

DANFORTH (*Looking at COREY.*) Who is this man?

PARRIS Giles Corey, sir, and a more contentious . . .

COREY (*To PARRIS.*) I am asked the question and I am old enough to answer it! (*To DANFORTH.*) 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 D. R.*)

DANFORTH And how do you imagine to help her cause with such contemptuous riot? Now begone, your old age alone keeps you out of jail for this.

COREY They're tellin' lies about my wife, sir, I . . .

DANFORTH Then you take it upon yourself to decide what this court shall believe and what it shall set aside?

COREY Your Excellency, we mean no disrespect for . . .

DANFORTH Disrespect, indeed! – It is disruption, Mister. This is the highest court of the supreme government of this province, do you know it?

COREY (*He is beginning to weep.*) Your Excellency, I only said she were reading books, sir, and they come and take her out of my house for . . .

DANFORTH What books, what . . . ?

COREY (*Through helpless sobs.*) It is my third wife, sir, and I never had no wife that be so taken with books, d'y'understand, sir, and I thought to find the cause of it, d'y'see, but it 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 his evidence in proper affidavit. You are certainly aware of our procedure here, Mr. Hale. (*To WILLARD.*) Clear this room.

WILLARD Come now, Giles. (*Gently pushes COREY out D. L.*)

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

DANFORTH Who is this man?

NURSE 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, Mister Nurse.

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

DANFORTH (*To NURSE.*) Let you write your plea and in due time I will . . .

NURSE Excellency, we have *proof* for your eyes, God forbid you shut them to it. The girls, sir, the girls are frauds.

DANFORTH (*With interest.*) What's what?

NURSE We have proof of it, sir. They are all deceiving you.

HATHORNE This is contempt, sir, contempt!

DANFORTH Peace, Judge Hathorne. Do you know who I am, Mister Nurse?