

The Crucible

## Danforth/Mary Warren

2017 Auditions

Nurse, Your Honor. I'll not conceal it, my hand shakes yet as with a wound! I pray you, sir, *this* argument let lawyers present to you.

Danforth: Mr. Hale, believe me; for a man of such terrible learning you are most bewildered - I hope you will forgive me. I have been thirty-two year at the bar, sir, and I should be con-founded were I called upon to defend these people. Let you consider, now - *To Proctor and the others:* 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, is it not? 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 all 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, Mr. Proctor.

*Proctor hands it to him. Hathorne rises, goes beside Danforth, and starts reading. Parris comes to his other side. Danforth looks at John Proctor, then proceeds to read. Hale gets up, finds position near the judge, reads too. Proctor glances at Giles. Francis prays silently, hands pressed together. Cheever waits placidly, the sublime official, dutiful. Mary Warren sobs once. John Proctor touches her head reassuringly. Presently Danforth lifts his eyes, stands up, takes out a kerchief and blows his nose. The others stand aside as he moves in thought toward the window.*

Parris, *hardly able to contain his anger and fear:* I should like to question -

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Danforth - *his first real outburst, in which his contempt for Parris is clear:* Mr. Parris, I bid you be silent! *He stands in silence, looking out the window. Now, having established that he will set the gait:* Mr.

Cheever, will you go into the court and bring the children here?

*Cheever gets up and goes out up-stage. Danforth now turns to Mary.*

Mary Warren, how came you to this turnabout? Has Mr. Proctor threatened you for this deposition?

Mary Warren: No, sir.

Danforth: Has he ever

threatened you?

Mary Warren, *weaker:* No, sir.

Danforth, *sensing a weakening:* Has he

threatened you?-

Mary Warren: 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? *She does not answer. Answer me!*

Mary Warren, *almost inaudibly:* I did, sir.

Danforth: How were you instructed in your life? Do you not know that God damns all liars? *She cannot speak. Or is it now that you lie!*

Mary Warren: No, sir - I am with God now.

Danforth: You are with God now.

Mary Warren: Aye, sir.