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**A short guide to:
Year of Wonders by Geraldine Brooks & The Crucible by
Arthur Miller**

written by Jonathan Wong

Year of Wonders

Author Bio

Name: Geraldine Brooks

Key facts:

- Australian-American novelist, born September 1955
- Her 2005 novel *March* won the Pulitzer Prize
- Formerly a journalist

Mini Plot Summary:

When an infected bolt of cloth carries plague from London to an isolated village, a housemaid named Anna Frith emerges as an unlikely heroine and healer. Through Anna's eyes we follow the story of the fateful year of 1666, as she and her fellow villagers confront the spread of disease and superstition. (From geraldinebrooks.com)

Extended Plot Summary:

The story begins in Eyam, 1666, a year after the Plague has ravaged the town. Anna Frith (servant to the town's rector, Michael Mompellion), laments that the apples have all begun to rot, and that 'there are so few people to do the picking'. Anna also reflects on

the death of her husband, Sam (two years ago), and of Elinor Mompellion, who died very recently.

The narrative shifts back in time to the season of spring, 1665. George Viccars, a tailor from London, has come to Eyam and is boarding at Anna's house. He is 'clean and neat' and a 'modest man' and Anna '[values] his kindness'. Anna is absorbed by her 'reawakened feelings' for George, but before any romance can develop between them, he falls into a 'weakened state' and eventually dies.

Prior to his death, George instructed Anna to 'burn [all the clothing]' he made, but she ultimately concludes that she 'had no right to withhold it from [the townspeople]'. The plague quickly spreads throughout the village as a result, and many people soon fall gravely ill. Among the dead are the children of the Hadfields (Anna's neighbours), and Anna's children, Jamie and Tom, soon die, too.

Fear spreads throughout the town, culminating in an incident where the town's healers - Mem Gowdie and Anys Gowdie - are killed. The townspeople believe that Mem is a 'quack physician' and a 'witch [who] consorted with the Devil's spawn', and they decide to 'swim her' in the lake (i.e. drown her). Anys Gowdie is '[hanged] ... with her own rope'. Michael Mompellion arrives at the scene and chastises the men who killed them, among which are John Gordon, Brad Hamilton and Martin Highfield.

Michael convinces the town to quarantine themselves against the Plague. He calls it a 'trial' of God that the villagers must overcome, and asks them to 'not flinch' and 'not fail'. Everyone agrees to this quarantine except for the Bradfords, who '[slip] out of the church unnoticed' and escape to Oxfordshire. Michael urges Colonel Bradford to 'reconsider [his] departure' but he responds that he must '[safeguard] what is mine'.

Anna assists Elinor in tending to the sick villagers. At one point, she is required to help midwife the baby of Mary Daniel. Anna discovers a piece of parchment in the possession of Kate Talbot - it has a spell written on it ('Abracadabra'), which someone has sold to her, and Anna chides Kate for believing 'these wicked follies'.

Anna turns to poppy oil to ease her pain. When she ventures out to the home of the Gowdies looking for more of it, she finds Elinor there, too. Anna is ashamed of her selfishness ('I came here not seeking herbs to help others ... only myself') but Elinor is

understanding, and proceeds to confess that she has also turned to poppy in the past in order to numb her pain.

Elinor tells Anna a story from her past: when she was younger ('just fourteen'), Elinor had a premarital affair which resulted in a pregnancy - and subsequent abortion - wherein she 'violated [her] own body with a fire iron'. Due to this incident, Elinor can no longer have children, and she tells Anna that it was gracious of Michael to still marry her in spite of this transgression. Anna and Elinor work together to help the town, and they do a lot of good for other people. They help retain the mining rights for an orphaned child named Merry Wickford - they do this by '[drawing] a dish' of ore from the Wickford mine themselves.

The town sexton dies, having been over-exhausted from digging graves. Joss Bont, Anna's father, becomes the new grave-digger for the town. But Joss ends up charging a 'thieving price' for his services and Anna laments that he has 'no check on his increasing greed'.

Soon enough, Joss attempts to bury a man named Christopher Unwin alive - he does this in order to rob Unwin's house. Among the things Joss steals are a 'silver ewer', a 'silver salt dish' and 'two brazen candlesticks'. He is subsequently charged for theft, and he is impaled by the hands to Unwin's mine. He dies of exposure.

It turns out that Aphra Bont is the person selling fake charms to the villagers, and Elinor is disbelieving that someone would '[prey] upon their desperate fellows' in such a way.

Anna reflects that 'fear took each of [them] differently' - Andrew Merrick ventures off to live alone in a 'hut he built for himself', Jane Martin becomes an 'alehouse haunter, seeking insensibility in the pot'. But John and Urith Gordon take the 'queerest path' of all - they flagellate themselves with 'spikes ... like a fishhook' because they believe 'self-punishment [can] allay God's wrath'.

Jane Martin is 'too drunk even to cover her nakedness' and Michael condemns her behaviour. He calls her a 'sinner' and states that 'she has taken the pure vessel of her body and filled it with corruption'.

Michael tells the village that ‘we must undertake here a great burning’, and so the town proceeds to set fire to most of their possessions until they are ‘stripped bare indeed’.

Aphra is discovered to have been the person selling fake charms, and she is chastised by the whole congregation, who hurl insults at her. Michael then ‘[errs, and errs] grievously’ - he allows Brand and Robert to ‘[confine Aphra] until her hearing the next day’. Brand and Robert throw Aphra into a sewer pit, filled with pig droppings, and by the end of her ordeal she is a ‘gibbering, broken thing’.

Aphra’s daughter (Faith) dies from the Plague, and she is ‘strung up like a puppet’ by the crazed Aphra, who ‘[tries] to mask the dead, black Plague flesh with some kind of chalky paste’.

The Plague begins to subside - the townspeople gather for worship, and Anna notes that ‘for the first time in almost a year, there was not one newly missing face’. Aphra arrives at the gathering ‘clutching the maggoty remnants of her daughter’s corpse’ in one arm, and she wields a large knife in her other hand.

‘Wild in her new frenzy’, Aphra swings her knife at Elinor and slashes her throat, killing her. She then ‘[turns] the knife on herself and [sinks] it to the hilt, deep into her chest’.

The narrative moves forward to autumn of 1666. The Plague is past, but Michael is wracked by grief due to the death of his wife. Anna, meanwhile, ‘[continues] to serve [Elinor] as best [she] could’, and she considers that ‘attending upon Mr. Mompellion’s grief, at least, gave me a way of managing my own’.

Feeling lonely, and seeking comfort, Anna and Michael end up sleeping together. As they are lying in bed, however, Michael confesses something to Anna - he confesses the truth behind his marriage with his wife, namely that he ‘never lay with Elinor’ throughout their marriage. He explains that his abstaining from sex was a form of punishment - an ‘eye for an eye’. He reasons that ‘because lust caused the sin, I deemed that she should atone by living ... life with her lusts unrequited’.

Anna is astounded that Michael could be so cruel to Elinor, and after leaving his bedside, she reflects that she ‘was sorry he had used her so’. She feels guilty that she ‘had stolen from her - stolen what should have been hers, her wedding night’.

Elizabeth Bradford's mother is about to give birth, but the surgeon '[has given] her up', and he has told Elizabeth that 'a woman of her age flirts with death by getting with child'. Anna tells Elizabeth that she has 'had some small experience attending childbirths', and she successfully helps Elizabeth's mother deliver the baby.

Elizabeth immediately tries to kill the baby due to the fact that it was 'a bastard, born of adultery'. Anna tells Elizabeth to 'give her to me, and [she] will raise her with love' - she then decides to flee from the town in order to protect the child.

Before Anna leaves, Michael finds her and tells her that he is 'sorry for what passed between us, sorry for everything', but that he is not looking for forgiveness and instead has 'come now only to help you go from here'. He offers her Anteros, his horse, so that she can make a quick escape.

Years later, Anna is in the city of Oran, Algeria, in North Africa. She is happy that she has '[severed] every tie that bound [her] to [her] old life'. She reflects that she 'did not want to walk each day in yet another place where Elinor had walked' and that in seeking new home, she believed 'the child and I together might make something entirely new'.

Anna works with Ahmed Bey, 'the most famous doctor in Barbary', and thinks he is 'the wisest and kindest man I have ever known'. She becomes a midwife and raises two children - Elinor (whom she conceived with Michael) and Aisha, the child she saved from death.

Overarching themes

Communities in crisis

- Fear and suspicion play a significant role in leading the small towns into crisis
 - The Crucible:
 - In Salem, when Betty Parris refuses to wake, the first instinct of the townspeople is to look for 'unnatural causes' (i.e. the Devil)
 - Reverend Hale comments that 'the Devil is alive in Salem'
 - Thomas Putnam believes there are 'hurtful, vengeful spirits' attacking Betty, Abigail and the other girls

- In Eyam, they murder the Healers
 - The townspeople believe Mem Gowdie to be a ‘quack physician’ and a ‘witch [who] consorted with the Devil’s spawn’
 - They decide to ‘swim her’ - i.e. drown her in a lake
 - They murder Anys Gowdie, too
 - ‘They [hung] her with her own rope’
 - Michael Mompellion comments that ‘dangerous ideas may spread on the very wind ... as easily as the seeds of disease’
- Certain characters take advantage of the crisis: they act purely out of self-interest, be it for self-gain or self-preservation
 - Aphra, Joss
 - Joss is tasked with digging graves for those who have died of the plague
 - He charges a ‘thieving price’ for his services
 - Anna observes that he has ‘no check on his increasing greed’
 - Aphra sells fake charms to villagers that she claims will protect them from the Plague
 - She is caught ‘trying to frighten ... Charity’ into buying a charm
 - Anna is ‘filled with disgust and anger’ when she discovers this fact
 - Abigail
 - Abigail is quick to lay blame on others in order to save herself
 - After the girls are discovered dancing in the forest, Abigail tells Reverend Parris that the slave Tituba ‘made [her] do it’
 - When Mary is testifying in front of Danforth and Hathorne, Abigail claims that Mary is practising ‘a black art’ and pretends that she is ‘stretching her claws’
 - Thomas Putnam
 - Putnam accuses Martha Corey of witchcraft in order to acquire more land
 - Putnam provides the court with ‘abundant evidence’ that Martha Corey is ‘reading ... fortunes’

- Giles Corey claims that Putnam is ‘reaching out for land’ and that he is feeding the court ‘lies’
 - Reverend Parris
 - He reverses his denials of witchcraft in order to preserve himself
 - He tells the court that John Proctor is ‘mischief’ and calls Mary Warren’s testimony a ‘vile lie’
- The crisis results in certain characters acting on their inner feelings - in The Crucible, it is their resentments, in Year of Wonders, it is their suspicions/prejudices
 - The deaths of Mem and Anys Gowdie
 - The townspeople believe Mem Gowdie to be a ‘quack physician’ and a ‘witch [who] consorted with the Devil’s spawn’
 - They decide to ‘swim her’ - i.e. drown her in a lake
 - They murder Anys Gowdie, too
 - ‘They [hung] her with her own rope’
 - Inner resentments in Salem
 - Rebecca Nurse is charged with the ‘murder of Goody Putnam’s babies’
 - The Putnams dislike the Nurses, so they ensure Rebecca Nurse is accused and charged
 - A man named Walcott charges Martha Corey (Giles’ wife) with ‘bewitching [his pigs]’
 - He does this because she refuses to give him his ‘money back’
 - (He purchased the pigs from her)
- The crisis also brings out the best in some people
 - Anna, Michael
 - Anna and Elinor
 - They help young Merry Wickford when a man named David Burton attempts to ‘nick’ her claim on a mine
 - Elinor insists to Anna that ‘[they] shall get this dish out for the child’
 - They tell Merry that she ‘will not have to face [the loss of her family’s mine]’
 - Anna

- Although she is inexperienced, Anna helps to ‘midwife Mary Daniel’
 - She and Elinor realise that ‘[they] are all [Mary] has’ and they are determined to ‘do the best [they] can’
 - Michael
 - Establishes the quarantine
 - He asks the residents of Eyam to ‘accept this Cross’ and demands that they do not ‘[carry] the seeds of the Plague’ which will result in ‘hundreds [dying]’
 - John, Reverend Hale, Elizabeth
 - Reverend Hale
 - Attempts to convince Danforth to postpone the hangings
 - Asks that Danforth ‘postpone a week’ and reasons to him that it will ‘speak mercy on [his] part’
 - Elizabeth
 - She attempts to convince her husband to confess to witchcraft in order to save his life
 - Tells John she ‘wants [him] living’
 - John Proctor
 - Values his integrity, and refuses to confess to ‘lies’
 - Refuses to implicate other townspeople as consorting with the Devil
 - When Danforth asks him whether he saw ‘Rebecca Nurse in [the Devil’s] company’, Proctor replies ‘No, I did not’
 - He tells Danforth that he ‘[speaks] his own sins; [he] cannot judge another’
- In both texts, the crisis results in some alarming behaviour
 - Year of Wonders
 - John Gordon flagellating himself to ward off the bubonic plague
 - Anna observes that fear ‘took each of us differently’. Some, such as Andrew Merrick, withdraw from the village to live a hermit-like existence.

- Others, such as Jane Martin, 'slaked their dread in drink and their loneliness in wanton caresses'
 - The Crucible
 - There are 'orphans wandering from house to house'
 - People are '[swearing] to anything' to avoid being hanged
- In The Crucible, crisis ultimately brings Salem to ruin, while in Year of Wonders, Eyam eventually manages to heal
 - The Crucible
 - Reverend Hale observes that there are:
 - 'abandoned cattle ... on the highroads' due to the fact that 'their masters are in the jails'
 - 'Rotting crops'
 - Due to what Reverend Hale terms as 'pride' and 'vanity', John Proctor decides to hang in order to preserve what Elizabeth calls his 'goodness'
 - The hysteria even spreads to other towns
 - Parris mentions that there is 'rebellion in Andover'
 - Year of Wonders
 - The plague ends
 - 'The Plague was past'
 - Anna is able to find happiness in Oran
 - She is able to 'make something entirely new'

Religious beliefs

- The religious influences in both Eyam and Salem lead to superstitions
 - Year of Wonders
 - Kate buys a strange charm - a piece of paper reading 'Abracadabra'
 - She believes she has bought it from the 'ghost' of Anys Gowdie
 - The Crucible
 - When Betty and Ruth fall sick, people are convinced they are being attacked by the devil
 - Thomas Putnam is convinced there is 'a murdering with among [them]'

- All the townspeople believe in ‘Lucifer’ and his ‘black book’
 - When Sarah Good confesses that she ‘wrote [Lucifer’s] name ... with her blood’, the court believes her
- In both texts, religion provides characters with a sense of conviction about good and evil, (although Anna in ‘Year of Wonders’ does not possess this conviction)
 - Year of Wonders
 - Michael Mompellion is convinced the town must quarantine themselves for the greater good
 - He instructs them that they must ‘let none enter and [let] none leave’
 - He tells them they must ‘accept this Cross’ and ‘carry it in God’s Holy Name’
 - Anna does not have faith that all actions are either godly or satanic
 - She recognises early on that ‘how [she] had been taught to view the world’ was not necessarily correct
 - This is due to Anys Gowdie
 - ‘Anys Gowdie confounded such thinking’
 - ‘She did good’
 - ‘The well-being of our village rested more on her works, and those of her aunt, than on the works of the rectory’s occupant’
 - Anna also questions whether God exists, or whether he would even care about the people on earth
 - ‘Why should I believe that God cared for such a small life such as mine?’
 - The Crucible
 - Deputy Governor Danforth refuses to delay the hangings, stating that ‘postponement [would speak] a floundering on [his] part’
 - He is adamant that ‘while [he speaks] God’s law, [he] will not crack its voice with whimpering’
 - Danforth declares that he will ‘hang ten thousand’ if they dare rise against the law

- In *The Crucible*, characters view the world in terms of polarities - i.e. there is only good and evil, and nothing in between. *Year of Wonders* is much the same, although Anna at some points is able to consider a different viewpoint
 - *The Crucible*
 - Deputy Governor Danforth stresses that good Christians can only be with the court or against it: 'there be no road between'
 - Danforth proclaims that 'an ocean of salt tears could not melt the resolution of the statutes'
 - *Year of Wonders*
 - Anna has been taught to view the world in terms of polarities
 - She reflects that there are 'two natures', which she describes as 'godly and right, or Satanic and evil'
 - BUT
 - She contemplates whether 'perhaps each was false, equally' and that 'the Plague was neither of God nor the Devil, but simply a thing in Nature, as the stone on which we stub a toe'
 - George Viccars questions Anys Gowdie's 'lustfulness and debauchery'
 - Anna responds that Anys lives in a 'hard world', and that she is not likely to be concerned with 'how vile [she smells]'.
 - Anna's point is that Anys' 'debauchery' does not define her - that she is still capable of being a good person in spite of her sins
- In *Year of Wonders*, religious faith begins to fade when crisis takes hold, whereas in *The Crucible*, the townspeople hold firm to their belief in God
 - *Year of Wonders*
 - Mompellion is so shaken by the events of the plague that he concludes 'there is no God'
 - The plague causes the people of Eyam to doubt their faith, too
 - 'Whispers passed that Mr. Mompellion's sermon was mistaken'

- Anna observes that ‘fear ... was working strange changes’ and that it ‘[corroded] their ability for clear thought’
 - Anna notes that ‘we were ... weary of words. What had they brought us, after all?’
 - At the end of the novel, when Anna is living in Oran, she refers to the ‘flimsy, tattered thing that is the remnant of [her] own belief’
 - She pictures her faith ‘like the faded threads of a banner on a battlement, shot-shredded’
- The Crucible
 - Even when her husband goes to the gallows, Elizabeth is proud that he ‘[has] his goodness now’
 - Danforth, towards the end of the play, declares that America is a ‘Christian country’
 - There are hints in a monologue from Reverend Hale that the events of Salem have changed people’s minds to some degree
 - He tells Elizabeth to ‘cleave to no faith when faith brings blood’
 - BUT ultimately he refers to ‘God’s judgement’ and states that he ‘[seeks] a Christian way’

Triangular relationships

- In ‘The Crucible’, poor relationships are the catalyst for crisis, whereas in ‘Year of Wonders’, they are a source of strength
 - The Crucible
 - The relationship between Abigail Williams and the Proctors in The Crucible forms a negative triangle
 - Abigail is deeply in love with Proctor, and she tells him she ‘cannot sleep for dreamin’ and urges him to admit that he ‘loved [her] then and [still does] now’
 - Year of Wonders
 - Together, Anna and the Mompellions carry the burden of supporting the devastated community
 - They help Merry Wickford

- They help to midwife Mary Daniel

Sin and redemption

- In both texts, the idea of sin hangs heavily over many of the main characters
 - Year of Wonders
 - Michael believes Elinor's abortion to be her 'gravest' sin
 - He thus punishes her by withholding intimacy throughout their marriage
 - He believes that 'she should atone' by living her life with 'her lusts unrequited'
 - Characters like John Gordon are 'flagellants' who believe that 'by grievous self-punishment, they can allay God's wrath'
 - The Crucible
 - When Elizabeth mentions her thoughts to John about him committing lechery, he explains how much the consequences of his sins have affected him
 - 'Were I stoned I would have cracked for shame this seven month!'
 - John believes that Elizabeth's 'spirit twists around the single error of [his] life' and that he 'will never tear it free'

Key Characters:

Year of Wonders

Main characters:

- *Anna Frith*
 - Protagonist
 - Housemaid
 - Intelligent
 - Selfless and giving
 - The events of the Plague result in Anna losing her faith
- *Michael Mompellion*

- Rector
- De facto leader of Eyam
- Charismatic
- Convinces town to quarantine themselves
- Refused to have sex with his wife due to her abortion

- *Elinor Mompellion*
 - Young wife of Michael Mompellion
 - Kind and generous
 - Had a self-induced abortion when young, leaving her unable to bear children
 - Dies towards end of novel

- *Josiah 'Joss' Bont*
 - Anna's father
 - Greedy and amoral
 - Tries to bury a man alive in order to steal from him

- *Aphra Bont*
 - Anna's stepmother
 - Sells fake charms to the other townspeople, and proceeds to be punished by being thrown into a sewer pit
 - Becomes deranged
 - Kills Elinor

Other characters:

- Mem & Anys Gowdie (Healers, killed by other townspeople who are fearful that they possess strange powers)
- Elizabeth Bradford/The Bradfords (Flee Eyam when the Plague begins to ravage the town)
- John & Urith Gordon (Flagellate themselves in the belief that it will save them from the Plague)

The Crucible

Main characters:

- *John Proctor*
 - Husband of Elizabeth Proctor
 - Had an affair with Abigail Williams
 - Powerful man
 - Possesses a sense of integrity

- *Abigail Williams*
 - 17 years old
 - Niece of Reverend Parris
 - Still in love with John Proctor
 - Deceptive
 - Accuses many others of witchcraft

- *Elizabeth Proctor*
 - Good woman
 - Has a reputation for never lying
 - Lies at a crucial stage of the play in order to protect the reputation of John Proctor
 - Blames herself for John Proctor's affair with Abigail

- *Reverend Hale*
 - Initially has a black-and-white way of thinking
 - As the story progresses, Hale begins to doubt the stories of Abigail and the other girls
 - Attempts to convince Danforth & the court to stop the hangings

- *Deputy Governor Danforth*
 - Highly dogmatic
 - Comes to Salem to preside over the witch trials
 - Sends many innocent people to the gallows
 - Believes that what he's doing is right

Other characters:

- Thomas Putnam (Rich farmer, seeks to increase his wealth by accusing Martha Corey of witchcraft and thus taking the Corey land)
- Giles Corey (Poor farmer, wife is accused of witchcraft)
- Francis Nurse (Rich farmer, wife is accused of witchcraft)

Key quotes

Year of Wonders:

“I knew how easy it is for widow to be turned witch in the common mind”

“Dark and light, dark and light, dark and light. That was how I had been taught to view the world. The Puritans who ministered to us here had held that all actions and thoughts could be only one of two natures: godly and right, or Satanic and evil.”

“Your blood will drive this sickness from my mother’s body.”

“But how would we repay the kindness of those who received us, if we carried the seeds of the Plague to them? What burden would we bear if, because of us, hundreds die who might have lived? No! Let us accept this Cross. Let us carry it in God’s Holy Name!”

“I said then, and I say now, that my life and the lives of my family are of more consequence to me than some possible risk to strangers.” (Colonel Bradford)

“You could have run and sought your own safety, and yet your loyal heart taught you to do otherwise.” (Michael Mompellion to Brand)

“This Plague will make heroes of us all, whether we will or no. But you are the first of them.” (Mompellion to Brand)

“Why did He raise us up out of the clay, to acquire good and expedient skills, and then send us back so soon to be dust when we yet had useful years before us?”

“Burton, a neighbouring miner, took his chance and placed the first nick upon the spindle of her stowe.”

“For one time, at least, in that hard season, I had the satisfaction of having done a thing that had come out right.”

“In his callousness, he would knock upon the doors of the ailing, saying if they wanted a grave he would dig it then and there or not at all. And so a person who yet lived would lie in his sickbed and listen to the rise and fall of my father’s spud.”

“Aphra has ever been superstitious. I believe that she convinced my father that she had somehow obtained chants or charms or somesuch to preserve them from the Plague’s infections.”

“One of these believes we embraced, the other we scorned as superstition. But perhaps each was false, equally. Perhaps the Plague was neither of God nor the Devil, but simply a thing in Nature, as the stone on which we stub a toe.”

“So where, exactly, in the design of the world, did I believe that matters tilted the scale sufficient to garner God’s notice? If I did not think He cared for the lie of a rock, why should I believe that He cared for a small life such as mine? It came to me then that we, all of us, spent a very great deal of time pondering these questions that, in the end, we could not answer. If we balanced the time we spent contemplating God, and why He afflicted us, with more thought as to how the Plague spread and poisoned our blood, then we might come nearer to saving our lives.”

“It seems that dangerous ideas may spread on the very wind and seek us out near or far, as easily as the seeds of disease have done.”

“Laid blame for the Plague on the sins of others”

“I have read of how in foreign cities they put hundreds of such innocents to death by fire.”

“She has taken the pure vessel of her body and filled it with corruption. She has done this knowingly. She shall be punished...” (Michael about Jane Martin)

“Whispers passed that Mr. Mompellion’s sermon was mistaken. Most dismissed such talking. But fear, as I have said, was working strange changes in all of us, corroding our ability for clear thought.”

“If the rector doesn’t do something, and quickly, I thought, this crowd will become a mob, and unslakable. We were all of us like wounded animals, our hurts so raw and our fear so great that we would lash out at anyone, especially someone who had acted as evilly as Aphra.”

The Crucible:

“The Salem tragedy, which is about to begin in these pages, developed from a paradox. It is a paradox in whose grip we still live, and there is no prospect yet that we will discover its resolution. Simply, it was this: for good purposes, even high purposes, the people of Salem developed a theocracy, a combine of state and religious power whose function was to keep the community together, and to prevent any kind of disunity that might open it to destruction by material or ideological enemies. It was forged for a necessary purpose and accomplished that purpose. But all organisation is and must be grounded on the idea of exclusion and prohibition, just as two objects cannot occupy the same space. Evidently the time came in New England when the repressions of order were heavier than seemed warranted by the dangers against which the order was organised. The witch-hunt was a perverse manifestation of the panic which set in among all classes when the balance began to turn towards greater individual freedom.”

“We cannot leap to witchcraft. They will howl me out of Salem for such corruption in my house.” (Parris)

“Thomas Putnam felt that his own name and the honour of his family had been smirched by the village, and he meant to right matters however he could.”

“Now look you. All of you. We danced. And Tituba conjured Ruth Putnam’s dead sisters. And that is all.” (Abigail)

“The necessity of the Devil may become evident as a weapon, a weapon designed and used time and time again in every age to whip men into a surrender to a particular church or church-state.”

“She made me do it! She made Betty do it!” (Abigail about Tituba)

“I want the light of God, I want the sweet love of Jesus! I danced for the devil; I saw him; I wrote in his book; I go back to Jesus; I kiss His hand. I saw Sarah Good with the Devil! I saw Goody Osburn with the Devil! I saw Bridget Bishop with the Devil!” (Abigail)

“There be a thousand names; why does she call mine? There be a certain danger in calling such a name - I am no Goody Good that sleeps in ditches, nor Osburn, drunk and half-witted. She'd dare not call out such a farmer's wife but there be monstrous profit in it. She thinks to take my place, John.” (Elizabeth about Abigail)

Hale: “They have confessed it.”

Proctor: “And why not, if they must hang for denyin' it? There are them that will swear to anything before they'll hang; have you never thought of that?”

“That bloody mongrel Walcott charge her. Y'see, he buy a pig off my wife four or five year ago, and the pig died soon after. So he come dancin' in for his money back. So my Martha, she says to him, 'Walcott, if you haven't the wit to feed a pig properly, you'll not come to own many,' she says. Now he goes to court and claims that from that day to this he cannot keep a pig alive for more than four weeks because my Martha bewitch them with her books!” (Giles Corey)

“Why do you never wonder if Parris be innocent, or Abigail? Is the accuser always holy now? Were they born this morning as clean as God's fingers? I'll tell you what's walking Salem - vengeance is walking Salem. We are what we always were in Salem, but now the little crazy children are jangling the keys of the kingdom, and common vengeance writes the law! This warrant's vengeance! I'll not give my wife to vengeance!” (Proctor)

“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.” (Danforth)

“Postponement now speaks a floundering on my part; reprieve or pardon must cast doubt upon the guilt of them that died till now. While I speak God's law, I will not crack its

voice with whimpering. If retaliation is your fear, know this - I should hang ten thousand that dared to rise against the law, and an ocean of salt tears could not melt the resolution of the statutes.” (Danforth)

“I blacken all of them when this is nailed to the church the very day they hang for silence!” (Proctor)