

The Crucible

Audition

Betty Parris, Abigail Williams, Mercy Lewis and Mary Warren

ABIGAIL. How is Ruth sick?

MERCY. It's weirdish, I know not-she seems to walk like a dead one since last night.

ABIGAIL. Betty? (*Betty doesn't move, She shakes her,*) Now stop this! Betty! Sit up now!

MERCY. Have you tried beatin' her? I gave Ruth a good one and it waked her for a minute. Here, let me have her. . . .

ABIGAIL. No, he'll be comin' up. Now look you, if they be questioning us tell them we danced-I told him as much already.

MERCY. And what more?

ABIGAIL. He saw you naked.

MERCY. Oh, Jesus! (*Falls back on bed. Enter :Mary Warren, breathless, She is seventeen, a subservient, naive girl.*)

MARY. What'll we do, the whole village is out!

MERCY, (*Mimicking her.*) "What'll we do?" (*Sitting up,*)

MARY. I just come from the farm, the whole country's talkin' witchcraft! They'll be callin' us witches, Abby!

MERCY. (*Mimicking her.*) "They'll be callin' us witches, Abby." She means to tell, I know it.

MARY. Abby, we've got to tell. Witchery's a hangin' error, a hangin' like they done in Boston two year ago! We must tell the truth, Abby I-you'll only be whipped for dancin', and the other things!

ABIGAIL. Oh, *we'll* be whipped'

MARY. I never done none of it, Abby, I only looked'

MERCY, Oh, you're a great one for lookin', aren't you, Mary Warren .,

ABIGAIL. (*Betty whimpers.*) Betty? Now, Betty, dear, wake up now. It's Abigail. (*She sits Betty up, furiously shakes her.*) I'll beat you, Betty! (*Betty whimpers.*) My, you seem improving. I talked to your papa and I told him everything, So there's nothing to . . .

HETTY. I want my mama I

ABIGAIL. What ails you, Betty? Your mama', dead and buried. . . ,

BETTY. I'll fly to Mama, let me fly . . . ! (*Raises her arms asthough to fly. Mercy and Abigail thrust them down.*)

ABIGAIL. I told him everything, he knows now, he knows every thing we . . . (*Betty suddenly*

springs off bed. rushes across room to window where Abigail catches her.)

BETTY. You drank blood, Abby, you drank blood!

ABIGAIL. *(Dragging Betty back to bed and forcing her into it.)* Betty, you never say that again! You will never. . . ,

BETTY. You did, you did! You drank a charm to kill John Proctor's wife! You drank a charm to kill Goody Proctor!

ABIGAIL *(Slaps her face.)* Shut it! Now shut it!

BETTY. *(Collapsing on the bed.)* Mama, Mama. . . ! *(She dissolves into sobs.)*

ABIGAIL. 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 things, and I will come to you in the black of some terrible night and I will bring a pointy reckoning that will shudder you. And you know I can do it. I saw Indians smash my dear parents' heads 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 cries louder She goes to Betty, sits L. side of bed D. S. of Mercy. and roughly sits her up.)* Now you. . . sit up and stop this! *(Betty collapses in her hands,)*

MARY. What's got her? Abby, she's going to die! It's a sin to conjure and we ' . .

ABIGAIL. I say shut it, Mary Warren