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American Literature 11A Ms. Ciuperca

***THE CRUCIBLE***  PASSAGES CLOSE READING

**ACT III**

1. **Hathorne**: This is contempt, sir, contempt!

**Danforth**: Peace, Judge Hathorne. Do you know who I am, Mr. Nurse?

**Francis**: I surely do, sir, and I think you must be a wise judge to be what you

are.

**Danforth**: And do you know that near to four hundred are in the jails from

Marblehead to Lynn, and upon my signature?

**Francis**: I -

**Danforth**: And seventy-two condemned to hang by that signature?

**Francis**: Excellency, I never thought to say it to such a weighty judge, but you

are deceived.

1. **Danforth**, *restrained - he is curious:* Not come to church?

**Proctor**: I - I have no love for Mr. Parris. It is no secret. But God I surely love.

**Cheever**: He plow on Sunday, sir.

**Danforth**: Plow on Sunday!

**Cheever,** *apologetically:* I think it be evidence, John. I am an official of the court, I

cannot keep it.

**Proctor**: I - I have once or twice plowed on Sunday. I have three children, sir,

and until last year my land give little.

**Giles:** You’ll find other Christians that do plow on Sunday if the truth be known.

**Hale:** Your Honor, I cannot think you may judge the man on such evidence.

**Danforth**: I judge nothing.

1. **Francis**: These are all covenanted Christians, sir.

**Danforth**: Then I am sure they may have nothing to fear. *Hands Cheever the*

*paper.* Mr. Cheever, have warrants drawn for all of these - arrest for

examination. *To Proctor:* Now, Mister, what other information do you have for

us? *Francis is still standing, horrified.* You may sit, Mr. Nurse.

**Francis**: I have brought trouble on these people; I have -

**Danforth**: No, old man, you have not hurt these people if they are of good

conscience. But you must understand, sir, that a person is either with this court

or he must be counted against it, there be no road between. This is a sharp time,

now, a pre-cise time - we live no longer in the dusky afternoon when evil mixed

itself with good and befuddled the world. Now, by God’s grace, the shining sun

is up, and them that fear not light will surely praise it. I hope you will be one of

those.

1. **Giles:** My proof is there! *Pointing to the paper.* If Jacobs hangs for a witch he

forfeit up his property - that’s law! And there is none but Putnam with the; coin

to buy so great a piece. This man is killing his neighbors for their land!

**Danforth**: But proof, sir, proof.

**Giles,** *pointing at his deposition:* The proof is there! I have it from an honest

man who heard Putnam say it! The day his daughter cried out on Jacobs, he said

she’d given him a fair gift of land.

**Hathorne:** And the name of this man?

**Giles**, *taken aback:* What name?

**Hathorne**: The man that give you this information.

**Giles**, *hesitates, then:* Why, I - I cannot give you his name.

**Hathorne**: And why not?

**Giles**, *hesitates, then bursts out:* You know well why not! He.’ll lay in jail if I give his

name!

**Hathorne**: This is contempt of the court, Mr. Danforth!

**Danforth**, *to avoid that:* You will surely tell us the name.

**Giles:** I will not give you no name, I mentioned my wife’s name once and I’ll

burn in hell long enough for that. I stand mute.

1. **Hale**: Excellency, I have signed seventy-two death warrants; I am a minister of the Lord,

and I dare not take a life without there be a proof so immaculate no slightest qualm of

conscience may doubt it.

**Danforth:** Mr. Hale, you surely do not doubt my justice.

**Hale:** I have this morning signed away the soul of Rebecca

**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 confounded 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?

1. **Mary Warren**: I never saw no spirits.

**Parris**: Then see no spirits now, and prove to us that you can faint by your

own will, as you claim.

**Mary Warren**, *stares, searching for the emotion of it, and then shakes her head:*

I - cannot do it.

**Parris:** Then you will confess, will you not? It were attacking spirits made you faint!

**Mary Warren**: No, sir, I -

**Parris:** Your Excellency, this is a trick to blind the court!

**Mary Warren:** It’s not a trick! *She stands.* I - I used to faint because I - I thought

I saw spirits.

**Danforth**: *Thought* you saw them!

**Mary Warren:** But I did not, Your Honor.

**Hathorne**: How could you think you saw them unless you saw them?

**Mary Warren**: I - I cannot tell how, but I did. I - I heard the other girls

screaming, and you, Your Honor, you seemed to believe them, and I - It were

only sport in the beginning, sir, but then the whole world cried spirits, spirits,

and I - I promise you, Mr. Danforth, I only thought I saw them but I did not.

1. **Abigail**: Why, this - this - is a base question, sir.

**Danforth**: Child, I would have you consider it -

**Abigail:** I have been hurt, Mr. Danforth; I have seen my blood runnin.’ out! I

have been near to murdered every day because I done my duty pointing out the

Devil’s people - and this is my reward? To be mistrusted, denied, questioned

like a -

**Danforth**, *weakening:* Child, I do not mistrust you -

**Abigail**, *in an open threat:* Let *you* beware, Mr. Danforth. Think you to be so

mighty that the power of Hell may not turn *your* wits? Beware of it!

1. **Abigail**, *looking about in the air, clasping her arms about her as though cold:* I

- I know not. A wind, a cold wind, has come. *Her eyes fall on Mary Warren.*

**Mary Warren**, *terrified, pleading:* Abby!

**Mercy Lewis**, *shivering:* Your Honor, I freeze!

**Proctor:** They’re pretending!

**Hathorne**, *touching Abigail’s hand:* She is cold, Your Honor, touch her!

**Mercy Lewis**, *through chattering teeth:* Mary, do you send this shadow on me?

**Mary Warren**: Lord, save me!

**Susanna Walcott**: I freeze, I freeze!

**Abigail**, *shivering visibly:* It is a wind, a wind!

**MARY Warren:** Abby, don’t do that!

**Danforth,** *himself engaged and entered by Abigail:* Mary Warren, do you witch

her? I say to you, do you send your spirit out?

*With a hysterical cry Mary Warren starts to run. Proctor catches her.*

Mary Warren, *almost collapsing:* Let me go, Mr. Proctor, I cannot, I cannot -

Abigail, *crying to Heaven:* Oh, Heavenly Father, take away this shadow!

*without warning or hesitation, Proctor leaps at Abigail and, grabbing her by*

*the hair, pulls her to her feet. She screams in pain. Danforth, astonished, cries,*

*“What are you about?.” and Hathorne and Parris call, .“Take your hands of*

*her!.” and out of it all comes Proctor’s roaring voice.*

**Proctor**: How do you call Heaven! Whore! Whore!

1. **Elizabeth**: Your Honor, I - in that time I were sick. And I - My husband is a good and

righteous man. He is never drunk as some are, nor wastin’ his time at the shovelboard,

but always at his work. But in my sickness - you see, sir, I were a long time sick after

my last baby, and I thought I saw my husband somewhat turning from me. And this girl

- *She turns to Abigail.*

**Danforth**: Look at me.

**Elizabeth**: Aye, sir. Abigail Williams - *She breaks op.*

**Danforth**: What of Abigail Williams?

**Elizabeth:** I came to think he fancied her. And so one night I lost my wits, I think, and

put her out on the highroad.

**Danforth**: Your husband - did he indeed turn from you?

**Elizabeth**, *in agony:* My husband - is a goodly man, sir.

**Danforth**: Then he did not turn from you.

**Elizabeth**, *starting to glance at Proctor:* He -

**Danforth,** *reaches out and holds her face, then:* Look at me! To your own knowledge,

has John Proctor ever committed the crime of lechery? *1n a crisis of indecision she*

*cannot speak,* Answer my question! Is your husband a lecher!

**Elizabeth,** *faintly:* No, sir.

**Danforth**: Remove her, Marshal.

**Proctor:** Elizabeth, tell the truth!

**Danforth**: She has spoken. Remove her!

**Proctor**, *crying out:* Elizabeth, I have confessed it!

**Elizabeth**: Oh, God!

1. **Mary Warren**, *hysterically, pointing at Proctor, fearful of him:* My name, he want my name. .“I.’ll

murder you,.” he says, .“if my wife hangs! We must go and overthrow the court,.” he says!

***Danforth’****s head jerks toward Proctor, shock and horror in his face.*

**Proctor**, *turning, appealing to Hale:* Mr. Hale!

**Mary Warren**, *her sobs beginning:* He wake me every night, his eyes were like coals

and his fingers claw my neck, and I sign, I sign...

**Hale:** Excellency, this child.’s gone wild!

**Proctor,** *as Danforth.’s wide eyes pour on him:* Mary, Mary!

**Mary Warren**, *screaming at him:* No, I love God; I go your way no more. I love God, I

bless God. *Sobbing, she rushes to Abigail.* Abby, Abby, I.’ll never hurt you more! *They*

*all watch, as Abigail, out of her infinite charity, reaches out and draws the sobbing*

*Mary to her, and then looks up to Danforth.*

**Danforth,** *to Proctor:* What are you? *Proctor is beyond speech in his anger.* You are

combined with anti-Christ, are you not? I have seen your power; you will not deny it!

What say you, Mister?

**Hale**: Excellency -

**Danforth**: I will have nothing from you, Mr. Hale! *To Proctor:* Will you confess

yourself befouled with Hell, or do you keep that black allegiance yet? What say you?

**Proctor,** *his mind wild, breathless:* I say - I say - God is dead'

**Parris**: Hear it, hear it!

**Proctor,** *laughs insanely, then:* A fire, a fire is burning! I hear

the boot of Lucifer, I see his filthy face! And it is my face, and yours, Danforth! For

them that quail to bring men out of ignorance, as I have quailed, and as you quail now

when you know in all your black hearts that this be fraud - God damns our kind

especially, and we will burn, we will burn together!

**Danforth**: Marshal! Take him and Corey with him to the jail!

**Hale,** *starting across to the door:* I denounce these proceedings!

**Proctor:** You are pulling Heaven down and raising up a whore!