

The Crucible  
Audition  
Ezekiel Cheever

CHEEVER. Why. . . (*Draws a long needle from doll.*) it is a needle! Willard, Willard, it is a needle!

PROCTOR. And what signifies a needle!

CHEEVER. Why, this go *hard with* her, Proctor, this.. I had my doubts, Proctor, I had my doubts, but here's calamity. . (*Crosses to Hale, shows needle*) You see it, sir, it is a needle!

HALE. Why? What meanin' has it?

CHEEVER. The girl, the Williams girl, Abigail Williams, sir. She sat to dinner in Reverend Parris' 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! I hope you're not takin' this for proof, Mister Hale.

CHEEVER. 'Tis hard proof!-I find here a poppet Goody Proctor keeps. I have found it, sir. And in the belly of the poppet a needle stuck.