

CHEEVER *(Turns doll over in his hands.)* Why, they say it may signify that she . . . *(He has lifted doll's skirt, and his eyes widen in astonished fear.)* Why, this, this . . .

PROCTOR What's there?

CHEEVER Why . . . *(Draws out a long needle from doll.)* it is a needle! Willard, Willard, it is a needle!

PROCTOR And what signifies a needle!

CHEEVER Why, this go *hard* with her, Proctor, this . . . I had my doubts, Proctor, I had my doubts, but here's calamity . . . *(Crosses to HALE, shows needle.)* You see it, sir, it is a needle!

HALE Why? What meanin' has it?

CHEEVER The girl, the Williams girl, Abigail Williams, sir. She sat to dinner in Reverend Parris' house tonight, and without word nor warnin', she falls to the floor. Like a struck beast, he 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.)* testify it were your wife's familiar spirit pushed it in.

PROCTOR Why, she done it herself! I hope you're not takin' this for proof, Mister Hale.

CHEEVER Tis hard proof! – I find here a poppet Goody Proctor keeps. I have found it, sir. And in the belly of the poppet a needle 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.)*

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

MARY What poppet's that, sir?

PROCTOR This poppet, this poppet.

MARY *(Looks at it, and evasively says.)* Why, I . . . I think it is mine.

PROCTOR *(A threat.)* It is your poppet, is it not?

MARY It . . . is, sir.

PROCTOR And *how* did it come into this house?

MARY 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 Why, I meant no harm by it, sir . . .

PROCTOR You stuck that needle in yourself?

MARY I . . . I believe I did, sir, I . . .

PROCTOR *(To HALE.)* What say you now?

HALE *(Still kindly endeavoring to get at the truth.)* 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 Wallcott – she saw me sewin' it in court. Ask *Abby*, Abby sat beside me when I made it.

PROCTOR *(To HALE, of CHEEVER.)* Bid him begone, Mister. Your mind is surely settled now. Bid him out, Mister.

ELIZABETH *(Bewildered.)* What signifies a *needle*?