



- 117 **Danforth** (*after thinking on it*). Fetch Goody Proctor to me. Then let you bring him up.
- 118 **Herrick**. Aye, sir. (*Herrick goes. There is silence.*)
- 119 **Hale**. Excellency, if you postpone a week and publish to the town that you are striving for their confessions, that speak mercy on your part, not faltering.
- 120 **Danforth**. Mr. Hale, as God have not empowered me like Joshua to stop this sun from rising,<sup>7</sup> so I cannot withhold from them the perfection of their punishment.
- 121 **Hale** (*harder now*). If you think God wills you to raise rebellion, Mr. Danforth, you are mistaken!
- 122 **Danforth** (*instantly*). You have heard rebellion spoken in the town?
- 123 **Hale**. Excellency, there are orphans wandering from house to house; abandoned cattle bellow on the highroads, the stink of rotting crops hangs everywhere, and no man knows when the harlots' cry will end his life—and you wonder yet if rebellion's spoke? Better you should marvel how they do not burn your province!
- 124 **Danforth**. Mr. Hale, have you preached in Andover this month?
- 125 **Hale**. Thank God they have no need of me in Andover.
- 126 **Danforth**. You baffle me, sir. Why have you returned here?
- 127 **Hale**. Why, it is all simple. I come to do the Devil's work. I come to counsel Christians they should belie themselves. (*His sarcasm collapses.*) There is blood on my head! Can you not see the blood on my head!!
- 128 **Parris**. Hush! (*For he has heard footsteps. They all face the door. Herrick enters with Elizabeth. Her wrists are linked by heavy chain, which Herrick now removes. Her clothes are dirty; her face is pale and gaunt. Herrick goes out.*)
- 129 **Danforth** (*very politely*). Goody Proctor. (*She is silent.*) I hope you are hearty?
- 130 **Elizabeth** (*as a warning reminder*). I am yet six month before my time.
- 131 **Danforth**. Pray be at your ease, we come not for your life. We— (*uncertain how to plead, for he is not accustomed to it.*) Mr. Hale, will you speak with the woman?
- 132 **Hale**. Goody Proctor, your husband is marked to hang this morning. (*pause*)
- 133 **Elizabeth** (*quietly*). I have heard it.

<sup>7</sup> **like Joshua . . . rising**: According to the Bible, Joshua became leader of the Israelites after Moses died. He led the people to the Promised Land while the sun stood still.

#### ANALYZE DRAMATIC ELEMENTS

**Annotate:** Mark stage directions that show what life has been like for Elizabeth Proctor since she was last seen in Act Three.

**Analyze:** How does this description help the reader understand her situation?



- 134 **Hale.** You know, do you not, that I have no connection with the court? (*She seems to doubt it.*) I come of my own, Goody Proctor. I would save your husband's life, for if he is taken I count myself his murderer. Do you understand me?
- 135 **Elizabeth.** What do you want of me?
- 136 **Hale.** Goody Proctor, I have gone this three month like our Lord into the wilderness.<sup>8</sup> I have sought a Christian way, for damnation's doubled on a minister who counsels men to lie.
- 137 **Hathorne.** It is no lie, you cannot speak of lies.
- 138 **Hale.** It is a lie! They are innocent!
- 139 **Danforth.** I'll hear no more of that!
- 140 **Hale** (*continuing to Elizabeth*). Let you not mistake your duty as I mistook my own. I came into this village like a bridegroom to his beloved, bearing gifts of high religion; the very crowns of holy law I brought, and what I touched with my bright confidence, it died; and where I turned the eye of my great faith, blood flowed up. Beware, Goody Proctor—cleave to no faith when faith brings blood. It is mistaken law that leads you to sacrifice. Life, woman, life is God's most precious gift; no principle, however glorious, may justify the taking of it. I beg you, woman, prevail upon your husband to confess. Let him give his lie. Quail not before God's judgment in this, for it may well be God damns a liar less than he that throws his life away for pride. Will you plead with him? I cannot think he will listen to another.
- 141 **Elizabeth** (*quietly*). I think that be the Devil's argument.
- 142 **Hale** (*with a climactic desperation*). Woman, before the laws of God we are as swine! We cannot read His will!
- 143 **Elizabeth.** I cannot dispute with you, sir; I lack learning for it.
- 144 **Danforth** (*going to her*). Goody Proctor, you are not summoned here for disputation. Be there no wifely tenderness within you? He will die with the sunrise. Your husband. Do you understand it? (*She only looks at him.*) What say you? Will you contend with him? (*She is silent.*) Are you stone? I tell you true, woman, had I no other proof of your unnatural life, your dry eyes now would be sufficient evidence that you delivered up your soul to Hell! A very ape would weep at such calamity! Have the Devil dried up any tear of pity in you? (*She is silent.*) Take her out. It profit nothing she should speak to him!
- 145 **Elizabeth** (*quietly*). Let me speak with him, Excellency.
- 146 **Parris** (*with hope*). You'll strive with him? (*She hesitates.*)
- 147 **Danforth.** Will you plead for his confession or will you not?
- 148 **Elizabeth.** I promise nothing. Let me speak with him.

<sup>8</sup> **like our Lord . . . wilderness:** According to the New Testament, Jesus spent 40 days wandering in the desert while fasting.



149 *(A sound—the sibilance of dragging feet on stone. They turn. A pause. Herrick enters with John Proctor. His wrists are chained. He is another man, bearded, filthy, his eyes misty as though webs had overgrown them. He halts inside the doorway, his eye caught by the sight of Elizabeth. The emotion flowing between them prevents anyone from speaking for an instant. Now Hale, visibly affected, goes to Danforth and speaks quietly.)*

150 **Hale.** Pray, leave them, Excellency.

151 **Danforth** *(pressing Hale impatiently aside)*. Mr. Proctor, you have been notified, have you not? *(Proctor is silent, staring at Elizabeth.)* I see light in the sky, Mister; let you counsel with your wife, and may God help you turn your back on Hell. *(Proctor is silent, staring at Elizabeth.)*

152 **Hale** *(quietly)*. Excellency, let—

153 *(Danforth brushes past Hale and walks out. Hale follows. Cheever stands and follows, Hathorne behind. Herrick goes. Parris, from a safe distance, offers.)*

154 **Parris.** If you desire a cup of cider, Mr. Proctor, I am sure I—*(Proctor turns an icy stare at him, and he breaks off. Parris raises his palms toward Proctor.)* God lead you now. *(Parris goes out.)*

155 *(Alone. Proctor walks to her, halts. It is as though they stood in a spinning world. It is beyond sorrow, above it. He reaches out his hand as though toward an embodiment not quite real, and as he touches her, a strange soft sound, half laughter, half amazement, comes from his throat. He pats her hand. She covers his hand with hers. And then, weak, he sits. Then she sits, facing him.)*

156 **Proctor.** The child?

157 **Elizabeth.** It grows.

158 **Proctor.** There is no word of the boys?

159 **Elizabeth.** They're well. Rebecca's Samuel keeps them.

160 **Proctor.** You have not seen them?

161 **Elizabeth.** I have not. *(She catches a weakening in herself and downs it.)*

162 **Proctor.** You are a—marvel, Elizabeth.

163 **Elizabeth.** You—have been tortured?

164 **Proctor.** Aye. *(Pause. She will not let herself be drowned in the sea that threatens her.)* They come for my life now.

165 **Elizabeth.** I know it.

166 *(pause)*

167 **Proctor.** None—have yet confessed?

168 **Elizabeth.** There be many confessed.

169 **Proctor.** Who are they?

#### ANALYZE LITERARY DEVICES

**Annotate:** Mark the figurative language in paragraphs 154 and 164.

**Evaluate:** How do these figures of speech reveal Proctor and Elizabeth's emotional states?



## NOTICE & NOTE

- 170 **Elizabeth.** There be a hundred or more, they say. Goody Ballard is one; Isaiah Goodkind is one. There be many.
- 171 **Proctor.** Rebecca?
- 172 **Elizabeth.** Not Rebecca. She is one foot in Heaven now; naught may hurt her more.
- 173 **Proctor.** And Giles?
- 174 **Elizabeth.** You have not heard of it?
- 175 **Proctor.** I hear nothin', where I am kept.
- 176 **Elizabeth.** Giles is dead.
- 177 (*He looks at her incredulously.*)
- 178 **Proctor.** When were he hanged?
- 179 **Elizabeth** (*quietly, factually*). He were not hanged. He would not answer aye or nay to his indictment; for if he denied the charge they'd hang him surely, and auction out his property. So he stand mute, and died Christian under the law. And so his sons will have his farm. It is the law, for he could not be condemned a wizard without he answer the indictment, aye or nay.
- 180 **Proctor.** Then how does he die?
- 181 **Elizabeth** (*gently*). They press him, John.
- 182 **Proctor.** Press?
- 183 **Elizabeth.** Great stones they lay upon his chest until he plead aye or nay. (*with a tender smile for the old man*) They say he give them but two words. "More weight," he says. And died.
- 184 **Proctor** (*numbed—a thread to weave into his agony*). "More weight."
- 185 **Elizabeth.** Aye. It were a fearsome<sup>9</sup> man, Giles Corey.
- 186 (*pause*)
- 187 **Proctor** (*with great force of will, but not quite looking at her*). I have been thinking I would confess to them, Elizabeth. (*She shows nothing.*) What say you? If I give them that?
- 188 **Elizabeth.** I cannot judge you, John.
- 189 (*pause*)
- 190 **Proctor** (*simply—a pure question*). What would you have me do?
- 191 **Elizabeth.** As you will, I would have it. (*slight pause*) I want you living, John. That's sure.
- 192 **Proctor** (*pauses, then with a flailing of hope*). Giles' wife? Have she confessed?
- 193 **Elizabeth.** She will not.
- 194 (*pause*)

<sup>9</sup> **fearsome:** courageous.

MCS



- 195 **Proctor.** It is a pretense, Elizabeth.
- 196 **Elizabeth.** What is?
- 197 **Proctor.** I cannot mount the gibbet like a saint. It is a fraud. I am not that man. (*She is silent.*) My honesty is broke, Elizabeth; I am no good man. Nothing's spoiled by giving them this lie that were not rotten long before.
- 198 **Elizabeth.** And yet you've not confessed till now. That speak goodness in you.
- 199 **Proctor.** Spite only keeps me silent. It is hard to give a lie to dogs. (*Pause. For the first time he turns directly to her.*) I would have your forgiveness, Elizabeth.
- 200 **Elizabeth.** It is not for me to give, John, I am—
- 201 **Proctor.** I'd have you see some honesty in it. Let them that never lied die now to keep their souls. It is pretense for me, a vanity that will not blind God nor keep my children out of the wind. (pause) What say you?
- 202 **Elizabeth** (*upon a heaving sob that always threatens*). John, it come to naught that I should forgive you, if you'll not forgive yourself. (*Now he turns away a little, in great agony.*) It is not my soul, John, it is yours. (*He stands, as though in physical pain, slowly rising to his feet with a great immortal longing to find his answer. It is difficult to say, and she is on the verge of tears.*) Only be sure of this, for I know it now: Whatever you will do, it is a good man does it. (*He turns his doubting, searching gaze upon her.*) I have read my heart this three month, John. (pause) I have sins of my own to count. It needs a cold wife to prompt lechery.
- 203 **Proctor** (*in great pain*). Enough, enough—
- 204 **Elizabeth** (*now pouring out her heart*). Better you should know me!
- 205 **Proctor.** I will not hear it! I know you!
- 206 **Elizabeth.** You take my sins upon you, John—
- 207 **Proctor** (*in agony*). No, I take my own, my own!
- 208 **Elizabeth.** John, I counted myself so plain, so poorly made, no honest love could come to me! Suspicion kissed you when I did; I never knew how I should say my love. It were a cold house I kept! (*In fright, she swerves, as Hathorne enters.*)
- 209 **Hathorne.** What say you, Proctor? The sun is soon up.
- 210 (*Proctor, his chest heaving, stares, turns to Elizabeth. She comes to him as though to plead, her voice quaking.*)
- 211 **Elizabeth.** Do what you will. But let none be your judge. There be no higher judge under Heaven than Proctor is! Forgive me, forgive me, John—I never knew such goodness in the world! (*She covers her face, weeping.*)

### ANALYZE CHARACTERS AND MOTIVATIONS

**Annotate:** Mark what Proctor says about his honesty.

**Analyze:** Why does he feel this way about his honesty?