever bullied you?

Mary – weaker: No, sir.

Danforth – thinking she is hiding something: Has he threatened you?

Mary – No, sir.

Danforth – Do you tell me that you sat in my court, lying, when you knew that people would hang? She does no answer. Answer me!

Mary – very quietly: I did, sir.

Danforth – Do you know that God damns all liars? She cannot speak. Or do you lie now?

Mary – No, sir, –I am with God now.

Danforth – You are with God now.

Mary – Aye, sir.

102 Danforth – controlling himself: I will tell you this – you are either lying now, or you were lying in the court, and in either case you have committed perjury by **lying** and you will go to jail for it. Lying in court is serious, Mary. Do you know that?

Mary – I cannot lie any more. I am with God, I am with God.

But she cries. The door opens and Susanna Walcott, Mercy Lewis, Betty Parris, and finally Abigail enter. Cheever comes to Danforth.

Cheever – Ruth Putnam’s not in the court, sir, nor the other children.

Danforth – These will be sufficient. Sit you down, children. *Silently they sit.* Your friend, Mary Warren, has given us a deposition. In which she swears that she never saw familiar spirits, apparitions, nor any manifest of the Devil. She claims as well that none of you have seen these things either. *Slight pause.* Now, children, this is a court of law. The law, based upon the Bible, and the Bible, writ by Almighty God, forbid the practice of witchcraft, and describe death as the penalty thereof. But likewise, children, the law and Bible damn all bearers of false witness. *Slight pause.* Now then. It does not escape me that this deposition may be devised to blind us; it may well be that Mary warren has been conquered by Satan, who sends her here to distract our sacred purpose. If so, her neck will break for it. But if she speak true, I bid you now drop your guile and confess your pretense, for a quick confession will go easier with you. *Pause.* Abigail Williams, rise. *Abigail slowly rises.* Is there any truth in this?

Abigail – No, sir.

Danforth – *thinks, glances at Mary, then back to Abigail:* Children, a very augur bit will now be turned into your souls until

103 honesty is proved. Will either of you change your positions now, or do you force me to hard questioning?

Abigail – I have naught to change, sir. She lies.

Danforth – *to Mary:* You would still go on with this?

Mary – *faintly:* Aye, sir.

Danforth – *turning to Abigail:* A poppet were discovered in Mr. Proctor’s house, stabbed by a needle. Mary Warren claims that you sat beside her in the court when she made it, and that you saw her make it and witnessed how she herself stuck her needle into it for safe-keeping. What say you to that?

Cheever – Ruth Putnam’s not in the court, sir. *(Do you think her father, Thomas Putnam, kept Ruth home because he was afraid Danforth would believe Mary?)*

Danforth – These are enough. Sit down, children. *They sit.* Your friend, Mary Warren, gives us a deposition. She says that she never saw spirits, ghosts, or the Devil. She also says that none of you have seen these things. *Slight pause.* Now, children, this is a court of law. Based on the Bible, and God, the law does not allow witchcraft, and witches must die. But the law also says lying is not allowed. *Slight pause.* Now then. I understand that it is possible that Mary may be lying to protect witches. If she is, her neck will break for it. But if she tells the truth, you better stop pretending now and tell me. You’ll be in less trouble if you do. *Pause.* Abigail Williams, rise. *Abigail slowly rises.* Is there any truth in this?

Abigail – No, sir.

Danforth – *thinks, looks at Mary, then back to Abigail:* Children, I will drill into you until

103 I know you are telling the truth. Will any of you want to change your minds now, or do you force me to question you?

Abigail – I have nothing to change, sir. Mary lies.

Danforth – *to Mary:* Do you still say they lie?

Mary – *softly:* Aye, sir.

Danforth – *to Abigail:* A poppet was discovered in Mr. Proctor’s house, with by a needle. Mary Warren says that you sat beside her in the court when she made it, and that you saw her make it and witnessed how she herself stuck her needle into it for safe-keeping. What do you say to that?

Abigail – *with a slight note of indignation*: It is a lie, sir.

Danforth – *after a slight pause*: While you worked for Mr. Proctor, did you see poppets in that house?

Abigail – Goody Proctor always kept poppets.

Proctor – Your Honor, my wife never kept no poppets. Mary Warren confesses it was her poppet.

Cheever – Your Excellency.

Danforth – Mr. Cheever.

Cheever – When I spoke to Goody Proctor in that house, she said she never kept no poppets. But she said she did keep poppets when she were a girl.

Proctor – She has not been a girl these fifteen years, Your Honor.

Hathorne – But a poppet will keep fifteen years, will it not?

Proctor – It will keep if it is kept, but Mary Warren swears she never saw no poppets in my house, nor anyone else.

104 Parris – Why could there not have been poppets hid where no one ever saw them?

Proctor – *furious*: There might also be a dragon with five legs in my house, but no one has ever seen it.

Parris – We are here, Your Honor, precisely to discover what no one has ever seen.

Proctor – Mr. Danforth, what profit this girl to turn herself about? What may Mary Warren gain but hard questioning and worse?

Danforth – You are charging Abigail Williams with a marvelous cool plot to murder, do you understand that?

Proctor – I do, sir. I believe she means to murder.

Danforth – *pointing at Abigail, incredulously*: This child would murder your wife?

Proctor – It is not a child. Now hear me, sir. In the sight of the congregation she were twice this year put out of this meetin' house for laughter during prayer.

Danforth – *shocked, turning to Abigail*: What's this? Laughter --!

Abigail – *a little bit angry*: It is a lie, sir.

Danforth – *after a small pause*: While you worked for Mr. Proctor, did you see poppets in that house?

Abigail – Goody Proctor always kept poppets.

Proctor – Your Honor, my wife never kept poppets. Mary Warren says it was her poppet.

Cheever – Your Excellency.

Danforth – Mr. Cheever.

Cheever – When I spoke to Goody Proctor in that house, she said she never kept poppets. But she said she did keep poppets when she was a girl.

Proctor – She has not been a girl for fifteen years, Your Honor.

Hathorne – But a poppet will last fifteen years, won't it?

Proctor – It will last if a person keeps it, but Mary Warren swears she never saw poppets in my house.

104 Parris – Why couldn't there be hidden poppets where no one ever saw them?

Proctor – *very angry*: There could be a dragon with five legs in my house, but no one has ever seen it.

Parris – We are here, Your Honor, to discover what no one has ever seen.

Proctor – Mr. Danforth, why would Mary lie about the girls? She has nothing to gain except hard questioning and worse.

Danforth – You are saying that Abigail Williams wants to murder, do you understand that?

Proctor – I do, sir. I believe she wants to murder my wife.

Danforth – *pointing at Abigail, not able to believe it*: This child would murder your wife?

Proctor – She is not a child. Now hear me, sir. Twice this year she was kicked out of church for laughing.

Danforth – *shocked, turning to Abigail*: What's this? Laughter --!

Parris – Excellency, she were under Tituba’s power at that time, but she is **solemn** now.

Giles – Aye, now she is solemn and goes to hang people!

Danforth – Quiet, man.

Hathorne – Surely it have no bearing on the question, sir. He charges contemplation of murder.

Danforth – Aye. *He studies Abigail for a moment, then:* Continue, Mr. Proctor.

Proctor – Mary. Now tell the Governor how you danced in the woods.

105 Parris – *instantly:* Excellency, since I come to Salem this man is blackening my name. He –

Danforth – In a moment, sir. *To Mary Warren, sternly, and surprised:* What is this dancing?

Mary – I – *She glances at Abigail, who is staring down at her remorselessly. Then, appealing to Proctor:* Mr. Proctor –

Proctor – *taking it right up:* Abigail leads the girls to the woods, Your Honor, and they have danced there naked –

Parris – Your Honor, this—

Proctor – *at once:* Mr. Parris discovered them himself in the dead of night! There’s the “child” she is!

Danforth – *It is growing into a nightmare, and he turns, astonished, at Parris:* Mr. Parris –

Paris – I can only say, sir, that I never found any of them naked, and this man is –

Danforth – But you discovered them dancing in the woods? *Eyes on Parris, he points at Abigail.* Abigail?

Hale – Excellency, when I first arrived from Beverly, Mr. Parris told me that.

Danforth – Do you **deny** it, Mr. Parris?

Parris – I do not, sir, but I never saw any of them naked.

Danforth – But she have *danced*?

Parris – Excellency, she was under Tituba’s power at that time, but she is **serious** now.

Giles – *Sarcastically:* Yes, now she is serious about hanging people!

Danforth – Quiet, man.

Hathorne – Surely laughing in church has nothing to do with murder, sir.

Danforth – Yes. *He studies Abigail for a moment, then:* Continue, Mr. Proctor.

Proctor – Mary. Now tell the Governor how you danced in the woods.

105 Parris – *very worried this could make him look bad:* Excellency, This man has been blackening my name ever since I came to Salem! He –

Danforth – In a moment, sir. *To Mary Warren, sternly, and surprised:* What is this dancing?

Mary – I – *She looks at Abigail, who is staring at her with hate. Mary knows that Abigail does not want her to tell. To Proctor:* Mr. Proctor –

Proctor – *saying it for Mary:* Abigail lead the girls to the woods, Your Honor, and they danced naked –

Parris – *really worried:* Your Honor, this—

Proctor – *angry at Parris:* Mr. Parris discovered them himself at night! Some “child”!

Danforth – *amazed how bad this story is getting, he turns, very surprised, to Parris:* Mr. Parris –

Paris – I can explain! I never found any of them naked, and this man is –

Danforth – But you discovered them dancing in the woods? *he points at Abigail.* Abigail?

Hale – Excellency, when I first arrived from Beverly, Mr. Parris told me they danced in the woods.

Danforth – Do you **say it isn’t true**, Mr. Parris?

Parris – I do not, sir, but I never saw any of them naked.

Danforth – But she *danced*?

Parris – *unwillingly*: Aye, sir.

Danforth, as though with new eyes, looks at Abigail.

Hathorne – Excellency, will you permit me?
He points at Mary Warren.

Danforth – *with great worry*: Pray, proceed.

106 Hathorne – You say you never saw no spirits, Mary, were never threatened or afflicted by any manifest of the Devil or the Devil’s agents.

Mary – *very faintly*: No, sir.

Hathorne – *with a gleam of victory*: And yet, when people accused of witchery confronted you in court, you would **faint**, saying their spirits came out of their bodies and **choked** you.

Mary – That were pretense, sir.

Danforth – I cannot hear you.

Mary – Pretense, sir.

Parris – But you did turn cold, did you not? I myself picked you up many times, and your skin were icy. Mr. Danforth, you –

Danforth – I saw that many times.

Proctor – She only pretended to faint, Your Excellency. They’re all marvelous pretenders.

Hathorne – then can she pretend to faint now?

Proctor – Now?

Parris – Why not? Now there are no spirits attacking her, for none in this room is accused of witchcraft. So let her turn herself cold now, let her pretend she is attacked now, let her faint. *He turns to Mary Warren.* Faint!

Mary – Faint?

Parris – Aye, faint. Prove to us how you pretended in the court so many times.

Mary – *looking to Proctor*: I – cannot faint now, sir.

Proctor – *alarmed, quietly*: can you not pretend it?

107 Mary – I – *She looks about as though searching for the passion to faint.* I – have no sense of it now, I—

Danforth – Why? What is **lacking** now?

Mary – I – cannot tell, sir, I –

Parris – *not wanting to say it*: Yes, sir.

Danforth, begins to think of Abigail differently.

Hathorne – Excellency, will you allow me to say something? *He points at Mary Warren.*

Danforth – *with great worry*: Please do.

106 Hathorne – Mary, you say you never saw spirits, the Devil, or the Devil’s helpers.

Mary – *very faintly*: No, sir.

Hathorne – *with a gleam of victory*: And yet, when people accused of witchery confronted you in court, you would **pass out**, saying their spirits came out of their bodies and tried **to stop** you from **breathing**.

Mary – That were pretense, sir.

Danforth – I cannot hear you.

Mary – Pretense, sir.

Parris – But you became cold, didn’t you? I picked you up many times, and your skin was ice cold. Mr. Danforth, you –

Danforth – I saw that many times.

Proctor – She only pretended to faint, Your Excellency. They’re all very good pretenders.

Hathorne – Then can she pretend to faint now?

Proctor – Now?

Parris – Why not? Now there are no spirits attacking her, for nobody in this room is accused of witchcraft. So let her turn herself cold now, let her pretend she is attacked now, let her faint. *He turns to Mary Warren.* Faint!

Mary – Faint?

Parris – Aye, faint. Prove to us how you pretended in the court so many times.

Mary – *looking to Proctor*: I – cannot faint now, sir.

Proctor – *worried, quietly*: Can’t you pretend now?

107 Mary – I – *She looks for the passion to faint.* I – don’t feel it now, I—

Danforth – Why? What is **missing** now?

Mary – I – don’t know, sir, I –

Danforth – Might it be that here we have no afflicting spirit loose, but in the court there were some?

Mary – I never saw no spirits.

Parris – Then see no spirits now, and prove to us that you can faint by your own will, as you claim.

Mary – *stares, searching for the emotion of it, and then shakes her head:* I – cannot do it.

Parris – Then you will confess, will you not? It were attacking spirits made you faint!

Mary – No, sir, I –

Parris – Your Excellency, this is a trick to blind the court!

Mary – It’s not a trick! *She stands.* I – I used to faint because I – I thought I saw spirits.

Danforth – Thought you saw them!

Mary - But I did not, Your Honor.

Hathorne – How could you think you saw them unless you saw them?

Mary – I – I cannot tell how, but I did. I – heard the other girls screaming, and you Your Honor, you seemed to believe them, and I—It were only sport in the beginning, sir, but then the whole world cried spirits, spirits, and I – I promise you, Mr. Danforth, I only thought I saw them but I did not.

Danforth peers at her.

108 Parris – *smiling, but nervous because Danforth seems to be struck by Mary Warren’s story:* Surely Your Excellency is not taken by this simple lie.

Danforth – *turning worriedly to Abigail:*

Abigail, I bid you now search your heart and tell me this –and **beware** of it, child, to God every soul is precious and His vengeance is terrible on them that take life without cause. It is possible, child, that the spirits you have seen are illusion only, some deception that may cross your mind when –

Abigail – Why, this—this—is a base question, sir.

Danforth – Child, I would have you consider I –

Danforth – Is it possible that we don’t have spirits attacking you here, but in the court there were some?

Mary – I never saw spirits.

Parris – Then see no spirits now, and prove to us that you can faint by yourself, as you said.

Mary – *trying, looking for the emotion of it, and then shakes her head no:* I – cannot do it.

Parris – Then attacking spirits made you faint!

Mary – No, sir, I –

Parris – Your Excellency, this is a trick to blind the court!

Mary – It’s not a trick! *She stands.* I – I used to faint because I – I thought I saw spirits.

Danforth – Thought you saw them!

Mary - But I did not, Your Honor.

Hathorne – How could you think you saw them unless you saw them?

Mary – I – I cannot tell how, but I did. I – heard the other girls screaming, and you ,Your Honor, you seemed to believe them, and I—It were only for fun in the beginning, sir, but then the whole world cried spirits, spirits, and I – I promise you, Mr. Danforth, I only thought I saw them but I did not.

Danforth looks at her.

108 Parris –*nervous because Danforth seems to seriously think about Mary Warren’s story:* Surely Your Excellency does not believe this lie.

Danforth – *turning worriedly to Abigail:*

Abigail, I ask you to look into your heart and tell me this –and **be careful**, child, every soul is special to God but His vengeance is terrible on people who take life for no good reason. Is it possible that the spirits you think you saw were not real?

Abigail – Why, this—this—is an insulting question, sir.

Danforth – Child, I would have you consider I –

Abigail – I have been hurt, Mr. Danforth; I have seen my blood runnin’ out! I have been near to murdered every day because I done my duty pointing out the Devil’s people –and this is my reward? To be mistrusted, denied, questioned like a –

Danforth – *weakening*: Child, I do not mistrust you –

Abigail – *in an open threat*: Let you beware, Mr. Danforth. Think you to be so mighty that the power of Hell may not turn your wits? Beware of it! There is –*Suddenly, from an accusatory attitude, her face turns, looking into the air above – it is truly frightened.*

Danforth – apprehensively: What is it, child?

Abigail – *looking about in the air, clasp*ing her arms about her as though cold: I – I know not. I wind, a cold wind, has come. *Her eyes fall on Mary Warren.*

Mary – *terrified, pleading*: Abby!

Mercy Lewis – *shivering*: Your Honor, I freeze!

Proctor – They’re pretending!

109 Hathorne – *touching Abigail’s hand*: She is cold, Your Honor, touch her!

Mercy – *through chattering teeth*: Mary, do you send this shadow on me?

Mary – Lord, save me!

Susanna – I freeze, I freeze!

Abigail – *shivering visibly*: It is a wind, a wind!

Mary – Abby, don’t do that!

Danforth – *himself engaged and entered by Abigail*: Mary Warren, do you witch her? I say to you, do you send your spirit out?

With a hysterical cry Mary Warren starts to run. Proctor catches her.

Mary – *almost collaps*ing: Let me go, Mr. Proctor, I cannot, I cannot—

Abigail – I have been hurt, Mr. Danforth; I have seen my blood running out! I have been almost murdered every day because I point to the Devil’s people –and this is my reward? Not trusted, questioned like a –

Danforth – *weakening*: Child, I do not mistrust you –

Abigail – *in an open threat*: Let you beware, Mr. Danforth. Do you think that you are so great that the power of Hell can’t affect your thinking? Beware of it! There is –*Suddenly, her face turns, looking into the air above – she looks very scared.*

Danforth – worried: What is it, child?

Abigail – *looking about in the air, hold*ing her arms about her like she is cold: I – I don’t know. I wind, a cold wind, has come. *Her eyes fall on Mary Warren.*

Mary – *scared, asking Abigail not to say she is throwing her spirit on Abigail*: Abby!

Mercy Lewis – *shivering*: Your Honor, I freeze!

Proctor – They’re pretending!

109 Hathorne – *touching Abigail’s hand*: She is cold, Your Honor, touch her!

Mercy – *through chattering teeth*: Mary, why do you send this spirit on me?

Mary – *afraid Danforth will think she is possessed by the Devil*: Lord, save me!

Susanna – I freeze, I freeze!

Abigail – It is a wind, a wind!

Mary – Abby, don’t do that!

Danforth – *believing Abigail*: Mary Warren, do you witch her? I say to you, do you send your spirit out?

With a hysterical cry, Mary Warren starts to run. Proctor catches her.

Mary – *almost fall*ing down: Let me go, Mr. Proctor, I cannot, I cannot—

Without warning or hesitation, Proctor leaps at Abigail and, grabbing her by the hair, pulls her to her feet. She screams in pain.

Danforth, astonished, cries, "What are you about?" and Hathorne and Parris call, "Take your hands off her!" and out of it all comes Proctor's roaring voice.

Proctor – How do you call heaven! Whore! Whore!

Herrick breaks Proctor from her.

Herrick – John!

Danforth – Man! Man, what do you---

110 Proctor – breathless, and in **agony**: It is a whore!

Danforth - *dumfounded*: You charge—

Abigail – Mr. Danforth, he is lying!

Proctor – Mark her! Now she'll suck a scream to stab me with, but—

Danforth – You will prove this! This will not pass!

Proctor – *trembling: his life collapsing about him*: I have known her, sir! I have known her.

Danforth – You –are a **lecher**?

Francis – *horrified*: John, you cannot say such a –

Proctor – Oh, Francis, I wish you had some evil you that you might know me. *To Danforth*: A man will not cast away his good name. You surely know that.

Danforth – *dumfounded*: In—in what time? In what place?

Proctor, *his voice about to break, and his shame great*: In the proper place—where my beasts are bedded. On the last night of my joy, some eight months past. She used to serve me in my house, sir. *He has to clamp his jaw to keep from weeping*. A man may think God sleeps, but God sees everything, I know it now. I beg you, sir, I beg you—see her for what she is. My wife, my dear good wife, took this girl soon after, sir, and put her out on the highroad. And being what she is, a lump of **vanity**, sir—

Suddenly, Proctor jumps at Abigail and, grabbing her by the hair, pulls her to her feet. She screams in pain. Danforth, astonished, cries, "What are you doing?" and Hathorne and Parris call, "Take your hands off her!" and Proctor's yells loudly:

Proctor – What do you call her? Whore! Whore!

Herrick pushes Proctor away from her.

Herrick – John!

Danforth – Man! Man, what do you---

110 Proctor – breathless, and in **pain**: She is a whore!

Danforth - *surprised and not able to believe*: You charge—

Abigail – Mr. Danforth, he is lying!

Proctor – Watch her! Now she'll act like a little innocent girl so she can kill me, but -

Danforth – You will prove this! We can not let you say this!

Proctor – *trembling: his life collapsing about him*: I have known her, sir! I have known her.

Danforth – You –are a **man sexually interested in a young girl**?

Francis – *horrified*: John, you cannot say such a –

Proctor – Oh, Francis, I wish you had some evil in you so that you could know me. *To Danforth*: You know that I tell the truth because why else would I throw away my good name!

Danforth – *dumfounded*: In—in what time? In what place?

Proctor, *almost crying, ashamed*: In the proper place—where my animals sleep. On the last night of my happiness, eight months ago. She used to serve me in my house, sir. *He has to shut his jaw to keep from weeping*. A man may think God sleeps, but God sees everything, I know it now. I beg you, sir, I beg you—see her for what she is. My wife, my dear good wife, kicked her out of our house soon after. And being what she is, a lump of **self-love**, sir—

He is being overcome. Excellency, forgive me, forgive me. Angrily against himself, he turns away from the Governor for a moment. Then, as though to cry out is his only means of speech left: She thinks to dance with me on my wife's grave! And well she might, for I thought of her softly. God help me, I lusted, and there is a promise in such sweat. But it is a whore's vengeance, and you must see it; I set myself in your hands. I know you must see it now.

111 Danforth – *blanched, in horror, turning to Abigail: You deny every scrap and title of this?*

Abigail – If I must answer that, I will leave and I will not come back again!

Danforth seems unsteady.

Proctor – I have made a bell of my honor! I have rung the doom of my good name—you will believe me, Mr. Danforth! My wife is innocent, except she knew a whore when she saw one!

Abigail – *stepping up to Danforth: What look do you give me? Danforth cannot speak. I'll not have such looks! She turns and starts for the door.*

Danforth – You will remain where you are! *Herrick steps into her path. She comes up short, fire in her eyes. Mr. Parris, go into the court and bring Goodwife Proctor out.*

Parris – *objecting: Your Honor, this is all a –*

Danforth – *sharply to Parris: Bring her out! And tell her not one word of what's been spoken here. And let you knock before you enter. Parris goes out. Now we shall touch the bottom of this swamp. To Proctor: Your wife, you say, is an honest woman.*

Proctor – In her life, sir, she have never lied. There are them that cannot sing, and them that cannot weep – my wife cannot lie. I have paid much to learn it, sir.

Danforth – And when she put this girl out of your house, she put her out for a harlot?

Proctor – Aye, sir.

He is being overcome. Excellency, forgive me, forgive me. Angrily against himself, he turns away from the Governor for a moment. Then he shouts: She plans to dance with me on my wife's grave! And well she might, for I was attracted to her. God help me, I wanted her, and she thought I promised to marry her. But is a whore's vengeance, and you must understand it; I put myself in your hands. I know you must understand it now.

111 Danforth – *white-faced, in horror, turning to Abigail: Do you say this is not true?*

Abigail – If I must answer that, I will leave and I will not come back again!

Danforth doesn't seem to know what to do.

Proctor – I have destroyed my honor and my name—you will believe me, Mr. Danforth! My wife is innocent, except that she knew a whore when she saw one!

Abigail – *stepping up to Danforth: What look do you give me? Danforth cannot speak. I'll not have such looks! She turns and starts for the door.*

Danforth – You will stay where you are! *Herrick steps in front of her. Mr. Parris, go into the court and bring Goodwife Proctor out.*

Parris – *very, very nervous that the truth will be known: Your Honor, this is all a –*

Danforth – *angry at Parris: Bring her out! And don't tell her one word that has been said here. And please knock before you enter. Parris goes out. Now we shall touch the bottom of this mess. To Proctor: Your wife, you say, is an honest woman.*

Proctor – She has never lied in her life. There are people who cannot sing, and people who cannot cry—my wife cannot lie.

Danforth – And when she kicked this girl out of your house, did she put her out because she was a whore?

Proctor – Aye, sir.

Danforth – And knew her for a harlot?
Proctor – Aye, sir, she knew her for a harlot.
Danforth – Good then. *To Abigail:* and if she tell me, child, **112** it were for harlotry, may God spread His mercy on you! *There is a knock. He calls to the door. Hold! To Abigail:* Turn your back. Turn your back. *To Proctor:* Do likewise. *Both turn their backs—Abigail with indignant slowness.* Now let neither of you turn to face Goody Proctor. No one in this room is to speak one word, or raise a gesture aye or nay. *He turns toward the door, calls:* Enter! *The door opens. Elizabeth enters with Parris. Parris leaves her. She stands alone, her eyes looking for Proctor.* Mr. Cheever, report this testimony in all exactness. Are you ready?

Cheever – Ready, sir.

Danforth – Come here, woman. *Elizabeth comes to him, glancing at Proctor's back.* Look at me only, not at your husband. In my eyes only.

Eliz – *faintly:* Good, sir.

Danforth – We are given to understand that at one time you dismissed your servant, Abigail Williams.

Eliz – That is true, sir.

Danforth – For what cause did you dismiss her? *Slight pause, Then Elizabeth tries to glance at Proctor.* You will look in my eyes only and not at your husband. The answer is in your memory and you need no help to give it to me. Why did you dismiss Abigail Williams?

Eliz – *not knowing what to say, sensing a situation, wetting her lips to stall for time:* She –dissatisfied me. *Pause.* And my husband.

Danforth – In what way dissatisfied you?

Eliz – She were—*she glances at Proctor for a cue.*

Danforth – Woman, look at me! *Elizabeth does.* Were she slovenly? Lazy? What disturbance did she cause?

Danforth – And knew her for being a whore?

Proctor – Aye, sir, she knew she was a harlot.

Danforth – Good then. *To Abigail:* and if Goody Proctor tells me, child, **112** that she kicked you out because you were a harlot, may God spread His mercy on you! *There is a knock. He calls to the door. Wait! To Abigail:* Turn your back. *To Proctor:* Turn your back too. *Both turn their backs—Abigail with indignant slowness.* Now neither of you turn to face Goody Proctor. No one in this room is to speak one word, or make a body movement meaning yes or no. *He turns toward the door, calls:* Enter! *The door opens. Elizabeth enters with Parris. Parris leaves her. She stands alone, her eyes looking for Proctor.* Mr. Cheever, write this down exactly as it happens. Are you ready?

Cheever – Ready, sir.

Danforth – Come here, woman. *Elizabeth comes to him, glancing at Proctor's back.* Look at me only, not at your husband. In my eyes only.

Eliz – *faintly:* Good, sir.

Danforth – We understand that at one time you sent away your servant, Abigail Williams.

Eliz – That is true, sir.

Danforth – Why did you dismiss her? *Short pause, Then Elizabeth tries to look at Proctor.* You will look in my eyes only and not at your husband. Please tell us. Why did you dismiss Abigail Williams?

Eliz – *not knowing what to say:* She –did not please me. *Pause.* And my husband.

Danforth – How didn't she please you?

Eliz – She was—*she glances at Proctor so she knows what to say.*

Danforth – Woman, look at me! *Elizabeth does.* Was she sloppy and unclean? Lazy? Why did you let her go?

113 Eliz – Your Honor, I—in that time I were sick. And I—My husband is a good and righteous man. He is never drunk as some are, nor wastin’ his time at the shovelboard, but always at his work. But in my sickness—you see, sir, I were a long time sick after my last baby, and I thought I saw my husband somewhat turning from me. And this girl—*she turns to Abigail.*

Danforth – Look at me.

Eliz – Aye, sir. Abigail Williams—*she breaks off.*

Danforth – What of Abigail Williams?

Eliz – I came to think he fancied her. And so one night I lost my wits, I think and put her out on the highroad.

Danforth – Your husband – did he indeed turn from you?

Eliz – *in agony:* My husband:--is a goodly man, sir.

Eliz – *starting to glance at Proctor:* He—

Danforth – *reaches out and holds her face, then:* Look at me! To your own knowledge, has John Proctor ever committed the crime of lechery? *In a crisis of indecision she cannot speak.* Answer my question! Is your husband a lecher!

Eliz – *faintly:* No, sir.

Danforth – Remove her, Marshal.

Proctor – Elizabeth, tell the truth!

Danforth – She has spoken. Remove her!

Proctor – *crying out:* Elizabeth, I have confessed it!

Eliz – Oh, God! *The door closes behind her.*

Proctor – She only thought to save my name!

114 Hale – Excellency, it is a natural lie to tell; I beg you, stop now before another is condemned! I may shut my conscience to it no more—private vengeance is working through this testimony! From the beginning this man has struck me true. By my oath to Heaven, I believe him now, and I pray you call back his wife before we—

Danforth – She spoke nothing of lechery, and this man has lied!

113 Eliz – Your Honor, I—in that time I was sick. And I—My husband is a good man. He is never drinks alcohol as some men do, or wastes his time gambling, He always works hard. But when I was sick—I was sick for a long time after my last baby, and I thought my husband was staying away from me. And this girl—*she turns to Abigail.*

Danforth – Look at me.

Eliz – Aye, sir. Abigail Williams—*she breaks off.*

Danforth – What of Abigail Williams?

Eliz – I thought he was attracted to her. And so one night I went crazy. I kicked her out of the house.

Danforth – Your husband – did he stay away from you? Was he attracted to Abigail?

Eliz – *in pain:* My husband:--is a goodly man, sir.

Eliz – *starting to look at Proctor:* He—

Danforth – *reaches out and holds her face, then:* Look at me! Is John Proctor a lecher? *She cannot decide and she cannot speak.* Answer my question! Is your husband a lecher!

Eliz – *quietly:* No, sir.

Danforth – Take her out, Marshal.

Proctor – Elizabeth, tell the truth!

Danforth – She has spoken. Take her out!

Proctor – *crying out:* Elizabeth, I have confessed it!

Eliz – Oh, God! *The door closes behind her.*

Proctor – She only wanted to save my name!

114 Hale – Excellency, it is a natural lie to tell; I beg you, stop now before another is condemned to die! I can’t let this happen any more—private vengeance is working through this testimony! I have always thought this man tells the truth. I believe him now, and I pray you call back his wife before we—

Danforth – She spoke nothing of lechery, and this man has lied!

Hale – I believe him! *Pointing at Abigail:* This girl has always struck me false! She has – *Abigail, with a weird, wild, chilling cry, screams up to the ceiling.*

Abigail: You will not! Begone! Begone, I say!

Danforth – what is it, child? *But Abigail, pointing with fear, is now raising up her frightened eyes, her awed face, toward the ceiling—the girls are doing the same—and now Hathorne, Hale, Putnam, Cheever, Herrick, and Danforth do the same. What’s there? He lowers his eyes from the ceiling, and now he is frightened; there is real tension in his voice. Child! She is transfixed—with all the girls, she is whimpering open-mouthed, agape at the ceiling. Girls! Why do you—***Mercy** – *pointing:* It’s on the beam! Behind the rafter!

Danforth – *Looking up:* Where!

Abigail – Why--? *She gulps.* Why do you come, yellow bird?

Proctor – Where’s a bird? I see no bird!

Abigail – *to the ceiling:* My face? My face?

Proctor – Mr. Hale –

Danforth – Be quiet!

Proctor – *to Hale:* do you see a bird?

115 Danforth – Be quiet!

Abigail – *to the ceiling, in a genuine conversation with the “bird”, as though trying to talk it out of attacking her:* But God made my face; you cannot want to tear my face. Envy is a deadly sin, Mary.

Mary – *on her feet with a spring, and horrified, pleading:* Abby!

Abigail – *unperturbed, continuing to the “bird”:* Oh, Mary, this is a black art to change your shape. No, I cannot, I cannot stop my mouth: it’s God’s work I do.

Mary – Abby, I’m *here!*

Proctor – *frantically:* They’re pretending, Mr. Danforth!

Abigail – *now she takes a backward step, as though in fear the bird will swoop down momentarily:* Oh, please, Mary! Don’t come down.

Hale – I believe him! *Pointing at Abigail:* This girl is lying! She has – *Abigail screams up to the ceiling.*

Abigail: You will not! Go away! Go Away, I say!

Danforth – what is it, child? *But Abigail, pointing with fear, is now raising up her frightened eyes, her awed face, toward the ceiling—the girls are doing the same—and now Hathorne, Hale, Putnam, Cheever, Herrick, and Danforth look up. What do you see? Danforth lowers his eyes from the ceiling, and now he is frightened; there is real tension in his voice. Child! She looks for a long time—with all the girls, she is crying, open-mouthed, at the ceiling. Girls! Why do you—***Mercy** – *pointing:* It’s on the beam of the ceiling!

Danforth – *Looking up:* Where!

Abigail – Why--? *She swallows nervously.* Why do you come, yellow bird?

Proctor – Where’s a bird? I don’t see a bird!

Abigail – *to the ceiling:* My face? My face?

Proctor – Mr. Hale –

Danforth – Be quiet!

Proctor – *to Hale:* Do you see a bird?

115 Danforth – Be quiet!

Abigail – *looking at the ceiling, having a real conversation with the “bird”, like she is trying to talk it out of attacking her:* But God made my face; you cannot want to tear my face. Envy, or wanting to be like me, is a deadly sin, Mary.

Mary – *jumping up and asking her not to do this:* Abby!

Abigail – *continuing to talk to the “bird”:* Oh, Mary, this is a black art to change your shape. No, I cannot, I cannot stop telling the truth: it’s God’s work I do.

Mary – Abby, I’m *here!* Not up there!

Proctor – *very worried:* They’re pretending, Mr. Danforth!

Abigail – *now she takes a backward step, as though in fear the bird will fly down soon:* Oh, please, Mary! Don’t come down.

Susanna – Her claws, she’s stretching her claws!

Proctor – Lies, lies.

Abigail – *backing further, eyes still fixed above:* Mary, please don’t hurt me!

Mary – *to Danforth:* I’m not hurting her!

Danforth – *To Mary Warren:* Why does she see this vision?

Mary – She sees nothin’!

Abigail, *now staring full front as though hypnotized, and mimicking the exact tone of Mary Warren’s cry:* She sees nothin’!

Mary – *pleading:* Abby, you mustn’t!

Abigail and All the Girls – *all transfixed:* Abby, you mustn’t!

Mary – *to all the girls:* I’m here, I’m here!

Girls – I’m here, I’m here!

Danforth – *horrified:* Mary Warren! Draw back your spirit out of them!

Mary – Mr. Danforth!

Girls, *cutting her off:* Mr. Danforth!

Danforth – Have you compacted with the Devil? Have you?

Mary – Never, never!

Girls – Never, never!

Danforth – *growing hysterical:* Why can they only repeat you?

Proctor – Give me a whip—I’ll stop it!

Mary – They’re sporting. They--!

Girls – They’re sporting!

Mary – *turning on them all hysterically and stamping her feet:* Abby, stop it!

Girls – *stamping their feet:* Abby stop it!

Mary – Stop it!

Girls – Stop it!

Mary – *screaming it out at the top of her lungs, and raising her fists:* Stop it!

Girls – *raising their fists:* Stop it!

Mary – *utterly confounded, and becoming overwhelmed by Abigail’s – and the girls’ – utter conviction, starts to whimper, hands half raised, powerless, and all the girls begin whimpering exactly as she does.*

Susanna – Her sharp nails, she’s stretching her nails!

Proctor – Lies, lies.

Abigail – *backing further, eyes still looking above:* Mary, please don’t hurt me!

Mary – *to Danforth:* I’m not hurting her!

Danforth – *To Mary Warren:* Why does she see the “bird”?

Mary – She sees nothin’!

Abigail, *now looking but seeing nothing, and copying the same tone of Mary Warren’s cry:* She sees nothin’!

Mary – *afraid:* Abby, you mustn’t!

Abigail and All the Girls – *all copying Mary:* Abby, you mustn’t!

Mary – *to all the girls:* I’m here, I’m here!

Girls – I’m here, I’m here!

Danforth – *horrified:* Mary Warren! Pull back your spirit out of them!

Mary – Mr. Danforth!

Girls, *stopping Mary by copying her:* Mr. Danforth!

Danforth – Have you agreed to work with the Devil? Have you?

Mary – Never, never!

Girls – Never, never!

Danforth – *growing hysterical:* Why do they repeat you?

Proctor – Give me a whip—I’ll stop it!

Mary – They’re pretending. They--!

Girls – They’re pretending!

Mary – *turning on all the girls and stamping her feet:* Abby, stop it!

Girls – *stamping their feet:* Abby stop it!

Mary – Stop it!

Girls – Stop it!

Mary – *screaming and raising her fists:* Stop it!

Girls – *raising their fists:* Stop it!

Mary – *utterly confused, and becoming upset by Abigail – and the girls–Mary starts to cry, hands half raised, and all the girls begin doing exactly the same as Mary.*

Danforth – A little while ago you were afflicted. Now it seems you afflict others; where did you find this power?

117 Mary – *staring at Abigail*: I – have no power.

Girls – I have no power.

Proctor – They’re gulling you, Mister!

Danforth – Why did you turn about this past two weeks? You have seen the Devil, have you not?

Hale – *indicating Abigail and the girls*: You cannot believe them!

Mary – I—

Proctor – *sensing her weakening*: Mary, God damns all liars!

Danforth – *pounding it into her*: You have seen the Devil, you have made compact with Lucifer, have you not?

Proctor – God damns liars, Mary!

Mary utters something unintelligible, staring at Abigail, who keeps watching the “bird” above.

Danforth – I cannot hear you. What do you say? *Mary utters again unintelligibly*: You will confess yourself or you will hang! *He turns her roughly to face him*. Do you know who I am? I say you will hang if you do not open with me!

Proctor – Mary, remember the angel Raphael—do that which is good and –

Abigail – *pointing upward*: The wings! Her wings are spreading! Mary, please, don’t, don’t--!

Hale – I see nothing, Your honor!

Danforth – Do you confess this power! *He is an inch from her face*. Speak!

Abigail – *She’s going to come down! She’s walking the beam!*

Danforth – Will you speak!

118 Mary – *staring in horror*: I cannot!

Girls – I cannot!

Parris – Cast the devil out! Look him in the face! Trample him! We’ll save you, Mary, only stand fast against him and—

Danforth – A little while ago you were attacked. Now, you attack others; where did you find this power?

117 Mary – *staring at Abigail*: I – have no power.

Girls – I have no power.

Proctor – They’re tricking you, Mister!

Danforth – Why did you change your mind these past two weeks? You have seen the Devil, haven’t you!

Hale – *indicating Abigail and the girls*: You cannot believe them!

Mary – I—

Proctor – *afraid Mary will stop telling the truth*: Mary, God damns all liars!

Danforth – *pounding it into her*: You have seen the Devil, you have made compact with the Devil, haven’t you!

Proctor – God damns liars, Mary!

Mary says something no one can hear, looking at Abigail, who keeps watching the “bird” above.

Danforth – I cannot hear you. What did you say? *Mary says it again but no one can understand her*: You will confess yourself or you will hang! *He turns her to face him*. Do you know who I am? I say you will hang if you do not tell me the truth!

Proctor – Mary, remember the angel, Raphael—do that which is good and –

Abigail – *pointing upward*: The wings! Her wings are spreading! Mary, please, don’t, don’t--!

Hale – I see nothing, Your honor!

Danforth – Do you confess this power! *He is an inch from her face*. Speak!

Abigail – *She’s going to come down! She’s walking the beam!*

Danforth – Will you speak!

118 Mary – *staring in horror*: I cannot!

Girls – I cannot!

Parris – *Hoping Mary will not be able to stay strong and making her look like she is possessed with the Devil*: Cast the devil out! Look him in the face! Stop him! We’ll save you, Mary, and—

Abigail – *looking up*: Look out! She’s coming down!

She and all the girls run to one wall, shielding their eyes. And now, as though cornered, they let out a gigantic scream, and Mary, as though infected, opens her mouth and screams with them. Gradually Abigail and the girls leave off, until only Mary is left there, staring up at the “bird”, screaming madly. All watch her, horrified by this evident fit. Proctor strides to her.

Proctor – Mary, tell the Governor what they—
He has hardly got a word out, when, seeing him coming for her, she rushes out of his reach, screaming in horror.

Mary – Don’t touch me—don’t touch me! *At which the girls halt at the door.*

Proctor – *astonished*: Mary!

Mary – *pointing at Proctor*: You’re the Devil’s man!

His stopped in his tracks.

Parris – Praise God!

Girls – Praise God!

Proctor – *numbed*: Mary, how--?

Mary – I’ll not hang with you! I love God, I love God.

Danforth – *to Mary*: He bid you do the Devil’s work?

Mary – *hysterically, indicating Proctor*: He come at me by night and every day to sign, to sign, to—

Danforth – Sign what?

119 Parris – The Devil’s book? He come with a book?

Mary – *hysterically, pointing at Proctor, fearful of him*: My name, he want my name. “I’ll murder you,” he says, “if my wife hangs! We must go and overthrow the court,” he says! *Danforth’s head jerks toward Proctor, shock and horror in his face.*

Proctor – *turning, appealing to Hale*: Mr. Hale!

Abigail – *looking up*: Look out! She’s coming down!

She and all the girls run to one wall, protecting their eyes. And now, they let out a giant scream, and Mary opens her mouth and screams with them. Slowly, Abigail and the girls stop screaming, until only Mary is left there, looking up at the “bird”, screaming madly. Everybody watches her, horrified by her crazy actions. Proctor walks to her.

Proctor – Mary, tell the Governor what they—
Seeing him coming for her, she runs away from him, screaming in horror.

Mary – Don’t touch me—don’t touch me

Proctor – *Surprised and worried*: Mary!

Mary – *pointing at Proctor*: You’re the Devil’s man!

His stops in surprise.

Parris – *Happy Mary calls Proctor possessed by the Devil*: Praise God!

Girls – Praise God!

Proctor – *not knowing what to think*: Mary, how--?

Mary – *knowing the girls will win and not wanting to die*: I won’t hang with you! I love God, I love God.

Danforth – *to Mary*: Did Proctor ask you to do the Devil’s work?

Mary – *hysterically, indicating Proctor*: He came to me by night and every day to sign, to sign, to—

Danforth – To sign what?

119 Parris – The Devil’s book? He came with a book?

Mary – *pointing at Proctor, afraid of him*: My name, he wants my name. “I’ll kill you if my wife hangs!” he says. We must go and overthrow the court,” he says! *Danforth’s head jerks toward Proctor, anger in his face.*

Proctor – *turning, asking for help from Hale*: Mr. Hale!

Mary – *her sobs beginning*: He wake me every night, his eyes were like coals and his fingers claw my neck, and I sign, I sign...

Hale – Excellency, this child's gone wild!

Proctor – *as Danforth's wide eyes pour on him*: Mary, Mary!

Mary – *screaming at him*: No, I love God; I go your way no more. I love God, I bless God. *Sobbing, she rushes to Abigail*. Abby, Abby, I'll never hurt you more! *They all watch, as Abigail, out of her infinite charity, reaches out and draws the sobbing Mary to her, and then looks up to Danforth.*

Danforth – *to Proctor*: What are you?

Proctor is beyond speech in his anger. You are combined with anti-Christ, are you not? I have seen your power; you will not deny it! What say you, Mister?

Hale – Excellency—

Danforth – I will have nothing from you, Mr. Hale! *To Proctor*: Will you confess yourself befouled with Hell, or do you keep that black allegiance yet? What say you?

Proctor – *his mind wild, breathless*: I say –I say –God is dead!

Parris – Hear it, hear it!

Proctor – *laughs insanely, then*: A fire, a fire is burning! I hear

120 the boot of Lucifer, I see his filthy face! And it is my face, and yours, Danforth! For them that quail now when you know in all your black hearts that this be fraud—God damns our kind especially, and we will burn, we will burn together!

Danforth – Marshal! Take him and Corey with him to the jail!

Hale, *starting across to the door*: I denounce these proceedings!

Proctor – You are pulling Heaven down and raising up a whore!

Hale – I denounce these proceedings, I quit this court! *He slams the door to the outside behind him.*

Mary – *crying*: He woke me up every night, his eyes were like coals and his fingers clawed my neck, and I signed, I signed...

Hale – Excellency, this child's has gone crazy!

Proctor – *scared*: Mary, Mary!

Mary – *screaming at him*: No, I love God; I can't help you any more. I love God, I bless God. *Crying, she runs to Abigail*. Abby, Abby, I'll never hurt you again! *They all watch, as Abigail, out of her kindness, (not!!!) reaches out and hugs Mary, and then looks up to Danforth.*(*Abigail tries to look so childish and innocent!*)

Danforth – *to Proctor*: What are you?

Proctor is so angry he can not speak. You are working with the Devil, aren't you?! I have seen your power; you can't deny it! What do you say, Mister?

Hale – Excellency—

Danforth – Don't say anything, Mr. Hale! *To Proctor*: Will you confess yourself from Hell, or do you still work for the Devil? What is your answer?

Proctor – *not sure what to say*: I say –I say –God is dead!

Parris – *Happy that Proctor looks like he is possessed with the devil*: Did you hear that?!

Proctor – *laughs insanely, then*: A fire, a fire is burning! I hear

120 the boot of Lucifer the Devil, I see his dirty face! And it is my face, and yours, Danforth! For all of us who know but don't admit that the girls lie – God damns our kind especially, and we will burn, we will burn together!

Danforth – Marshal! Take Proctor and Corey to jail!

Hale, *going to the door*: I say there is no justice in this court!

Proctor – You are pulling Heaven down and raising up a whore!

Hale – I denounce these proceedings, I leave this court! *He slams the door to the outside behind him.*

<p>Danforth – <i>calling to him in a fury</i>: Mr. Hale! Mr. Hale!</p> <p><i>The curtain falls.</i></p>	<p>Danforth – <i>calling to him in a fury</i>: Mr. Hale! Mr. Hale!</p> <p><i>The curtain falls.</i></p>
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Act IV

Plot – John Proctor is in the Salem Jail. He is very thin and dirty. He does not confess to lying. The judge wants John to confess because the judge knows that if John confesses, other people will confess too. He is beginning to realize the court has made a big mistake. Rev Hale worries that too many people have died.

The judge uses Elizabeth to force John to confess. In the end, he doesn't confess because he doesn't want to hurt his "name", his reputation for being a good man. His sons will live with their father's reputation.

Setting - A *small room for prisoners in Salem jail. There is a high window with bars on it, a big, heavy door and two benches. It is dark with some moonlight coming through the bars. It looks empty. Someone is coming down the hall and keys make a sound. The big door opens. Marshal Herrick enters with a light. He is drunk, and heavy-footed. He pushes Sarah Good who is sleeping on the bench in very old clothes. She thinks Marshal Herrick is the devil who has come to take her and Tituba to sunny Barbados. (This can be funny or it can be very sad.)*

Original Text

Adapted Version

Herrick – Sarah, wake up! Sarah good! *He then crosses to the other bench.*

Sarah Good – *rising in her rags:* Oh, Majesty! Comin', comin'! Tituba, he's here, His Majesty's come!

Herrick – Go to the north cell; this place is wanted now. He hangs his lantern on the wall. *Tituba sits up.*

Tituba – That don't look to me like His Majesty; look to me like the marshal.

Herrick – *taking out his flask:* Get along with you now, clear this place.

122 *He drinks, and Sarah Good comes and peers up into his face.*

Sarah – Oh, is it you Marshal! I thought sure you be the devil comin' for us. Could I have a sip of cider for me goin'-away?

Herrick – *handing her the flask :* and where are you off to, Sarah?

Tituba – *as Sarah drinks:* We goin' to Barbados, soon the Devil gits here with the feathers and the wings.

Herrick – Oh? A happy voyage to you.

Marshal Herrick – Sarah, wake up! Sarah good! *He goes to the other bench.*

Sarah Good – *rising in her rags and thinking she sees the devil:* Oh, Majesty (Devil) ! Tituba, he's here, His Majesty is here!

Marshal Herrick – Go to the north cell; Other people need to use this cell. *He hangs his light on the wall. Tituba sits up.*

Tituba – That doesn't look like His Majesty; it looks like the marshal.

Herrick – *taking out his bottle of alcohol drink:* Go now, get out of this place.

122 *He drinks, and Sarah Good comes and looks up into his face.*

Sarah – Oh, is it you Marshal! I thought you were the devil coming to take us to Barbados. Could I have a small drink of cider?

Herrick – *giving her the flask :* and where are you going, Sarah?

Tituba – *as Sarah drinks:* We are going to Barbados, when the Devil gets here with the feathers and the wings to fly us.

Herrick – Oh? A happy voyage to you. *(Herrick thinks they are crazy!)*

Sarah – A pair of bluebirds wingin’ southerly, the two of us! Oh, it be a grand transformation, Marshal! *She raises the flask to drink again.*

Herrick – *taking the flask from her lips:* You’d best give me that or you’ll never rise off the ground. Come along now.

Tituba – I’ll speak to him for you, if you desires to come along, Marshal.

Herrick – I’d not refuse it, Tituba; it’s the proper morning to fly into Hell.

Tituba – Oh, it be no Hell in Barbados. Devil, him be pleasure-man in Barbados, him be singin’ and dancin’ in Barbados. It’s you folks – you riles him up ‘round here; it be too cold ‘round here for that Old boy. He freeze his soul in Massachusetts, but in Barbados he just as sweet and – *A bellowing cow is heard, and Tituba leaps up and calls to the window:* Aye, sir! That’s him, Sarah!

Sarah – I’m here, Majesty! *They hurriedly pick up their rags as Hopkins, a guard, enters.*

Hopkins – The Deputy Governor’s arrived.

123 *grabbing Tituba:* Come along, come along.

Tituba – *resisting him:* No, he comin’ for me. I goin’ home!

Herrick – *pulling her to the door:* That’s not Satan, just a poor old cow with a hatful of milk. Come along now, out with you!

Tituba – *calling to the window:* Take me home, Devil! Take me home!

Sarah – *following the shouting Tituba out:* Tell him I’m goin’, Tituba! Now you tell him Sarah Good is goin’ too!

In the corridor outside Tituba calls on: Take me home, Devil; Devil take me home!” and Hopkins voice orders her to move on. Herrick returns and begins to push old rags and straw into a corner. Hearing footsteps, he turns, and enter **Danforth** and **Judge Hathorne**. They are in greatcoats and wear hats against the bitter cold. They are followed in by Cheever, who carries a dispatch case and flat wooden box containing his writing materials.

Herrick – Good morning, Excellency.

Danforth – Where is Mr. Parris?

Herrick – I’ll fetch him. He starts for the door.

Sarah – A pair of birds flying south, the two of us! Oh, it will be wonderful, Marshal! *She raises the flask to drink again.*

Herrick – *taking the flask from her lips:* You better give me that or you’ll never get off the ground. Come on now.

Tituba – I’ll tell the devil to take you too, if you want to come with us, Marshal.

Herrick – I would like to, Tituba; it’s a morning to fly into Hell.

Tituba – Oh, there is no Hell in Barbados. The Devil makes people happy in Barbados; he is singing and dancing in Barbados. You people in the north make him angry. He freezes his spirit in Massachusetts, but in Barbados he is just as sweet and – *A noisy cow is heard, and Tituba jumps up and calls to the window:* Yes, sir! That’s the devil, Sarah!

Sarah – I’m here, Majesty! *They hurry to pick up their rags as Hopkins, a guard, enters.*

Hopkins – The Deputy Governor has arrived.

123 *grabbing Tituba:* Come on, come on.

Tituba – *stopping him:* No, the devil is coming for me. I’m going home!

Herrick – *pulling her to the door:* That’s not Satan, that’s just a poor old cow, full of milk. Come along now, out with you!

Tituba – *calling to the window:* Take me home, Devil! Take me home!

Sarah – *shouting:* Tell him I’m going, Tituba! Now you tell him Sarah Good is going too!

In the hall, Tituba calls: Take me home, Devil; Devil, take me home!” and Hopkins voice tells her to move.

Enter Danforth and Judge Hathorne. They wear big coats and hats because of the cold. Cheever enters, carrying a book bag and flat wooden box for his writing materials.

Herrick – Good morning, Excellency.

Danforth – Where is Mr. Parris?

Herrick – I’ll get him. He goes to the door.

Danforth – Marshal. *Herrick stops.* When did Reverend Hale arrive?

Herrick – It were toward midnight, I think.

Danforth – *suspiciously:* What is he about here?

Herrick – He goes among them that will hang, sir. And he prays with them. He sits with Goody Nurse now. And Mr. Parris with him.

Danforth – Indeed. That man have no authority to enter here, Marshal. Why have you let him in?

124 Herrick – why, Mr. Parris command me sir. I cannot deny him.

Danforth – Are you drunk, Marshal?

Herrick – No, sir, it is a bitter night, and I have no fire here.

Danforth – *containing his anger:* Fetch Mr. Parris.

Herrick – Aye, sir.

Danforth – There is a prodigious stench in this place.

Herrick – I have only now cleared the people out for you.

Danforth – Beware hard drink, Marshal.

Herrick – Aye, sir. *He waits an instant for further orders. But Danforth, in dissatisfaction, turns his back on him, and Herrick goes out. There is a pause. Danforth stands in thought.*

Hathorne – Let me question Hale, Excellency; I should not be surprised he have been preaching in Andover lately.

Danforth – We’ll come to that; speak nothing of Andover. Parris prays with him. That’s strange. He blows on his hands, moves toward the window, and looks out.

Hathorne – Excellency, I wonder if it be wise to let Mr. Parris so continuously with the prisoners. *Danforth turns to him, interested.* I think, sometimes, the man has a mad look these days.

Danforth – Mad?

Hathorne – I met him yesterday coming out of his house, and I bid him good morning—and he wept and went his way. I think it is not well the village sees him so unsteady.

Danforth – Perhaps he have some sorrow.

Danforth – Marshal. *Herrick stops.* When did Reverend Hale get here?

Herrick – about midnight, I think.

Danforth – *worried:* What is he doing here?

Herrick – He talks to the people who will hang, sir. And he prays with them. He is with Goody Nurse now. And Mr. Parris is with him.

Danforth – Really! Nobody said he could come here, Marshal. Why did you let him in?

124 Herrick – Mr. Parris told me to and I can’t say no to him.

Danforth – Are you drunk, Marshal?

Herrick – No, sir, it is a very cold night, and I have no fire here.

Danforth – *angry:* Bring Mr. Parris here.

Herrick – Yes, sir.

Danforth – This place stinks!

Herrick – I just moved the prisoners a minute ago.

Danforth – Beware hard drink, Marshal.

Herrick – Yes, sir. *He waits for more orders but Danforth turns his back on him. Herrick goes out. There is a pause. Danforth is thinking.*

Hathorne – Let me question Hale, Excellency; I’ll bet he was preaching in Andover, where people revolt against the court.

Danforth – We’ll talk about that in a minute; don’t talk about Andover yet. Changing the subject: It’s strange that Parris prays with Hale. *He blows on his hands, trying to stay warm.*

Hathorne – Excellency, do you think it’s a good idea to let Parris spend so much time with the prisoners? *Danforth turns to him, interested.* I think, Parris has a mad look on his face sometimes.

Danforth – Mad?

Hathorne – I met him yesterday coming out of his house, and I said good morning—and he went away crying. I don’t think it’s good for the village to see him acting so crazy.

Danforth – Maybe he has a sadness.

Cheever – *stamping his feet against the cold:* I think it be the cows, sir.

Danforth – Cows?

125 Cheever – There be so many cows wanderin’ the highroads, now their masters are in the jails, and much disagreement who they will belong to now. I know Mr. Parris be arguin’ with farmers all yesterday – there is great contention, sir, about the cows. **Contention** make him weep, sir; it were always a man that weep for contention. *He turns, as do Hathorne and Danforth, hearing someone coming up the corridor. Danforth raises his head as Parris enters. He is gaunt, frightened, and sweating in his greatcoat.*

Parris – *to Danforth, instantly:* Oh, good morning, sir, thank you for coming, I beg your pardon wakin’ you so early. Good morning, Judge Hathorne.

Danforth – Reverend Hale have no right to enter this –

Parris – Excellency, a moment. *He hurries back and shuts the door.*

Hathorne – Do you leave him alone with the prisoners?

Danforth – What’s his business here?

Parris – *prayerfully holding up his hands:* Excellency, hear me. It is **providence**. Reverend Hale has returned to bring Rebecca Nurse to God.

Danforth – *surprised:* He bids her confess?

Parris – *sitting:* Hear me. Rebecca have not given me a word this three month since she came. Now she sits with him, and her sister and Martha Corey and two or three others, and he **pleads** with them, confess their crimes and save their lives.

Danforth – Why—this is indeed a providence. And they soften, they soften?

Parris – Not yet, not yet. But I thought to summon you, sir, that we might think on whether it be not wise, to – *He dares not say it.*

126 I had thought to put a question, sir, and I hope you will not –

Danforth – Mr. Parris, be plain, what troubles you?

Cheever – *stamping his feet against the cold:* I think it’s the cows, sir.

Danforth – Cows?

125 Cheever – There are so many cows running loose because their owners are in jails, and nobody knows who the cows belong to. I heard Mr. Parris arguing with farmers yesterday – there is a lot of **disagreement** about the cows, sir. The arguing makes him cry; Reverend Parris always hated people disagreeing. *They all turn as they hear someone coming up the hall.*

Parris enters. *He is very thin, frightened, and sweating in his coat.*

Parris – *to Danforth, instantly:* Oh, good morning, sir, thank you for coming, I’m so sorry to wake you up you so early. Good morning, Judge Hathorne.

Danforth – Reverend Hale has no right to enter this –

Parris – Excellency, a moment. *He hurries back and shuts the door.*

Hathorne – Do you leave him alone with the prisoners?

Danforth – What’s he doing here?

Parris – *holding up his hands:* Excellency, hear me. It is **God’s work**. Reverend Hale has returned to bring Rebecca Nurse to God.

Danforth – *surprised:* He gets her to confess?

Parris – *sitting:* Hear me. Rebecca has not spoken to me for three months, since she got here. Now she sits with him, and her sister and Martha Corey and two or three others, and he **asks** them to confess to being witches and save their lives.

Danforth – Why—this is a providence.! And do they confess?

Parris – Not yet, not yet. But I thought you should be here to decide– *He’s afraid to say it.*

126 I have to ask you a question, sir, and I hope you will not –

Danforth – Mr. Parris, be plain, what troubles you?

Parris – There is news, sir, that the court – the court must reckon with. My niece, sir, my niece—I believe she has vanished.

Danforth – Vanished!

Parris – I had thought to advise you of it earlier in the week, but –

Danforth – Why? How long is she gone?

Parris – This be the third night. You see, sir, she told me she would stay a night with Mercy Lewis. And next day, when she does not return, I send to Mr. Lewis to inquire. Mercy told him she would sleep in *my* house for a night.

Danforth – *alarmed*: I will send a party for them. Where may they be?

Parris – Excellency, I think they be aboard a ship. *Danforth stands agape*. My daughter tells me how she heard them speaking of ships last week, and tonight I discover my – my strongbox is broke into. *He presses his fingers against his eyes to keep back tears*.

Hathorne – *astonished*: She have robbed you?

Parris – Thirty-one pound is gone. I am penniless. *He covers his face and sobs*.

Danforth – Mr. Parris, you are a brainless man! *He walks in thought, deeply worried*.

127 Parris – Excellency, it profit nothing you should blame me. I cannot think they would run off except they fear to keep in Salem any more. *He's pleading*. Mark it, sir, Abigail has close knowledge of the town, and since the news of Andover has broken here—

Danforth – Andover is remedied. The court returns there on Friday, and will resume examinations.

Parris – I am sure of it, sir. But the rumor here speaks rebellion in Andover, and it –

Danforth – There is no rebellion in Andover!

Parris – I tell you what is said here, sir. Andover have thrown out the court, they say, and will have no part of witchcraft. There be a faction here, feeding on that news, and I tell you true, sir, I fear there will be riot here.

Parris – There is news, sir, that the court – the court must know. My niece, sir, my niece—I believe she has disappeared.

Danforth – Vanished!

Parris – I should have told you earlier but –

Danforth – Why? How long has she been gone?

Parris – This be the third night. You see, sir, she told me she would spend a night with Mercy Lewis. And the next day, when she did not return, I asked Mr. Lewis where she was. Mercy told him she would sleep in *my* house for a night. The girls tricked us!

Danforth – *very worried*: I will send men to find them. Where do you think they are?

Parris – Excellency, I think they are on a ship. *Danforth's mouth opens*. My daughter tells me how she heard the girls speaking about ships last week, and tonight I see that my – my money is gone! *He tries not to cry*.

Hathorne – *astonished*: She have robbed you?

Parris – Thirty-one pound is gone. I have no money. *He covers his face and cries*.

Danforth – Mr. Parris, you are a man without a brain! *He thinks hard, very worried*.

127 Parris – Excellency, calling me names doesn't help us. I can only think of one reason they would run away; they are afraid to stay in Salem any more. Abigail knows how the people of Salem are angry with the court and, after what happened in Andover--

Danforth – Problems in Andover are solved. The court returns there on Friday.

Parris – I am sure of it, sir. I hear that people in Andover have thrown out the court! There is rebellion!

Danforth – There is no rebellion in Andover!

Parris – I tell you what I hear, sir. Andover has thrown out the court, and the people don't believe in witchcraft. There is a group of people here, who think Andover has the right idea. I tell you, sir, I am afraid there will be riot here too.

Hathorne – Riot! Why at every execution I have seen naught but high satisfaction in the town.

Parris – Judge Hathorne- it were another sort that hanged ‘til now. Rebecca Nurse is no Bridget that lived three year with Bishop before she married him. John Proctor is not Isaac Ward that drank his family to ruin. *To Danforth:* I would to God it were not so, Excellency, but these people have great weight yet in the town. Let Rebecca stand upon the gibbet and send up some righteous prayer, and I fear she’ll wake a vengeance on you.

Hathorne – Excellency, she is condemned a witch. The court have –

Danforth – in deep concern, *raising a hand to Hathorne:* Pray you. *To Parris:* How do you propose, then?

Parris – Excellency, I would postpone these hangin’s for a time.

Danforth – There will be no postponement.

128 Parris – Now Mr. Hale’s returned, there is hope, I think – for if he bring even one of these to God, that confession surely damns the others in the public eye, and none may doubt more that they are all linked to Hell. This way, unconfessed and claiming innocence, doubts are multiplied, many honest people will weep for them, and our good purpose is lost in their tears.

Danforth – *after thinking a moment, then going to Cheever:* Give me the list.

Cheever opens the dispatch case, searches.

Parris – It cannot be forgot, sir, that when I summoned the congregation for John Proctor’s excommunication there were hardly thirty people come to hear it. That speak a discontent, I think, and –

Danforth – *studying the list:* There will be no postponement.

Parris – Excellency—

Hathorne – Riot! I don’t believe that! Every time I see a witch is put to death, the people look happy.

Parris – Judge Hathorne- We are killing a different type of person now. Rebecca Nurse is no Bridget that lived three years with Bishop before she married him. John Proctor is not Isaac Ward that drank his family to ruin. *To Danforth:* I wish to God it were not true, Excellency, but these people still have great power in the town. If Rebecca Nurse gets the chance to pray in public before she is hanged, I’m afraid she will make people want to hurt you because they think you have hurt others.

Hathorne – Excellency, she is condemned to die because the court says she is a witch.

Danforth – *very worried, raising a hand to Hathorne:* Please stop. *To Parris:* What do you think we should do?

Parris – Excellency, I would delay or set a later date for these hangings.

Danforth – There will be no postponement.

128 Parris – Mr. Hale’s returned so I think there is hope –if he can get just one person to confess to being a witch, that confession will make the village believe that they are all witches. But if nobody confesses to being a witch, the village will believe they are innocent. Many good people will cry for them, and we are done for! We must get someone to confess to being a witch!

Danforth – *after thinking a moment, then going to Cheever:* Give me the list of witches. *Cheever finds the list.*

Parris – We can not forget, sir, there were only thirty people who came to church to hear me kick John Proctor out of church. I think that means people don’t want any more talk of witches.

Danforth – *studying the list:* There will be no postponement.

Parris – Excellency—

Danforth – Now, sir – which of these in your opinion may be brought to God? I will myself strive with him till dawn. *He hands the list to Parris, who merely glances at it.*

Parris – There is not sufficient time until dawn.

Danforth – I shall do my utmost. Which of them do you have hope for?

Parris – *not even glancing at the list now, and in a quavering voice, quietly: Excellency – a dagger -- He chokes up.*

Danforth – What do you say?

Parris – Tonight, when I open my door to leave the house, a dagger clattered to the ground. *Silence. Danforth absorbs this. Now Parris cries out: You cannot hang this sort. There is danger for me. I dare not step outside at night!*

*Reverend Hale enters. They look at him for an instant in silence. **129** He is steeped in sorrow, exhausted, and more direct than he ever was.*

Danforth – Accept my congratulations, Reverend Hale; we are gladdened to see you returned to your work.

Hale – *coming to Danforth now: You must pardon them, they will not budge. Herrick enter, waits.*

Danforth – *conciliatory: You misunderstand, sir, I cannot pardon these when twelve are already hanged for the same crime. It is not just.*

Parris – *with failing heart: Rebecca will not confess?*

Hale – The sun will rise in a few minutes. Excellency, I must have more time.

Danforth – Now hear me, and beguile yourselves no more. I will not receive a single plea for pardon or postponement. Them what will not confess will hang. Twelve are already executed; the names of these seven are given out, and the village expects to see them die this morning.

Danforth – Now, sir – in your opinion, which of these people might confess? *He hands the list to Parris, who only quickly looks at it.*

Parris – There is not enough time before the sun comes up and they hang.

Danforth – I shall do my best. Which of them do you have hope for?

Parris – *not even looking at the list now, and in a shaking voice, quietly: Excellency – a knife -- He starts to cry.*

Danforth – What did you say?

Parris – Tonight, when I opened my door to leave the house, a knife fell to the ground. *Silence. Danforth begins to understand this. Now Parris cries out: You cannot hang these people! There is danger for me! I dare not step outside my house at night!*

*Reverend Hale enters. They look at him in silence. **129** He is very sad and tired. He says what he believes, not caring any more who he angers.*

Danforth – Congratulations, Reverend Hale; we are happy to see you returned to your work. *A lie because earlier, he said he worried about Hale being back in town and seeing the people in jail. Now that Danforth knows that Hale tries to get people to confess, he likes him. If people confess, Danforth looks like he was correct in hanging the other twelve.*

Hale – *coming to Danforth now: You must let these people go. They will not confess.*

Danforth – *politely: Sir, how can I let these people go when I've hung twelve others for the same reason! I can not.*

Parris – *afraid: Rebecca will not confess?*

Hale – The sun will rise in a few minutes. Excellency, I must have more time.

Danforth – Now hear me, and fool yourselves no more. I will not receive a single plea for pardon or postponement. People who don't confess will hang. Twelve are already executed; the names of these seven have been made public, and the village expects to see

Postponement now speaks a floundering on my part; reprieve or pardon must cast doubt upon the guilt of them that died till now. While I speak God's law, I will not crack its voice with whimpering. If retaliation is your fear, know this – I should hang ten thousand that dare to rise against the law, and ocean of salt tears could not melt the resolution of the statutes. Now draw yourselves up like men and help me, as you are bound by Heaven to do. Have you spoken with them all, Mr. Hale?

Hale – All but Proctor. He is in the dungeon.

Danforth – *to Herrick* – what's Proctor's way now?

Herrick – He sits like some great bird; you'd not know he lived except he will take food from time to time.

130 Danforth – *after thinking a moment*: His wife – his wife must be well on with child now.

Herrick – She is, sir.

Danforth – What think you, Mr. Parris? You have closer knowledge of this man; might her presence soften him?

Parris – It is possible, sir. He have not laid eyes on her these three months. I should summon her.

Danforth – *to Herrick*: Is he yet adamant? Has he struck you again?

Herrick – He cannot, sir, he is chained to the wall now.

Danforth – *after thinking on it*: Fetch Goody Proctor to me. Then let you bring him up.

Herrick – Aye, sir. *Herrick goes. There is silence.*

Hale – Excellency, if you postpone a week and publish to the town that you are striving for their confessions, that speak mercy on your part, not faltering.

Danforth – Mr. Hale, as God have not empowered me like Joshua to stop this sun from rising, so I cannot withhold from them the perfection of their punishment.

them die this morning. Postponement makes me look like I don't know what I'm doing; reprieve or pardon makes the decision to hang the other twelve seem like a mistake. While I speak God's law, I will not listen to weak voices. If you are afraid of the public's anger, know this – I would hang ten thousand more people who try to overthrow the court. Now draw yourselves up like men and help me, as you are bound by Heaven to do. Have you spoken with all of them, Mr. Hale?

Hale – All but Proctor. He is in the dungeon.

Danforth – *to Herrick* – How is Proctor acting now?

Herrick – He sits like some great bird; the only way you know he's alive is that he eats food, from time to time.

130 Danforth – *thinking about how he can use Proctor to make others confess*: His wife – his wife must be quite pregnant with her child by now.

Herrick – She is, sir.

Danforth – What do you think, Mr. Parris? You know this man better than I do; if we bring her to him, would she be able to make him confess?

Parris – It is possible, sir. He has not seen her for three months. I would bring her here.

Danforth – *to Herrick*: Is he still angry? Has he punched you again?

Herrick – He cannot, sir, he is chained to the wall now.

Danforth – *after thinking*: Bring Goody Proctor to me. Then bring John Proctor up.

Herrick – Yes, sir. *Herrick goes. There is silence.*

Hale – Excellency, if you tell the town that the hangings are being postponed for a week, you don't seem unsure of what you are doing; you sound kind for wanting to save lives.

Danforth – Mr. Hale, God did not give Joshua the power to stop the sun from rising, just as he did not give me the same power. I cannot stop the hanging of these people.

Hale – *harder now*: If you think God wills you to raise rebellion, Mr. Danforth, you are mistaken!

Danforth – *instantly*: You have heard rebellion spoken in the town?

Hale – Excellency, there are orphans wandering from house to house; abandoned cattle bellow on the highroads, the stink of rotting crops hangs everywhere, and no man knows when the harlots' cry will end his life – and you wonder yet if rebellion's spoke? Better you should marvel how they do not burn your province!

131 Danforth – Mr. Hale, have you preached in Andover this month?

Hale – Thank God they have no need of me in Andover.

Danforth – You baffle me, sir. Why have you returned here?

Hale – Why, it is all simple. I come to do the Devil's work. I come to counsel Christians they should belie themselves. *His sarcasm collapses.* There is blood on my head! Can you not see the blood on my head!

Parris – Hush! *For he has heard footsteps. They all face the door. Herrick enters with Elizabeth. Her wrists are linked by heavy chain, which Herrick now removes. Her clothes are dirty; her face is pale and gaunt. Herrick goes out.*

Danforth – *very politely*: Goody Proctor. *She is silent.* I hope you are hearty?

Elizabeth – *as a warning reminder*: I am yet six month before my time.

Danforth – Pray be at your ease, we come not for your life. We – *uncertain how to plead, for he is not accustomed to it.* Mr. Hale, will you speak with the woman?

Hale – *harder now*: If you think God wants you to start a revolt, Mr. Danforth, you are wrong!

Danforth – *surprised*: Have you heard about a revolt in the town?

Hale – Excellency, there are children without parents wandering from house to house; cows with no one to take care of them call for help on the roads, the stink of rotting food waiting to be harvested in the fields is everywhere, and no man knows when his life will end – and you wonder if people speak of rebellion? You should be surprised that they do not burn your whole town!

131 Danforth – Mr. Hale, have you talked to the people in Andover this month? (*Danforth thinks that Hale may have started the revolt in Andover.*)

Hale – Thank God they have no need of me in Andover.

Danforth – You confuse me, sir. Why have you returned here? (*Danforth is afraid that Hale tells people to lie about being a witch to save their lives but this is also like saying the court is wrong. Hale could start a revolt in Salem, like Andover.*)

Hale – *sarcastically*, *saying the opposite of what he means*: Why, that's easy. I come to do the Devil's work. I come to help Christians lie about themselves. *His sarcasm ends.* There is blood on my head! Can you not see the blood on my head! *He feels terrible that he has killed innocent people!*

Parris – Silence! *They hear footsteps. They all turn toward the door. Herrick enters with Elizabeth. Her wrists are chained. Herrick takes the chains off. Her clothes are dirty; her face is white and thin. Herrick goes out.*

Danforth – *very politely*: Goody Proctor. *She is silent.* I hope you are feeling strong?

Elizabeth – *angry that she is pregnant and in jail*: I am six months pregnant.

Danforth – Please relax, we aren't going to hang you. We – *not sure what to say*: Mr. Hale, will you speak with the woman?

Hale – Goody, Proctor, your husband is marked to hang this morning.

Pause.

Elizabeth – *quietly*: I have heard it.

Hale – You, do you not, that I have no connection with the court? *She seems to doubt it.* I come of my own, Goody Proctor. I would save your husband’s life, for if he is taken I count myself his minister. Do you understand me?

Elizabeth – What do you want of me?

132 Hale – Goody Proctor, I have gone this three month like our Lord into the wilderness. I have sought a Christian way, for damnation’s doubled on a minister who counsels men to lie.

Hathorne – It is no lie, you cannot speak of lies.

Hale – It is a lie! They are innocent!

Danforth – I’ll hear no more of that!

Hale – *continuing to Elizabeth*: Let you not mistake your duty as I mistook my own. I came into this village like a bridegroom to his beloved, bearing gifts of high religion; the very crowns of holy law I brought, and what I touched with my bright confidence, it died; and where it turned the eye of my great faith, blood flowed up. Beware, Goody Proctor – cleave to no faith when faith brings blood. It is mistaken law that leads you to sacrifice. Life, woman, life is God’s most precious gift; no principle, however glorious, may justify the taking of it. I beg you, woman, prevail upon your husband to confess. Let him give his lie. Quail not before God’s judgment in this, for it may well be God damns a liar less than he that throws his life away for pride. Will you plead with him? I cannot think he will listen to another.

Elizabeth – I cannot dispute with you, sir; I lack learning for it.

Hale – Goody, Proctor, your husband is supposed to hang this morning.

Pause.

Elizabeth – *quietly*: I know.

Hale – Do you know that I have no connection with the court? *She does not believe him.* I am here by myself, Goody Proctor, not with the court. I would like to save your husband’s life, because I feel responsible, as his minister. Do you believe me?

Elizabeth – What do you want from me?

132 Hale – Goody Proctor, like the Lord, who went into the wilderness to think, I have thought for a long time what to do for you and the others. I have decided that you and the others must lie to save yourselves.

Hathorne – The court is not a lie! You cannot speak of lies.

Hale – It is a lie! They are innocent!

Danforth – I’ll hear no more of that!

Hale – *continuing to Elizabeth*: Please don’t make the same mistake I made. I came into this village like a bridegroom to his bride, bringing gifts of high religion; I believed that I brought just Christian law to the people but that was a lie. The law tricked the people and many died. Beware, Goody Proctor – don’t believe that your goodness can win against this evil court. The court will kill you and the others. Life, woman, life is God’s most precious gift; there is no good reason to end a life. I beg you, woman, talk your husband into confessing, even if he has to lie. God will be happier if he lies to save his life than if he dies to save his self-respect. Please get him to confess and save his life! He will listen to you.

Elizabeth – I cannot argue with you, sir; I don’t have the education for it.

Danforth – *going to her*: Goody Proctor, you are not summoned here for disputation. Be there no wifely tenderness within you? He will die with the sunrise. Your husband. Do you understand it? *She only looks at him*. What say you? Will you contend with him? *She is silent*. Are you stone? I tell you true. Woman, had I no other proof of your unnatural life, your dry eyes now would be sufficient evidence that you delivered

up your soul to **133** Hell! A very ape would weep at such calamity! Have the devil dried up any tear of pity in you? *She is silent*. Take her out. It profit nothing she should speak to him!

Elizabeth – *quietly*: Let me speak with him, Excellency.

Parris – *with hope*: You'll strive with him? *She hesitates*.

Danforth – Will you plead for his confession or will you not?

Elizabeth – I promise nothing. Let me speak with him.

A sound – the sibilance of dragging feet on stone. They turn. A pause. Herrick enters with John Proctor. His wrists are chained. He is another man, bearded, filthy, his eyes misty as though webs had overgrown them. He halts inside the doorway, his eye caught by the sight of Elizabeth. The emotion flowing between them prevents anyone from speaking for an instant. Now Hale, visibly affected, goes to Danforth and speaks quietly.

Hale – Pray, leave them, Excellency.

Danforth – *pressing Hale impatiently aside*: Mr. Proctor, you have been notified, have you not? *Proctor is silent, staring at Elizabeth*. I see light in the sky, Mister; let you counsel with your wife, and may God help you turn your back on Hell. *Proctor is silent, staring at Elizabeth*.

Hale – *quietly*: Excellency, let – *Danforth brushes past Hale and walks out. Hale follows. Cheever stands and follows, Hathorne behind. Herrick goes. Parris, from a safe distance, offers:*

Danforth – *going to her*: Goody Proctor, we did not call you here to argue with you. Do you have a wife's love for your husband? He will die with the sunrise. Your husband. Do you understand it? *She only looks at him*. What do you say? Will you help him? *She is silent*. Are you stone? I tell you the truth. Woman, your dry eyes seem evidence that you work in

133 Hell! Even a monkey would cry in your situation! Does the devil stop you from feeling sorry for him? *She is silent*. Take her out. Letting her speak to her husband will not help!

Elizabeth – *quietly*: Let me speak with him, Excellency.

Parris – *with hope*: You'll get him to confess? *She thinks*.

Danforth – Will you ask him to confess or not?

Elizabeth – I promise nothing. Let me speak with him.

A sound – the sound of feet on stone. They turn and wait. Herrick enters with John Proctor. His wrists are chained. He is a different man, bearded, dirty, his eyes not clear. He stops inside the doorway when he sees Elizabeth. The emotion between them stops anyone from talking. Now Hale, very emotional, goes to Danforth and speaks quietly.

Hale – Please, leave them, Excellency.

Danforth – *pushing Hale away*: Mr. Proctor, you know, right? *Proctor is silent, staring at Elizabeth*. The sun is coming up for your hanging, Mister; I'll let you talk with your wife, and may God help you turn your back on Hell. *Proctor is silent, staring at Elizabeth*.

Hale – *quietly*: Excellency, let – *Danforth passes Hale and walks out. Hale follows. Cheever stands and follows, Hathorne behind. Herrick goes. Parris, from a safe distance, offers:*

Parris – If you desire a cup of cider, Mr., Proctor, I am sure I – *Proctor turns an icy stare at him, and he breaks off. Parris raises his palms toward Proctor. God lead you now. Parris goes out.*

Alone. Proctor walks to her, halts. It is as though they stood in a spinning world. It is beyond sorrow, above it. He reaches out.

134 *his hand as though toward an embodiment not quite real, and as he touches her, a strange soft sound, half laughter, half amazement, comes from his throat. He pats her hand. She covers his hand with hers. And then, weak, he sits. Then she sits, facing him.*

Proctor – The child?

Elizabeth – It grows.

Proctor – There is no word of the boys?

Elizabeth – They're well. Rebecca's Samuel keeps them.

Proctor – You have not seen them?

Elizabeth – I have not. *She catches a weakening in herself and downs it.*

Proctor – Your are a –marvel, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth – You – have been tortured?

Proctor – Aye. *Pause. She will not let herself be drowned in the sea that threatens her. They come for my life now.*

Elizabeth – I know it.
Pause.

Proctor – None – have yet confessed?

Elizabeth – There be many confessed.

Proctor – Who are they?

Elizabeth – There be a hundred or more, they say. Goody Ballard is one; Isaiah Goodkind is one. There be many.

Proctor – Rebecca?

Elizabeth – Not Rebecca. She is one foot in Heaven now; naught may hurt her more.

135 – **Proctor** – And Giles?

Elizabeth – You have not heard of it?

Proctor – I hear nothin', where I am kept.

Elizabeth – Giles is dead.

He looks at her incredulously.

Proctor – When were he hanged?

Parris – If you desire a cup of cider, Mr., Proctor, I am sure I – *Proctor gives Parris an icy cold look, and Parris stops. God help you now. Parris goes out.*

Alone. Proctor walks to her, stops. He reaches out.

134 *his hand toward something not quite real, and as he touches her, a strange soft sound comes from him. He pats her hand. She covers his hand with hers. And then, weak, he sits. Then she sits, facing him.*

Proctor – The child?

Elizabeth – It grows.

Proctor – What do you know of the boys?

Elizabeth – They're well. Rebecca's Samuel keeps them.

Proctor – Have you seen them?

Elizabeth – I have not. *She starts to cry but stops.*

Proctor – Your are amazing, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth – You – have been tortured?

Proctor – Yes. *Pause. They come for my life now.*

Elizabeth – I know it. *Elizabeth will not let herself be weak. She does not cry.*
Pause.

Proctor – nobody has confessed yet?

Elizabeth – Many confessed.

Proctor – Who are they?

Elizabeth – A hundred or more, they say. Goody Ballard is one; Isaiah Goodkind is one. There are many.

Proctor – Rebecca?

Elizabeth – No, Not Rebecca. She is dying; nobody can hurt her any more.

135 – **Proctor** – And Giles?

Elizabeth – Haven't you heard?

Proctor – I hear nothing, where they keep me.

Elizabeth – Giles is dead.

He looks at her like he can't believe it.

Proctor – When was he hanged?

Elizabeth – *quietly, factually*: He were not hanged. He would not answer aye or nay to his indictment; for if he denied the charge they'd hang him surely, and auction out his property. So he stand **mute**, and died Christian under the law. And so his sons will have his farm. It is the law, for he could not be condemned a wizard without he answer the indictment, aye or nay.

Proctor – The how does he die?

Elizabeth – *gently*: They press him, John.

Proctor – Press?

Elizabeth – Great stones they lay upon his chest until he plead aye or nay. *With a tender smile for the old man*: They say he give them but two words. “More weight,” he says. And died.

Proctor – *numbed* – a thread to weave into his agony: “More weight.”

Elizabeth – Aye. He were a fearsome man, Giles Corey.

Pause.

Proctor – *with great force of will, but not quite looking at her*: I have been thinking I would confess to them, Elizabeth. *She shows nothing*. What say you? If I give them that?

Elizabeth – I cannot judge you, John.

Pause.

136 – **Proctor** – *simply – a pure question*: What would you have me do?

Elizabeth – As you will, I would have it. *Slight pause*: I want you living, John. That's sure.

Proctor – *pauses, then with a flailing of hope*: Giles' wife? Have she confessed?

Elizabeth – She will not.

Pause.

Proctor – It is a pretense, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth – What is?

Proctor – I cannot mount the gibbet like a saint. It is a fraud. I am not that man. *She is silent*. My honesty is broke, Elizabeth; I am no good man. Nothing's spoiled by giving them this lie that were not rotten long before.

Elizabeth – *quietly*: He was not hanged. He would not answer yes or no to the accusation of being a witch; if he answered them, they would hang him and sell his land. So he was silent so that his sons could have his land and farm. The law says he can not be hanged for being a witch if does not answer the indictment, yes or no.

Proctor – Then how did he die?

Elizabeth – *gently*: They press him, John.

Proctor – Press?

Elizabeth – Great stones they lay upon his chest until he answered yes or no. *With smile for the old man*: People say he gave them only two words. “More weight,” he says. And died.

Proctor – *sad*– “More weight.”

Elizabeth – Yes. He was a strong man, Giles Corey.

Pause.

Proctor – *with great force of will, but not quite looking at her*: I have been thinking I would confess to them, Elizabeth. *She shows nothing*. What do you think? Should I confess?

Elizabeth – I cannot tell you what to do, John.

Pause.

136 – **Proctor** – *simply – a pure question*: What do you want me to do?

Elizabeth – I want you to do what you want... *Slight pause*: I want you to live, John. That's for sure.

Proctor – *pauses, then with a little hope*: Giles' wife? Has she confessed?

Elizabeth – She will not.

Pause.

Proctor – It is a lie, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth – What is?

Proctor – I cannot hang like a saint hangs for God's good. It is a lie. I am not that man. *She is silent*. I have to be honest, Elizabeth; I am not a good man. I don't lose anything by telling them this lie because I am already a bad person.

Elizabeth – And yet you’ve not confessed till now. That speak goodness in you.

Proctor – Spite only keeps me silent. It is hard to give a lie to dogs. *Pause, for the first time he turns directly to her.* I would have your forgiveness, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth – It is not for me to give, John. I am—

Proctor – I’d have you see some honestly in it. Let them that never lied die now to keep their souls. It is pretense for me, a vanity that will not blind God nor keep my children out of the wind. *Pause.* What say you?

Elizabeth – *upon a heaving sob that always threatens:* John, it come to naught that I should forgive you, if you’ll not forgive yourself. *Now he turns away a little, in great agony.* It is not my soul, John, it is yours. *He stands, as though in physical pain, slowly rising to his feet with a great immortal longing to find his 137 answer.* It is difficult to say, *and she is on the verge of tears.* Only be sure of this, for I know it now: Whatever you do, it is a good man does it. *He turns his doubting, searching gaze upon her.* I have read my heart this three month, John. *Pause.* I have sins of my own to count. It needs a cold wife to prompt lechery.

Proctor – *in great pain:* Enough, enough—

Elizabeth – *now poring out her heart:* Better you should know me!

Proctor – I will not hear it! I know you!

Elizabeth – You take my sins upon you, John!

Proctor – *in agony:* No, I take my own, my own!

Elizabeth – John, I counted myself so plain, so poorly made, no honest one could come to me! Suspicion kissed you when I did; I never knew how I should say my love. It were a cold house I kept! In fright, *she swerves, as Hathorne enters.*

Hathorne – What say you, Proctor? The sun is soon up.

Proctor, *his chest heaving, stares, turns to Elizabeth.* *She comes to him as though to plead, her voice quaking.*

Elizabeth - But you have waited a long time to confess, John. That means you must be good.

Proctor – The only reason I haven’t confessed is to get back at them. It is hard to give a lie to dogs. *Pause. For the first time he turns directly to her.* I want you to forgive me, Elizabeth.

Elizabeth – I can’t forgive you, John. I am—

Proctor – Let’s be honest. Let people who never lied die to keep their souls. It is a lie for me, a lie that God sees. And the lie will not feed and house my children. *Pause.* What do you think?

Elizabeth – *crying:* John, I can’t forgive you, if you’ll not forgive yourself. *Now he turns away a little, in great pain.* It is not my soul, John, it is yours. *He stands, as though in physical pain, slowly rising to his feet with a great need to find his 137 answer.* It is difficult to say, *and she begins to cry.* Only be sure of this, because I know it now: Whatever you do, you are a good man. *He looks at her, not believing her.* I have read my heart these three months, John. *Pause.* I failed at being a good wife. Lechery is caused by a cold wife, me.

Proctor – *in great pain:* Enough, enough—

Elizabeth – *now speaking from her heart:* Better you should know me!

Proctor – I will not hear it! I know you!

Elizabeth – You take my sins upon yourself, John!

Proctor – *in agony:* No, I take my own, my own!

Elizabeth – John, I counted myself so ugly, so poorly made, no good man would want me! Suspicion kissed you when I did; I never knew how to tell you I loved you. It was a cold house I kept! *Afraid, she moves away, as Hathorne enters.*

Hathorne – What say you, Proctor? The sun will be up soon for your hanging.

Proctor, *breathing hard, stares, turns to Elizabeth.* *She comes to him as though to ask him to please confess, her voice breaking.*

Elizabeth – Do what you will. But let none be your judge. There be no higher judge under Heaven than Proctor is! Forgive me, forgive me, John—I never knew such goodness in the world! *She covers her face, weeping.*

Proctor turns from her to Hathorne; he is off the earth, his voice hollow.

Proctor – I want my life.

Hathorne – *electrified, surprised:* You'll confess yourself?

Proctor – I will have my life.

Hathorne – *with a mystical tone:* God be praised! It is a providence!

138 *He rushes out the door, and his voice is heard calling down the corridor. He will confess! Proctor will confess!*

Proctor – *with a cry, as he strides to the door:* Why do you cry it? *In great pain he turns back to her. It is evil, is it not? It is evil.*

Elizabeth – *in terror, weeping:* I cannot judge you, John, I cannot!

Proctor – Then who will judge me? *Suddenly claspng his hands:* God in Heaven, what is John Proctor, what is John Proctor? *He moves as an animal, and a fury is riding in him, a tantalized search. I think it is honest. I think so; I am no saint. As though she had denied this he calls angrily at her; Let Rebecca go like a saint; for me it is fraud!*

Voices are heard in the hall, speaking together in suppressed excitement.

Elizabeth – I am not your judge, I cannot be. *As though giving him release:* Do as you will, do as you will!

Proctor – Would you give them such a lie? Say it. Would you ever give them this? *She cannot answer. You would not; if tongs of fire were singeing you, you would not! It is evil. Good then – it is evil, and I do it!*

Hathorne enters with Danforth, and with them, Cheever, Parris, and Hale. It is a businesslike, rapid entrance, as though the ice had been broken.

Elizabeth – Do what you will. But let no one be your judge. There is no higher judge under Heaven than John Proctor is! Forgive me, forgive me, John—I never knew such goodness in the world! *She covers her face, weeping.*

Proctor turns from her to Hathorne; he is off the earth, his voice hollow.

Proctor – I want my life.

Hathorne – *electrified, surprised:* You'll confess yourself?

Proctor – I will have my life.

Hathorne – *with a mystical tone:* God be praised! It is a providence!

138 *He rushes out the door, and his voice is heard calling down the hall: He will confess! Proctor will confess!*

Proctor – *with a cry, as he runs to the door:* Why do you shout it? *In great pain he turns back to her. It is evil, is it not? It is evil.*

Elizabeth – *in terror, crying:* I cannot judge you, John, I cannot!

Proctor – Then who will judge me? *Suddenly holding his hands:* God in Heaven, what is John Proctor, what is John Proctor? *He moves like an angry animal is riding in him. I think it is honest. I think so; I am not a saint! Angry: Let Rebecca die like a saint; for me it is lie!*

They hear voices in the hall, speaking with excitement.

Elizabeth – I am not your judge, I cannot be. Do what you think is right, John!

Proctor – Do you want me to confess to being a witch? Say it. Would you ever give them this lie? *She cannot answer. No, you would not; if fire were burning you, you would not! It is evil. Good then – it is evil, and I do it!*

Hathorne enters with Danforth, and with them, Cheever, Parris, and Hale. It is a businesslike, rapid entrance. They think he is ready to confess.

Danforth – *with great relief and gratitude:* Praise to God, man, praise to God; you shall be blessed in Heaven for this. *Cheever has hurried to the bench with pen, ink, and paper. Proctor watches him.* Now then, let us have it. Are you ready, Mr. Cheever?

Proctor – *with a cold, cold horror at their efficiency:* Why must it be written?

139 Danforth – Why, for the good instruction of the village, mister; this we shall post upon the church door! *To Parris, urgently:* Where is the marshal?

Parris – *runs to the door and calls down the corridor:* Marshal! Hurry!

Danforth – Now, then, Mister, will you speak slowly, and directly to the point, for Mr. Cheever's sake. *He is on record now, and is really dictating to Cheever, who writes.* Mr. Proctor, have you seen the devil in you life? *Proctor's jaws lock.* Come, man, there is light in the sky; the town waits at the scaffold; I would give out this news. Did you see the Devil?

Proctor – I did.

Parris – Praise God!

Danforth – And when he come to you, what were his demand? *Proctor is silent. Danforth helps.* Did he bid you to do his work upon the earth?

Proctor – He did.

Danforth – And you bound yourself to his service? *Danforth turns, as Rebecca Nurse enters, with Herrick helping to support her. She is barely able to walk.* Come in, come in, woman!

Rebecca – *brightening as she sees Proctor:* Ah, John! You are well, then, eh?
Proctor turns his face to the wall.

Danforth – Courage, man courage – let her witness your good example that she may come to God herself. Now hear it, Goody Nurse! Say on, Mr. Proctor. Did you bind yourself to the Devil's service?

Rebecca – *astonished:* Why, John!

Proctor – *through his teeth, his face turned from Rebecca:* I did.

Danforth – *thankful*” Praise to God, man, praise to God; you shall be blessed in Heaven for this. *Cheever gets pen, ink, and paper. Proctor watches him.* Now then, tell us. Are you ready, Mr. Cheever?

Proctor – *with a cold, cold horror at their efficiency:* Why do you have to write it?

139 Danforth – Why, to teach the village, mister; we will put this on the church door! *To Parris, urgently:* Where is the marshal?

Parris – *runs to the door and calls down the corridor:* Marshal! Hurry!

Danforth – Now, then, Mister, will you speak slowly, so Mr. Cheever can write this down. Mr. Proctor, have you seen t the devil?
Proctor closes his jaw hard and does not speak. Come on, man, the sun is coming up; the town waits for your hanging; Let me tell them the good news. Did you see the Devil?

Proctor – I did.

Parris – Thank God!

Danforth – And when he came to you, what did he ask for? *Proctor is silent. Danforth helps.* Did he ask you to do his work?

Proctor – He did.

Danforth – And you did his service? *Danforth turns, as Rebecca Nurse enters, with Herrick helping her. She walks with great difficulty.* Come in, come in, woman!

Rebecca – *looking happy when she sees Proctor:* Ah, John! You are well, then, eh?
Proctor turns his face to the wall, not wanting her to see him.

Danforth – Courage, man, be brave– let her hear your good example so she may come to God and do the same. Now hear it, Goody Nurse! Say on, Mr. Proctor. Did you work for the Devil?

Rebecca – *astonished:* Why, John!

Proctor – *through his teeth, his face turned away from Rebecca:* I did.

140 Danforth – Now, woman, you surely see it profit nothin’ to keep this conspiracy any further. Will you confess yourself with him?

Rebecca – Oh, John – God send his mercy on you!

Danforth – I say, will you confess yourself, Good Nurse?

Rebecca – Why, it is a lie, it is a lie; how may I damn myself? I cannot, I cannot.

Danforth – Mr. Proctor, When the Devil came to you did you, see Rebecca Nurse in his company?

Proctor is silent. Come, man, take courage – did you ever see her with the Devil?

Proctor – *almost inaudibly:* No.

Danforth, *now sensing trouble, glances at John and goes to the table, and picks up a sheet – the list of condemned.*

Danforth – Did you ever see her sister, Mary Easty, with the Devil?

Proctor – No, I did not.

Danforth – *his eyes narrow on Proctor:* Did you ever see Martha Corey with the Devil?

Proctor – I did not.

Danforth – *realizing, slowly putting the sheet down:* Did you ever see anyone with the Devil?

Proctor – I did not.

Danforth – Proctor, you mistake me. I am not empowered to trade your life for a lie. You have most certainly seen some person with the Devil. *Proctor is silent.* Mr. Proctor, a score of people have already testified they saw this woman with the Devil.

Proctor – Then it is proved. Why must I say it?

141 Danforth – Why “must” you say it! Why, you should rejoice to say it if your soul is truly purged of any love for Hell!

Proctor – They think to go like saints. I like not to spoil their names.

Danforth – *inquiring, incredulous:* Mr. Proctor, do you think they go like saints?

Proctor – *evading:* This woman never thought she done the devil’s work.

140 Danforth – Now, woman, you see how you should confess. Will you confess yourself with him?

Rebecca – Oh, John – God forgive you!

Danforth – I say, will you confess yourself, Good Nurse?

Rebecca – Why, it is a lie, it is a lie; how may I damn myself? I cannot, I cannot.

Danforth – Mr. Proctor, When the Devil came to you, did you see Rebecca Nurse with him?

Proctor is silent. Come, man, take courage – did you ever see her with the Devil?

Proctor – *very quietly:* No.

Danforth, *now expecting trouble, looks at John and goes to the table, and picks up a paper – the list of condemned people.*

Danforth – Did you ever see her sister, Mary Easty, with the Devil?

Proctor – No, I did not.

Danforth – *his eyes narrow on Proctor:* Did you ever see Martha Corey with the Devil?

Proctor – I did not.

Danforth – *realizing, slowly putting the paper down:* Did you ever see anyone with the Devil?

Proctor – I did not.

Danforth – Proctor, you don’t know me. I can not let you live if you lie to me. You must have seen someone with the Devil. *Proctor is silent.* Mr. Proctor, many people have already said they saw this woman with the Devil.

Proctor – Then it is proved. Why must I say it?

141 Danforth – Why “must” you say it? You should be happy to say it if you really want to be finished with Hell!

Proctor – These other people want to die like saints. I don’t want to ruin their names.

Danforth – *inquiring, incredulous:* Mr. Proctor, do you think they die like saints?

Proctor – *not wanting to answer the question:* This woman never thought she did the devil’s work.

Danforth – Look you, sir. I think you mistake your duty here. It matters nothing what she thought – she is convicted of the unnatural murder of children, and you for sending your spirit out upon Mary Warren. Your soul alone is the issue here, Mister, and you will prove its whiteness or cannot live in a Christian country. Will you tell me now what persons conspired with you in the Devil’s company? *Proctor is silent.* To your knowledge was Rebecca Nurse ever –

Proctor – I speak my own sins; I cannot judge another. *Crying out, with hatred:* I have no tongue for it.

Hale – *quickly to Danforth* : Excellency, it is enough he confess himself. Let him sign it, let him sign it.

Parris – *feverishly:* It is a great service, sir. It is a weighty name; it will strike the village that Proctor confess. I beg you, let him sign it. The sun is up, Excellency!

Danforth – *considers; then with dissatisfaction:* Come, then, sign your testimony. *To Cheever:* Give it to him. *Cheever goes to Proctor, the confession and a pen in hand. Proctor does not look at it.* Come, man, sign it.

Proctor – *after glancing at the confession:* You have all witness it – it is enough.

Danforth – You will not sign it?

142 Proctor – You have all witnessed it; what more is needed?

Danforth – Do you sport with me? You will sign your name or it is no confession, mister! *His breast heaving with agonized breathing, Proctor now lays the paper down and signs his name.*

Parris – Praise be to the Lord! *Proctor just finished signing when Danforth reaches for the paper. But Proctor snatches it up, and now a wild terror is rising in him, and a boundless anger.*

Danforth – *perplexed, but politely extending his hand:* If you please, sir.

Proctor – No.

Danforth – Look you, sir. I don’t think you understand what you are asked to do here. It doesn’t matter what she thought – she is convicted of the murder of children, and you for sending your spirit out upon Mary Warren. Your soul alone is the issue here, Mister, and you will prove its whiteness or cannot live in a Christian country. Will you tell me now what persons worked with you in the Devil’s company? *Proctor is silent.* To your knowledge was Rebecca Nurse ever –

Proctor – I tell my own sins; I cannot judge others. *Crying out, with hatred:* I have no tongue for it.

Hale – *quickly to Danforth* : Excellency, Let him to make his own confession. Let him sign it, let him sign it. That’s enough. He doesn’t need to say what others did.

Parris – *excited:* Yes, I agree! Proctor’s name is respected in the town and his confession will be noticed. I beg you, let him sign it. Look, the sun is up, Excellency! Time is running out!

Danforth – *thinks about this, then:* Come, then, sign your confession. *To Cheever:* Give it to him. *Cheever goes to Proctor, with the confession and a pen. Proctor does not look at it.* Come, man, sign it.

Proctor – *after glancing at the confession:* You have all heard me – that is enough.

Danforth – You will not sign it?

142 Proctor – You have all seen and heard me confess; what more do you need?

Danforth – Are you kidding me? You will sign your name or there is no confession, mister! *Breathing hard, Proctor signs his name.*

Parris – Thank God! He signs! *Proctor just finished signing when Danforth reaches for the paper. But Proctor takes it, very angry.*

Danforth – *confused, reaching for the paper:* If you please, sir.

Proctor – No.

Danforth, *as though Proctor did not understand*: Mr. Proctor, I must have –

Proctor – No, no. I have signed it. You have seen me. It is done! You have no need for this.

Parris – Proctor, the village must have proof that–

Proctor – Damn the village! I confess to God, and God has seen my on this! It is enough!

Danforth – You have not con—

Proctor – I have confessed my elf! Is there no good penitence but it be public? God does not need my name nailed upon the church! God sees my name; God knows how black my sins are! It is enough!

Danforth – Mr. Proctor—

Proctor – You will no use me! I am no Sarah Good or Tituba,

143 I am John Proctor! You will not use me! It is no part of salvation that you should use me!

Danforth – I do not wish to –

Proctor – I have three children – how may I teach them to walk like men in the world, and I sold my friends?

Danforth – You have not sold your friends –

Proctor – Beguile me not! I blacken all of them when this is nailed to the church the very day they hang for silence!

Danforth – Mr. Proctor, I must have good and legal proof that you –

Proctor – You are the high court, your word is good enough! Tell them I confessed myself; say Proctor broke his knees and wept like a woman; say what you will, but my name cannot—

Danforth – *with suspicion*: It is the same, is it not? If I report it or you sign it?

Proctor – *he knows it is insane*: No, it is not the same! What others say and what I sign to is not the same!

Danforth – Why? Do you mean to deny this confession when you are free?

Proctor – I mean to deny nothing!

Danforth, *as though Proctor did not*

understand: Mr. Proctor, I must have –

Proctor – No, no. I have signed it. You have watched me do it. You have no need for this.

Parris – Proctor, the village must have proof that–

Proctor – Damn the village! I confess to God, and God saw me!! It is enough!

Danforth – You have not con—

Proctor – I have confessed! Why do we need to tell the village? God does not need my name nailed upon the church! God sees my name; God knows how black my sins are! It is enough!

Danforth – Mr. Proctor—

Proctor – You will no use me! I am not little Sarah Good or Tituba,

143 I am John Proctor! You will not use my confession so the others will hang!

Danforth – I do not wish to –

Proctor – I have three children – how may I teach them to walk like men in the world, if I let down my friends?

Danforth – You have not let down your friends –

Proctor – Don't try to trick me! The day this is nailed to the church, they all look guilty of witchcraft. And they are strong enough to hang for being silent!

Danforth – Mr. Proctor, you must sign because I must have legal proof that you –

Proctor – You are the high court, your word is good enough! Tell them I confessed; say Proctor went down on his knees and cried like a woman; say anything you want, but my name cannot—

Danforth – *with suspicion*: Wait a minute. If you sign it or say it, it's the same thing, isn't it?

Proctor – *Proctor knows he makes no sense*: No, it is not the same! What others say and what I sign to is not the same!

Danforth – Why? Are you planning to say that you didn't sign the confession, after you are free?

Proctor – No!

Danforth – Then explain to me, Mr. Proctor, why you will not let –

Proctor – *with a cry of his whole soul:* Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life! Because I lie and sign them to hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name!

Danforth – *pointing at the confession in Proctor's hand:* Is that document a lie? If it is a lie I will not accept it! What say you?

144 I will not deal in lies Mister! *Proctor is motionless.* You will give me your honest confession in my hand, or I cannot keep you from the rope. *Proctor does not reply.* Which way do you go, mister?

His breast heaving, his eyes staring, Proctor tears the paper and crumpling it, and he is weeping in fury, but erect.

Danforth – Marshal!

Parris – *hysterically, as though the tearing paper were his life:* Proctor, Proctor!

Hale – Man, you will hang! You cannot!

Proctor – *his eyes full of tears:* I can. And there's your first marvel, that I can. You have made your magic now, for now I do think I see some shred of goodness in John Proctor. Not enough to weave a banner with, but white enough to keep it from such dogs. *Elizabeth, in a burst of terror, rushes to him and weeps against his hand.* Give them no tear! Tears pleasure them! Show honor now, show a stony heart and sink them with it! *He has lifted her, and kisses her now with great passion.*

Rebecca – Let you fear nothing! Another judgment waits us all!

Danforth – Hang them high over the town! Who weeps for these, weeps for corruption! *He sweeps out past them. Herrick starts to lead Rebecca, who almost collapses, but Proctor catches her, and she glances up at him apologetically.*

Rebecca – I've had no breakfast.

Danforth – Then explain to me, Mr. Proctor, why you will not let me have your signed –

Proctor – *with a cry of his whole soul:* Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another name in my life! Because if I lie, I sign them to hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul; leave me my name!

Danforth – *pointing at the confession in Proctor's hand:* Is that confession a lie? If it is a lie I will not accept it!

144 I will not deal in lies, Mister! *Proctor doesn't move.* You will give me your honest confession in my hand, or I cannot keep you from the rope. *Proctor does not answer.* Well?

His breast heaving, his eyes staring, Proctor tears the paper and crumpling it, and he is crying, but standing straight and tall.

Danforth – Marshal!

Parris – *screaming, as though the tearing paper were his life:* Proctor, Proctor!

Hale – Man, you will hang! You cannot!

Proctor – *crying:* I can. And there's your first surprise, that I can. I do think I see some goodness in John Proctor. Not a lot, but enough. *Elizabeth, in a burst of terror, rushes to him and weeps against his hand.* Don't cry! Crying makes them happy! Show honor, show a strong heart! *He has lifted her, and kisses her now with great passion.*

Rebecca – Let you fear nothing!

Danforth – Hang them high over the town! Who cries for these people, cries for the Devil! *He quickly walks out past them. Herrick starts to lead Rebecca, who almost falls, but Proctor catches her, and she looks up at him, like she is saying she is sorry.*

Rebecca – I've had no breakfast.

Herrick – Come, man.

Herrick escorts them out, Hathorne and Cheever behind them. Elizabeth stands staring at the empty doorway.

Parris – *in deadly fear, to Elizabeth:* Go to him, Goody Proctor! There is yet time!

From outside the drum roll strikes the air. Parris is startled. Elizabeth jerks about toward the window.

Parris – Go to him! *He rushes out the door, as though to hold back his fate.*

Proctor! Proctor!

Again, a short burst of drums.

Hale – Woman, plead with him! *He starts to rush out the door, and then goes back to her.*

Woman! It is pride, it is vanity. *She avoids his eyes, and moves to the window. He drops to his knees. Be his helper! –what profit him to bleed? Shall the dust praise him? Shall the worms declare his truth? Go to him, take his shame away!*

Elizabeth – *supporting herself against collapse, grips the bars of the window, and with a cry:* He have his goodness now. God forbid I take it from him!

The final drum roll crashes, then heightens violently. Hale weeps in frantic prayer, and the new sun is pouring in upon her face, and the drums rattle like bones in the morning air.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

Herrick – Come, man.

Herrick takes them out, Hathorne and Cheever behind them. Elizabeth stands looking at the empty doorway.

Parris – *scared, to Elizabeth:* Go to him, Goody Proctor! There is still time!

From outside the drum roll can be heard. Parris jumps. Elizabeth jumps and turns toward the window.

Parris – Go to him! *He rushes out the door, like he could change what will happen.*

Proctor! Proctor!

Again, a short sound of drums.

Hale – Woman, ask him! *He starts to rush out the door, and then goes back to her. Woman!*

It is his pride! *She doesn't look at him, and moves to the window. He drops to his knees. Be his helper! –why should he die? Will the dirt thank him? Will the worms say he told the truth? Go to him, take his shame away!*

Elizabeth – *holding the bars on the window so she doesn't fall, she cries:* He has his goodness now. God does not let me take it from him!

The final drum roll crashes loudly. Hale cries, and the new sun is on her face, and the drums rattle like bones in the morning air.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.