

INT. CHEEVER (PROCTOR & HALE)

CHEEVER

Why-

He draws out a long needle from the poppet.
It is a needle! Herrick, Herrick, it is a needle!

PROCTOR

(Angrily, bewildered)

And what signifies a needle!

CHEEVER

(His hands shaking.)

Why, this go hard with her, Proctor, this- I had my doubts, Proctor, I had my doubts, but here's calamity.

(To HALE, showing
the needle.)

You see it, sir, it is a needle!

HALE

Why? What meanin' has it?

CHEEVER

(Wide-eyed, trembling.)

The girl, the Williams girl, Abigail Williams, sir. She sat to dinner in the Reverend Parris's house tonight, and without word nor warnin' she falls to the floor. Like a struck beast, he says, and screamed a scream that a bull would weep to hear. And he goes to save her, and, stuck two inches in the flesh of her belly, he draw a needle out. And demandin' of her how she come to be so stabbed, she-

(To Proctor:)

testify it were your wife's familiar spirit pushed it in.

PROCTOR

Why, she done it herself!

(To HALE:)

I hope you're not takin' this for proof, Mister!

HALE, struck by the proof, is silent.

CHEEVER

'Tis hard proof!

(To HALE:)

I find here a poppet Goody Proctor keeps. I have found it, sir. And in the belly of the poppet a needle's stuck. I tell you true, Proctor, I never warranted to see such proof of Hell, and I bid you obstruct me not, for I-

ENTER ELIZABETH with MARY WARREN. PROCTOR, seeing MARY WARREN, draws her by the arm to HALE.