




1. Salem, Massachusetts, 1692. Reverend Parris discovers his daughter, Betty, and her friends, dancing in the forest; Betty faints at being discovered.




2. Rumors of witchcraft begin to spread through the town and Abigail – Parris' niece – eventually admits that the reverend's black slave, Tituba, was trying to conjure spirits.




3. Abigail is left alone with local farmer John Proctor, with whom we learn she had an affair when she worked in his household; she tells him there was no witchcraft, and that she loves him, but he insists that the relationship is over.




4. Reverend Hale – a witch-hunter from a neighboring town – arrives. Threatened with punishment, Tituba breaks down, admits to communicating with the devil and begins to name other witches in the town; a chant with which Abigail, and then Betty, hysterically join.




5. Eight days later, Proctor and his wife Elizabeth discuss the court that has been established to charge witches.




6. They learn from their servant, Mary Warren – a friend of Abigail's who is also accusing people in town – that Elizabeth herself has come under suspicion.




7. Elizabeth asks Proctor to go to the court and expose Abigail as a liar, but he refuses, and she suspects he still has feelings for Abigail.




8. Hale arrives to investigate Elizabeth, and soon after she – along with the wives of Giles Corey and Francis Nurse – is arrested.




9. Alone with Mary, Proctor demands that she accompany him to court and reveal that the girls are lying.




10. In court, Mary tells Deputy-Governor Danforth and Judge Hathorne that the girls have been lying.



11. To prove that Abigail is a liar, Proctor admits to his affair with Abigail.



12. Danforth tests the claim by calling for Elizabeth – who Proctor says has never lied – asking whether Proctor betrayed her. She denies it in an attempt to save his honour, but in doing so condemns him as a liar.



13. Abigail and the girls begin pretending that Mary is attacking them with her spirit, until the pressure is too great, and she turns on Proctor, accusing him of being a witch.



14. Proctor is arrested.




15. Hale, who now sees through the ludicrous nature of the proceedings, denounces the proceedings and storms out.




16. Abigail steals all of Parris' savings and runs away.




17. In order to prevent more hangings, Parris and Hale try to convince those convicted of witchcraft to confess and save their lives, as Danforth refuses to stop the executions.



18. Elizabeth – who is now pregnant and will therefore not be hanged – is asked to convince Proctor to confess, and he agrees.



19. His refusal to incriminate other townsfolk as witches, and then to allow his signed confession to be nailed to the church door for all to see, means that Danforth won't accept his confession.



20. Proctor tears up the confession and walks out to the gallows to die after all; Parris and Hale are horrified, but Elizabeth claims that at least he has his goodness now.