

Proctor

PROCTOR. I speak my own sins, I cannot judge another. I have no tongue for it.

HALE. Excellency, it is enough he confess himself. Let him sign it, let him sign it...

PARRIS. It is a great service, sir—it is a weighty name, it will strike the village that he confess. I beg you, let him sign it. The sun is up, Excellency!

DANFORTH. (To Proctor.) Come then, sign your testimony. Mr. Cheever, take it to him. (Cheever gives Proctor a pen.) Come, man, sign it.

PROCTOR. You have all witnessed it—it is enough.

DANFORTH. You will not sign it?

PROCTOR. (Desperately.) 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! (Proctor signs.) Your second name, man. (Proctor signs last name.)

PARRIS. Praise be to the Lord!

DANFORTH. (Perplexed, but politely extending his hand.) If you please, sir.

PROCTOR. (Dumbly, looking at paper.) No.

DANFORTH. Mister Proctor, I must have...

PROCTOR. (Putting paper behind him. Childishly befuddled.) No—no. I have signed it. You have seen me. It is done! You have no need to sign it.

PARRIS. Proctor, the village must have proof that...

PROCTOR. Damn the village! I confess to God and God has seen my name on this! It is enough!

DANFORTH. No, sir, it is...

PROCTOR. You came to save my soul, did you not? Here!—I have confessed myself, it is enough!

DANFORTH. You have not con...

PROCTOR. I have confessed myself! 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. Mister Proctor...

PROCTOR. You will not use me! I am no Sarah Good or Tituba, 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. Mister 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 to it?

PROCTOR. (He knows it is childish.) 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. (Rising.) I mean to deny nothing!

DANFORTH. Then explain to me, Mr. Proctor, why you will not let...

PROCTOR. Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life! Because I lie and sign myself to lies! Because I am not worth the dust on the feet of them that hang! How may I live without my name? I have given you my soul, leave me my name!

DANFORTH. (Turning to confession in Proctor's hand.) I shall document a lie? If it is a lie I will not accept it! What say you? I will not deal in lies, Mister! (During this speech Proctor looks at Danforth, then Rebecca, then Elizabeth.) You will give me your honest confession in my hand, or I cannot keep you from the rope. What way do you go, Mister? (Proctor deliberately tears paper open.) Marshal. (Willard comes from entrance to inside room.)

PARRIS. Proctor, Proctor!

HALE. Man, you will hang!—You cannot!

PROCTOR. (Crossing slowly to Elizabeth, takes her hands for a moment. Simply, with dignity.) Pray God it speak some goodness for me. (They embrace. He then holds her at arm's length.) Give them no tear. Show them a heart of stone and sink them with it.

REBECCA. Let you fear nothing. There is another judgment waits us all.

ACT II

Scene 1

A wood. Night. Light is concentrated on log D.S. L.

Proctor enters D. L. with lantern, glancing behind him, then halts, holding lantern raised. Abigail appears D. L. with a wrap over her nightgown, her hair down. A moment of questioning silence.

PROCTOR. *(Searching. Crosses to D. R. of log.)* I must speak with you, Abigail. *(She does not move, staring at him.)* Will you sit? ABIGAIL. How do you come? PROCTOR. Friendly.

ABIGAIL. *(Glancing about.)* I don't like the woods at night. Pray you, stand closer. *(He comes closer to her.)* I knew it must be you. When I heard the pebbles on the window, before I opened up my eyes I knew. *(Sits on L. of log.)* I thought you would come a good time sooner.

PROCTOR. I had thought to come many times.

ABIGAIL. Why didn't you? I am so alone in the world now.

PROCTOR. *(As a fact. Not bitterly.)* Are you! I've heard that people ride a hundred mile to see your face these days.

ABIGAIL. Aye, my face. Can you see my face?

PROCTOR. *(Holds lantern to her face.)* Then you're troubled?

ABIGAIL. Have you come to mock me?

PROCTOR. *(Sets lantern on ground. Sits next to her.)* No, no, but I hear only that you go to the tavern every night, and play shovelboard with the Deputy Governor, and they give you cider.

ABIGAIL. I have once or twice played the shovelboard. But I have no joy in it.

PROCTOR. This is a surprise, Abby. I'd thought to find you gayer than this. I'm told a troop of boys go step for step with you whenever you walk these days.

ABIGAIL. Aye, they do. But I have only lewd looks from the boys. PROCTOR. And you like that not?

ABIGAIL. I cannot bear lewd looks no more, John. My spirit's changed entirely. I ought be given Godly looks when I suffer for them as I do.

PROCTOR. Oh? How do you suffer, Abby?

ABIGAIL. *(Pulls up dress.)* Why, look at my leg. I'm holes all over from their damned needles and pins. *(Touching her stomach.)* The jab your wife gave me's not healed yet, y'know.

PROCTOR. *(Seeing her madness now.)* Oh, it isn't.

ABIGAIL. I think sometimes she pricks it open again while I sleep. PROCTOR. Ah?

ABIGAIL. And George Jacobs—*(Sliding up her sleeve.)* he comes again and again and raps me with his stick—the same spot every night all this week. Look at the lump I have.

PROCTOR. Abby—George Jacobs is in the jail all this month.

ABIGAIL. Thank God he is, and bless the day he hangs and lets me sleep in peace again! Oh, John, the world's so full of hypocrites! *(Astonished, outraged.)* They pray in jail! I'm told they all pray in jail! PROCTOR. They may not pray?

ABIGAIL. And torture me in my bed while sacred words are comin' from their mouths? Oh, it will need God Himself to cleanse this town properly!

PROCTOR. Abby—you mean to cry out still others?

ABIGAIL. *(Front.)* If I live, if I am not murdered, I surely will, until the last hypocrite is dead.

PROCTOR. Then there is no one good?

ABIGAIL. Aye, there is one. *You* are good.

PROCTOR. Am I! How am I good?

ABIGAIL. Why, you taught me goodness, therefore you are good. It were a fire you walked me through, and all my ignorance was burned away. It were a fire, John, we lay in fire. And from that night no woman dare call me wicked any more but I knew my answer. I used to weep for my sins when the wind lifted up my skirts; and blushed for shame because some old Rebecca called me loose. And then you burned my ignorance away. As bare as some December tree I saw them all—walking like saints to church, running to feed the sick, and hypocrites in their hearts! And God gave me strength to call them liars, and God made men to listen to me, and by God I will scrub the world clean for the love of Him! Oh, John, I will

make you such a wife when the world is white again! *(She kisses his hand.)* You will be amazed to see me every day, a light of heaven in your house, a— *(He rises, backs away, amazed.)* Why are you cold?

PROCTOR. My wife goes to trial in the morning, Abigail.

ABIGAIL. *(Distantly.)* Your wife?

PROCTOR. Surely you knew of it?

ABIGAIL. I do remember it now. How—how—Is she well?

PROCTOR. As well as she may be, thirty-six days in that place.

ABIGAIL. You said you came friendly.

PROCTOR. She will not be condemned, Abby.

ABIGAIL. You brought me from my bed to speak of her?

PROCTOR. I come to tell you, Abby, what I will do tomorrow in the court. I would not take you by surprise, but give you all good time to think on what to do to save yourself.

ABIGAIL. Save myself.

PROCTOR. If you do not free my wife tomorrow, I am set and bound to ruin you, Abby.

ABIGAIL. *(Her voice small—astonished.)* How—ruin me?

PROCTOR. I have rocky proof in documents that you knew that poppet were none of my wife's; and that you yourself bade Mary Warren stab that needle into it.

ABIGAIL. *(A wildness stirs in her, a child is standing here who is unutterably frustrated, denied her wish, but she is still grasping for her wits.)* I bade Mary Warren—?

PROCTOR. You know what you do, you are not so mad!

ABIGAIL. Oh, hypocrites! Have you won him, too?! John, why do you let them send you?

PROCTOR. I warn you, Abby!

ABIGAIL. They send you! They steal your honesty and—

PROCTOR. I have found my honesty!

ABIGAIL. No, this is your wife pleading, your sniveling, envious wife! This is Rebecca's voice, Martha Corey's voice. You were no hypocrite!

PROCTOR. I will prove you for the fraud you are!

ABIGAIL. And if they ask you why Abigail would ever do so murderous a deed, what will you tell them?

PROCTOR. I will tell them why.

ABIGAIL. What will you tell? You will confess to fornication? In the court?

PROCTOR. If you will have it so, so I will tell it! *(She utters a*

disbelieving laugh.) I say I will! *(She laughs louder, now with more assurance he will never do it. He shakes her roughly.)* If you can still hear, hear this! Can you hear! *(She is trembling, staring up at him as though he were out of his mind.)* You will tell the court you are blind to spirits; you cannot see them any more, and you will never cry witchery again, or I will make you famous for the whore you are! ABIGAIL. *(Grabs him.)* Never in this world! I know you, John—you are this moment singing secret Hallelujahs that your wife will hang!

PROCTOR. *(Throws her down.)* You mad, you murderous bitch!

ABIGAIL. Oh, how hard it is when pretense falls! But it falls, it falls! *(She wraps herself up as though to go.)* You have done your duty by her. I hope it is your last hypocrisy. I pray you will come again with sweeter news for me. I know you will—now that your duty's done. Good night, John. *(She is backing away L., raising her hand in farewell.)* Fear naught. I will save you tomorrow. *(As she turns and goes D. L.)* From yourself I will save you. *(She is gone D. L. Proctor is left alone, amazed, in terror. Takes up his lantern and slowly exits U. L. as lights dim out and curtain falls.)*

STOP

Scene 2

The vestry room of the Meeting House. There are three entrances: one at D. L. leading to outside, one at D. R. leading to courtroom and one at U. R. leading to the judges' chambers. In the Meeting House proper, beyond the R. wall, offstage, an examination is going on as curtain rises. The stage is empty, but we hear offstage.

HATHORNE. 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. I am innocent to a witch. I know not what a witch is.

HATHORNE. How do you know then that you are not a witch?

MARTHA. If I were I would know it.

HATHORNE. Why do you hurt these children?

PROCTOR. (*His weeping heart pressing his words.*) Out of my sight!
HALE. (*Pleading.*) Charity, Proctor, charity—what I have heard in
her favor I will not fear to testify in court. God help me, I cannot
judge her guilty nor innocent... I know not. Only this consider—
the world goes mad, and it profit nothing you should lay the 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. (*Shaken. Greatly disturbed, trying to convince himself.*) 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—and
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. (*Crossing to Nurse. Pleading with them.*) 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 R.*)

NURSE. I never heard no murder done in Salem.

PROCTOR. Leave me, Francis, leave me. (*Nurse slowly exits R.*)

COREY. John... tell me, are we lost?

PROCTOR. Go home now, Giles. We'll speak on it tomorrow.

COREY. Let you think on it; we'll come early, eh?

PROCTOR. Aye. Go now, Giles.

~~COREY. Good night, then. (*Corey goes out R. Long pause.*)~~

MARY. Mister 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.

MARY. I cannot charge murder on Abigail...

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

MARY. She'll kill me for sayin' that! Abby'll charge lechery on you,
Mister Proctor!

PROCTOR. (*Stops.*) ... She's told you!

MARY. I have known it, sir. She'll ruin you with it, I know she
will.

PROCTOR. (*Advancing on her.*) Good. Then her saintliness is
done with. We will slide together into our pit. You will tell the court
what you know.

MARY. I cannot. They'll turn on me.

PROCTOR. (*Grabs her.*) My wife will never die for me. I will bring
your guts into your mouth, but that goodness will not die for me.

MARY. I cannot do it. I cannot.

PROCTOR. Make your peace with it. Now Hell and Heaven
grapple on our backs, and all our old pretense is ripped away. Make
your peace. (*Throws her down.*)

MARY. (*Sobs.*) I cannot.

PROCTOR. (*Crossing to door L.*) Peace! It is a providence and no
great change. We are what we always were, but naked now. Aye,
naked. And the wind, God's icy wind, will blow. (*Mary continues
sobbing. "I cannot!"*)

CURTAIN

STOP

ELIZABETH. (*Faintly.*) No, sir.
DANFORTH. Remove her. (*Proctor and Abigail turn around into scene.*)

PROCTOR. Elizabeth, tell the truth, Elizabeth!

DANFORTH. She has spoken. Remove her. (*Hale crosses R. following Elizabeth.*)

PROCTOR. (*Cries out.*) Elizabeth, I have confessed it!

ELIZABETH. Oh, John! (*Goes out U. R.*)

PROCTOR. She only thought to save my name!

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. I believe him now! By my oath to heaven, I believe him, and I pray you call back his wife before we...

DANFORTH. She spoke nothing of rectory, and this... lies!

HALE. (*Cries out in anguish.*) I believe him! I cannot turn my face from it no more. (*Pointing at Abigail.*) This girl has always struck me false! She... (*Abigail with a weird cry screams up to ceiling.*)

ABIGAIL. You will not! Begone! Begone, I say! (*Mercy and Susanna rise, looking up.*)

DANFORTH. What is it, child? (*But Abigail, pointing with fear, is now raising up her frightened eyes, her awed face, toward ceiling—the girls doing the same—and now Hathorne, Hale, Putnam, Cheever 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, in complete silence, she is open-mouthed, agape at ceiling and in great fear.*) Girls! Why do you...?

MERCY. It's on the beam!—behind the rafter!

DANFORTH. (*Looking up.*) Where!

ABIGAIL. Why...? Why do you come, yellow bird?

PROCTOR. (*A tone of reason, firmly.*) Where's a bird? I see no bird!

ABIGAIL. My face? My face?!

PROCTOR. Mister Hale...

DANFORTH. Be quiet!

PROCTOR. (*To Hale.*) ... Do you see a bird?

DANFORTH. Be quiet!!

ABIGAIL. (*To 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.

Abigail

MARY. Abby!

ABIGAIL. (*Unperturbed, continues to "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. They're pretending, Mister Danforth!

ABIGAIL. (*Now she takes a backward step, as though the bird would swoop down momentarily.*) Oh, please, Mary!—Don't come down...

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...! She's going to come down! She's walking the beam! Look out! *She's coming down!* (*All scream. Abigail dashes*

STOP

house as you are paid *nine pound* a year to do?—and my wife not wholly well?

MARY. (*Crossing L. to Elizabeth, taking small rag doll from pocket in her undershirt.*) I made a gift for you today, Goody Proctor. I had to sit long hours in a chair, and passed the time with sewing.

ELIZABETH. (*Perplexed, she looks at the doll.*) Why, thank you, it's a fair poppet.

MARY. (*Fervently, with a trembling, decayed voice.*) We must all love each other now, Goody Proctor.

ELIZABETH. (*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.

PROCTOR. Mary. Is it true there be fourteen women arrested?

MARY. No, sir. There be thirty-nine now... (*She suddenly breaks off and sobs.*)

ELIZABETH. (*Rising and crossing to Mary.*) Why, she's weepin'! What ails you, child?

MARY. Goody Osburn... will hang! (*Elizabeth hugs her.*)

PROCTOR. Hang! Hang, y'say?

MARY. Aye...

PROCTOR. The Deputy Governor will permit it?

MARY. He sentenced her. He must—(*Taking her head from Elizabeth's shoulder. To ameliorate it.*) But not Sarah Good. For Sarah Good confessed, y'see.

PROCTOR. Confessed! To what?

MARY. That 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. (*Elizabeth puts doll on table.*)

PROCTOR. But... surely you know what a jabberer she is. Did you tell them that?

MARY. Mister Proctor, in open court she near to choked us all to death.

PROCTOR. How choked you?

MARY. She sent her *spirit* out.

ELIZABETH. Oh, Mary, Mary, surely you...

MARY. She tried to kill me many times, Goody Proctor!

ELIZABETH. Why, I never heard you mention that before.

MARY. (*Innocently.*) I never *knew* it before. I never knew anything before. When she come into the court I say to myself, I must not

accuse this woman, for she sleep in ditches, and so very old and poor... But then... then she sit there, denying and denying, and I feel a misty coldness climbin' 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 as though it were a miracle.*) I hear a voice, a screamin' voice, and it were my voice... and all at once I remembered everything she done to me! (*Slight pause as Proctor watches Elizabeth pass him, then speaks, being aware of Elizabeth's alarm.*)

PROCTOR. (*Looking at Elizabeth.*) Why?—What did she do to you?

MARY. (*Like one awakened to a marvelous secret insight.*) So many time, Mister Proctor, she come to this very door beggin' bread and a cup of cider—and mark *this*—whenever I turned her away empty—she mumbled.

ELIZABETH. Mumbled! She may mumble, hungry.

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? ELIZABETH. Why... I do, I think, but...

MARY. And so I told that to Judge Hathorne, and he asks her so—"Goody 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 all; I only say my commandments; I hope I may say my commandments," says she! ELIZABETH. And that's an upright answer.

MARY. Aye, but then Judge Hathorne say, "Recite for us your commandments!"—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!

PROCTOR. And so condemned her?

MARY. (*Impatient at his stupidity.*) Why, they *must* when she condemned herself.

PROCTOR. But the proof, the proof?

MARY. (*With greater impatience with him.*) I told you the proof—it's hard proof, hard as rock the judges said.

PROCTOR. You will not go to that court again, Mary Warren.

MARY. (*Defiantly.*) I must tell you, sir, I will be gone *every day* now. I am *amazed* you do not see what weighty work we do.

PROCTOR. What work you do! It's strange work for a Christian girl to hang old women!

WILLARD. She is, sir.
DANFORTH. What think you, Mister 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 Willard.*) Is he yet adamant?—Has he struck at you again?
WILLARD. (*Smiling drunkenly.*) He cannot, sir, he is chained to the wall now.
DANFORTH. Fetch Goody Proctor to me. Then let you bring him up. (*Sits bench u.s. of Parris.*)
WILLARD. Aye, sir. (*Willard goes out. 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. Mister 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.
HALE. (*Rising, crossing up to door.*) If you think God wills you to raise rebellion, Mister Danforth, you are mistaken.
DANFORTH. You have heard rebellion spoken in Salem?
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!
DANFORTH. Mister 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. There is blood on my head! Can you not see the blood on my head!!
PARRIS. Hush! (*All face entrance. Willard and Elizabeth enter. Willard goes out again.*)
DANFORTH. (*Very politely.*) Goody Proctor. I hope you are hearty?
ELIZABETH. 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.*) Mister Hale, will you speak with the woman?

HALE. Goody Proctor, your husband is marked to hang this morning.
ELIZABETH. (*Quietly.*) I have heard it.
HALE. (*He finds it difficult to look at her.*) You know, do you not, that I have no connection with the court? I come of my own, Goody Proctor. (*She knows this to be untrue.*) I would save your husband's life, for if he is taken I count myself his murderer. Do you understand me?
ELIZABETH. What do you want of me?
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. No more. No more. I'll hear no more of that.
HALE. (*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 I 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. (*She looks at him, then front.*) 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.

stop

ELIZABETH. (*Quietly. With trembling.*) I shall speak to Danforth.
argument.
HALE. Woman, before the laws of God we are as swine. We cannot read His will.
ELIZABETH. (*Sincerely—simply.*) I cannot dispute with you, sir, I lack learning for it.
DANFORTH. (*Irritated.*) Goody Proctor, you are not summoned here for dispute—be there to wifely tenderness within you? He will die with the sunrise, your husband. Do you understand it? What say you? Will you contend with him? (*She is silent, staring at him.*) Are you stoned? 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 Hell!—a very ape would weep at

ELIZABETH. Your anger! I only ask you...

PROCTOR. Woman, am I so base? Do you truly think me base?

ELIZABETH. I never called you base.

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

ELIZABETH. Then why do you anger with me when I bid you break it?

PROCTOR. *(So angry he gropes for words and phrases.)* 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!

ELIZABETH. *(Cries 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! *(Proctor starts R. Quite suddenly, as though from the air. Hale appears R. They start slightly. Hale is different now, drawn—a little, even, of guilt about his manner now.)*

HALE. Good evening.

PROCTOR. Why, Mister Hale! Good evening to you, sir. Come in, come in.

HALE. I hope I do not startle you.

ELIZABETH. No—no, it's only that I heard no horse...

HALE. You are Goodwife Proctor.

PROCTOR. Aye: Elizabeth.

HALE. I hope you're not off to bed yet.

PROCTOR. No—no... let you come in, Mister Hale. We are not used to visitors after dark, but you're welcome here. Will you sit you down, sir?

HALE. *(I still have no fear of you, Goodwife Proctor.)*

PROCTOR. Will you drink cider, Mister Hale?

HALE. No, it rebels my stomach—I have some further traveling yet tonight. Sit you down, sir. I will not keep you long, but I have some business with you.

PROCTOR. Business of the court?

HALE. *(Hesitantly.)* No... no, I come of my own, without the court's authority. Hear me. I know not if you are aware, but your wife's name is... mentioned in the court.

PROCTOR. 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...

ELIZABETH. *(Shocked.)* Rebecca's charged!

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

ELIZABETH. You will never believe, I hope, that Rebecca trafficked with the Devil?

HALE. *(Regretfully.)* Woman, it is possible.

PROCTOR. *(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?

PROCTOR. *(Evading.)* 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. I thought, sir, to put some questions as to the Christian character of this house, if you'll permit me.

PROCTOR. *(Why we have no fear of you, Mister Parris keeps, I note that you are rarely in the church on Sabbath Day...)*

PROCTOR. No, sir, you are mistaken...

HALE. Only twenty-six time in seventeen month, sir. I must call that rare. Will you tell me why you are so absent?

PROCTOR. Mister Hale, *(Slight pause as he controls himself.)* I never knew I must account to that man for I come to church or stay at home... My wife were sick this winter.

HALE. *(Kindly.)* So I am told. But you, Mister, why could you not come alone?

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

HALE. Mister Proctor, your house is not a church; your theology must tell you that.

PROCTOR. *(Restraining his anger.)* 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...?

PROCTOR. *(A pause. His L. hand gripping edge of table as he controls his anger.)* Since we built the church there were pewter candlesticks

Tituba

I wake and find myself standing in the open doorway and not a stitch on my body! ~~(Covering herself with her arms, turning upside and away.)~~ I always hear her laughing in my sleep. I hear her singing her Barbados songs and tempting me with—

HALE. Tituba, I want
you to wake this child.

I never—

TITUBA. I have no power on this child, sir.

HALE. You must certainly do, and you will loose her from it now! When did you compact with the Devil?

TITUBA. I don't compact with no Devil!

PARRIS. You will confess yourself or I will take you out and whip you to your death, Tituba!

PUTNAM. This woman must be hanged! She must be taken and hanged!

TITUBA. *(Kneeling.)* No—no, don't hang Tituba. I tell him I don't desire to work for him, sir.

HALE. Who, the Devil? Now, Tituba, I know that when we bind ourselves to Hell it is very hard to break with it entirely. Now, we are going to help you tear yourself free. —You would be a good Christian woman, would you not, Tituba?

TITUBA. Ay, sir, a good Christian woman.

HALE. And you love these little children?

TITUBA. Oh, yes, sir, I don't desire to hurt little children!

HALE. And you love God, Tituba?

TITUBA. I love God with all my bein'.

HALE. Now in God's holy name...

TITUBA. Bless Him... bless Him...

HALE. And to His Glory...

TITUBA. Eternal Glory... Bless Him... Bless God...

HALE. Open yourself, Tituba—open yourself and let God's holy light shine on you.

TITUBA. Oh, bless the Lord.

HALE. When the Devil comes to you does he ever come... with another person? Perhaps another person in the village? Someone you know.

PARRIS. Who came with him?

PUTNAM. Sarah Good? Did you ever see Sarah Good with him?—or Osburn?

PARRIS. Was it man or woman came with him?

TITUBA. Was... was woman.

PARRIS. What woman? A woman, you said. What woman? TITUBA. It was black dark, and I...

PARRIS. You could see him, why could you not see her?

TITUBA. Well, they was always talking, they was always runnin' round and carryin' on.

PARRIS. You mean out of Salem? Salem witches? *(Hale indicates to Parris to take it easy.)*

TITUBA. I believe so, yes, sir.

HALE. *(Calmly. Now he takes her hand.)* Tituba. You must have no fear to tell us who they are, do you understand? We will protect you. The Devil can never overcome a minister. You know that, do you not?

TITUBA. Aye, sir, oh, I do.

HALE. You have confessed yourself to witchcraft, and that speaks a wish to come to heaven's side. And we will bless you, Tituba...

TITUBA. *(Deeply relieved.)* Oh, God bless you, Mister Hale...

HALE. You are God's instrument put in our hands to discover the Devil's agents among us. You are selected, Tituba, you are chosen to help us cleanse our village. So speak utterly, Tituba, turn your back on him and face God, face God, Tituba, and God will protect you.

TITUBA. Oh, God, protect Tituba!

HALE. Who came to you with the Devil? Two? Three? Four?—how many?

TITUBA. *(Pants, and begins rocking back and forth, staring ahead.)* There was four. There was four.

PARRIS. Who? Who? Their names, their names!

TITUBA. Oh, how many times he bid me kill you, Mister Parris!

PARRIS. Kill me!

TITUBA. *(Starting to weep.)* He say Mister Parris must be kill! Mister Parris no goodly man, Mister Parris mean man and no gentle man, and he bid me rise out of my bed and cut your throat! *(Parris backs away a step L., then all straighten up. They gasp.)* I tell him, no! I don't hate that man! I don't want kill that man! But he say, You work for me, Tituba, and I make you free! I give you pretty dress to wear, and put you way high up in the air and you gone fly back to Barbados! And I say, You lie, Devil, you lie! And then he come one stormy night to me, and he say, Look! I have white people belong to me. And I look... And there was Goody Good.

~~TITUBA. Sarah Good!~~

~~TITUBA. *(Rocking violently.)* Aye, sir, and Goody Osburn...~~

STOP

There is prodigious danger in the seeking of loose spirits, I fear it, I fear it. Let us rather blame ourselves and...

PUTNAM. How may we blame ourselves? I am one of nine sons; the Putnam seed have peopled this province. And yet I have but one child left of eight—and now she shrivels!

REBECCA. I cannot fathom that.

ANN. You think it God's work you should never lose a child, nor a grandchild either, and I bury all but one?

PUTNAM. When Reverend Hale comes you will proceed to look for signs of witchcraft here.

PROCTOR. You cannot command Mister Parris. We vote by name in this society, not by acreage.

PUTNAM. I never heard you worried so on this society, Mister 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. There are many others who stay away from church these days because he hardly ever mention God anymore.

~~PARRIS, why, that's a drastic charge...~~

REBECCA. It's somewhat true; there are many that quail to bring their children...

PARRIS. I do not preach for children, Rebecca. It is not the *children* who are unmindful of their obligations toward this ministry. Where is my wood? My contract provides I be supplied with all my firewood. I am waiting since November for a stick, and even in November I had to show my frost-bitten hands like some London beggar!

COREY. You are allowed six pounds a year to buy your wood, Mister Parris.

PARRIS. I am paid little enough without I spend six pound on firewood. The salary is sixty-six pound, Mister Proctor! I am not some preaching farmer with a book under my arm; I am a graduate of Harvard College.

COREY. Aye, and well-instructed in mathematic!

PARRIS. Mister Corey, you will look far for a man of my kind at sixty pound a year! I am not *used* to this poverty; I left a thrifty business in the Barbados to serve the Lord. I do not fathom it, why am I persecuted here?! I cannot offer one proposition but there be a howling riot of argument. I have often wondered if the Devil be in it somewhere; I cannot understand you people otherwise.

PROCTOR. Mister Parris, you are the first minister ever did demand the deed to this house—

PARRIS. I am your third preacher in seven years. I do not wish to be put out like the cat, whenever some majority feels the whim. You people seem not to comprehend that a minister is the Lord's man in the parish; a minister is not to be so lightly crossed and contradicted... PUTNAM. Aye!

PARRIS. There is either obedience or the church will burn like hell is burning!

PROCTOR. Can you speak one minute without we land in hell again? I am sick of hell!

PARRIS. It is not for you to say what is good for you to hear!

PROCTOR. I may speak my heart, I think!

PARRIS. What, are we Quakers? We are not Quakers here yet, Mister Proctor. And you may tell that to your followers!

PROCTOR. My followers!

PARRIS. There is a *party* in this church; I am not blind; there is a faction and a party. **stop**

~~PROCTOR. Against you!~~

PUTNAM. Against him and all authority.

PROCTOR. Why, then I must find it and join it.

REBECCA. He does not mean that...

PROCTOR. I mean it solemnly, Rebecca; I like not the smell of this "authority," I have a crop to sow, and lumber to drag home. What say you, Giles? Let's find that party. He says there is a party. COREY. I've changed my opinion of this man. Mister Parris, I beg your pardon. I never thought you had so much iron in you.

PARRIS. Why, thank you, Giles.

COREY. It suggest to the mind what the trouble be among us all these years. Think on it, wherefore is everybody suing everybody else. I have been six times in court this year.

PROCTOR. Is it the Devil's fault that a man cannot say you Good Morning without you clap him for defamation? You're old, Giles, and you're not hearing as well as you did.

COREY. John Proctor, I have only last month collected four pound damages for you publicly saying I burned the roof off your house, and I—

PROCTOR. I never said no such thing, but I paid you for it, so I hope I can call you deaf without charge. Come along, Giles, and help me drag my lumber home.

MARY. But, Mister Proctor, they will not *hang* them if they *confess*. Sarah Good will only sit in *jail* some time... and here's a *wonder* for you, think on this. Goody Good is pregnant!

ELIZABETH. Pregnant! Are they mad?—the woman's near to sixty!

MARY. (*Happy with wonders of the court.*) 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, thank God; for they'll not hurt the innocent *child*. (*Smiling happily.*) But be that not 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...

PROCTOR. I'll official you! (*Rises, gets whip.*)

MARY. (*Striving for her authority.*) I'll not stand *whipping any more*! The Devil's loose in Salem, Mister Proctor, we must discover where he's hiding!

PROCTOR. I'll whip the Devil out of you...! (*With whip raised she yells.*)

MARY. (*Pointing at Elizabeth.*) I saved her life today! (*Silence. His whip comes down.*)

ELIZABETH. (*Softly.*) I am accused?

MARY. You are 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.

ELIZABETH. Who accused me?

MARY. I am bound by law; I cannot tell it. (*To Proctor.*) I... I hope you'll not be so sarcastical no more—four judges and the King's deputy sat to dinner with us but an hour ago. I... I would have you speak civilly to me, from this out.

PROCTOR. (*In disgust at her.*) Go to bed.

MARY. I'll not be ordered to bed no more, Mister Proctor! I am eighteen and a woman, however single!

PROCTOR. Do you wish to sit up?—then sit up.

MARY. (*Stamping foot.*) I wish to go to bed!

PROCTOR. (*In anger.*) Good night, then! (*She starts out L.*)

MARY. Good night. (*She goes out L. He throws whip down.*)

ELIZABETH. Oh, the noose, the noose is up!

PROCTOR. There'll be no noose...

ELIZABETH. She wants me dead; I knew all week it would come to this!

PROCTOR. (*Without conviction.*) They dismissed it. You heard her say...

ELIZABETH. And what of tomorrow?—she will cry me out until they take me!

PROCTOR. Sit you down...

ELIZABETH. She wants me dead, John, you know it!

PROCTOR. I say sit down! Now we must be wise, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH. (*With sarcasm, and a sense of being lost.*) Oh, indeed, indeed!

PROCTOR. (*Not looking at her.*) Fear nothing. I'll find Ezekiel Cheever. I'll tell him she said it were all sport.

ELIZABETH. John, with so many in the jail, more than that is needed now, I think. Would you favor me with this?—Go to *Abigail*.

PROCTOR. What have I to say to Abigail?

ELIZABETH. John... grant me this. You have a faulty understanding of young girls. There is a promise made in any bed...

PROCTOR. (*Striving against his anger. Looking at her.*) What promise?

ELIZABETH. 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 to take my place. 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.

PROCTOR. (*He knows it is true.*) She cannot think it!

ELIZABETH. John, have you ever shown her somewhat of contempt? She cannot pass you in the church but you will blush...

PROCTOR. I may blush for my sin.

ELIZABETH. I think she sees another meaning in that blush.

PROCTOR. And what see you? What see you, Elizabeth?

ELIZABETH. I think you be somewhat ashamed, for I am there, and she so close.

PROCTOR. When will you know me, woman? Were I stone I would have cracked for shame this sevenmonth!

ELIZABETH. Then go—and tell her she's a whore. Whatever promise she may sense—break it, John, break it.

PROCTOR. (*Rising, getting gun.*) Good, then. I'll go.

ELIZABETH. Oh, how unwillingly!

PROCTOR. I will curse her hotter than the oldest cinder in hell, fear not. But pray, begrudge me not my anger!

by Abigail's—and the girls'—utter conviction, starts to whisper, hands half raised, powerless—and all girls begin whispering exactly as she does.)

DANFORTH. A little while ago you were afflicted. Now it seems you afflict others; where did you find this power?

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?

MARY. I...

GIRLS. I...

PROCTOR. (*Sensing her weakening.*) Mary, 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. (*Quietly.*) 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...! She's going to come down! She's walking the beam! Look out! *She's coming down!*

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?

PARRIS. The Devil's book? He come with a book?

DANFORTH. What are you! You are combined with anti-Christ, are you not? I have seen your power, Mister, you will not deny it!

HALE. This is not witchcraft! These girls are frauds! You condemn an honest man!

DANFORTH. I will have nothing from you, Mister Hale! (*To Proctor.*) Will you confess yourself befouled with hell, or do you keep that black allegiance yet? What say you?

PROCTOR. I say... God is dead!

STOP

Rebecca

ANN. My mother told me that! When they cannot bear to hear the name of...

PARRIS. Rebecca, Rebecca, come to her... we're lost, she suddenly cannot bear to hear the Lord's name. *(Rebecca crosses to bed. Giles Corey enters. He is eighty-three, knotted with muscle, canny, inquisitive, and still powerful.)* There is hard sickness here, Giles Corey, so please to keep the quiet.

COREY. We not said a word. No one here can testify I've said a word as she going to fly again? I hear she flies.

PUTNAM. Man, be quiet now! *(Rebecca stands by Betty, who becomes quiet.)*

ANN. What have you done?

REBECCA. 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 keeping 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's the truth of it, Rebecca.

ANN. This is no silly season, Rebecca. My Ruth is bewildered, Rebecca, she cannot eat.

REBECCA. Perhaps she is not hungered yet. Mr. Parris, I hope you are not decided to go in search of loose spirits. 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 let you come out and call them wrong. Are you our minister or Mister Hale? Did you consult the wardens of the church before you called this minister to look for devils?

PARRIS. He is not coming to look for devils.

PROCTOR. Then what he coming for?

PUTNAM. There he children join in the village, Minister...

PROCTOR. I see none dyin'...

REBECCA. Pray, John... be calm. Mister Parris, I think you'd best send Reverend Hale back as soon as he come. This will set us all to arguin' again in the society, and we thought to have peace this year. I think we ought rely on Doctor Griggs now, and good prayer...

ANN. Rebecca, the doctor's baffled.

REBECCA. If so he is, then let us go to God for the cause of it.

There is prodigious danger in the seeking of loose spirits, I fear it, I fear it. Let us rather blame ourselves and...

PUTNAM. How may we blame ourselves? I am one of nine sons; the Putnam seed have peopled this province. And yet I have but one child left of eight—and now she shrivels!

REBECCA. I cannot fathom that.

ANN. ~~You think it God's work you should never lose a child, for a grandchild either, and I bury all but one?~~

PUTNAM. When Reverend Hale comes you will proceed to look for signs of witchcraft here.

PROCTOR. You cannot command Mister Parris. We vote by name in this society, not by acreage.

PUTNAM. I never heard you worried so on this society, Mister 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. There are many others who stay away from church these days because he hardly ever mention God anymore.

PARRIS. Why, that's a drastic charge...

REBECCA. It's somewhat true; there are many that quail to bring their children...

PARRIS. I do not preach for children, Rebecca. It is not the children who are unmindful of their obligations toward this ministry. Where is my wood? My contract provides I be supplied with all my firewood. I am waiting since November for a stick, and even in November I had to show my frost-bitten hands like some London beggar!

COREY. You are allowed six pounds a year to buy your wood, Mister Parris.

PARRIS. I am paid little enough without I spend six pound on firewood. The salary is sixty-six pound, Mister Proctor! I am not some preaching farmer with a book under my arm; I am a graduate of Harvard College.

COREY. Aye, and well-instructed in mathematic!

PARRIS. Mister Corey, you will look far for a man of my kind at sixty pound a year! I am not used to this poverty; I left a thrifty business in the Barbados to serve the Lord. I do not fathom it, why am I persecuted here? I cannot offer one proposition but there be a howling riot of argument. I have often wondered if the Devil be in it somewhere; I cannot understand you people otherwise.