

DANFORTH Mister Hale, believe me; for a man of such terrible learning you are most bewildered – I hope you will forgive me. (*Relishing in his knowledge of the law.*) I have been thirty-two year at the bar, sir, and I should be confounded were I called upon to defend these people. Let you consider, now – 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. 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 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, Mister Proctor. (*PROCTOR hands it to him. HATHORNE goes to L. of DANFORTH and starts reading. PARRIS comes to his side.*)

PARRIS (*Timidly.*) I should like to question . . .

DANFORTH (*His first real outburst, in which his contempt for PARRIS is clear.*) Mister Parris, I bid you be silent! Sit you down, Mr. Proctor. You sit there. (*To MARY, indicating bench D. S. of table. PROCTOR takes MARY to bench, returns*

*and sits L. of table.*) Mister Cheever, will you go into the court and bring the children here. (*CHEEVER gets up, goes out D. R. DANFORTH now turns to MARY.*) Mary Warren, how came you to this turnabout? Has Mister Proctor threatened you for this deposition?

MARY No, sir.

DANFORTH Has he *ever* threatened you?

MARY (*Weaker.*) No, sir.

DANFORTH (*Sensing a weakening, harder.*) 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? Answer me!

MARY (*Almost inaudibly.*) I did, sir.

DANFORTH How were you instructed in your life? – Do you not know that God damns all liars? Or is it now that you lie?

MARY No, sir – I am with God now.

DANFORTH You are with God now.

MARY Aye, sir.

DANFORTH 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. Enter CHEEVER, SUSANNA WALLCOTT, MERCY LEWIS, and finally ABIGAIL D. R.*)