

bowed in L. hand, his L. hand on table. After four seconds chains are heard off R.)

PROCTOR *(Running off R.)* Willard! Willard, don't chain her! Damn you, man, you will not chain her! *(Outside.)* Off with them! I'll not have it! I will not have her chained! *(And other men's voices against his. COREY calls to HALE.)*

COREY And yet silent, Minister? It is fraud, you know it is fraud! What keeps you, man! *(PROCTOR is thrown into room by two guards, followed by WILLARD. Guards exit R. after PROCTOR pulls away.)*

PROCTOR I'll pay you, Willard, I will surely pay you! *(Sits bench R., head in hands.)*

WILLARD In God's name, John, I cannot help myself. I must chain them all. Now let you keep inside this house till I am gone! *(To HALE.)* Man, are you blind? *(He exits R.)*

HALE Mister Proctor . . .

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!