

WITCHCRAZE

Book, Music, and Lyrics by

Patricia Causey

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WITCHCRAZE™

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Rev. 01-12-10

ACT II

SCENE 1

(Setting: CHIEF JUSTICE'S office...One month later, October, 1692.)

CHIEF JUSTICE

Well, boys, we've done it! In the past month, we've locked up the wealthiest women, silenced those "equal rights" upstarts, and shackled the most crotchety old crones.

BISHOP

Accusing the Governor's wife of witchcraft was a stroke of genius!

CHIEF JUSTICE

That social chatterbox needed reminding that her place is in the shadow of her husband...like all the others...And the money from their taverns and shops is rolling in!

BISHOP

Not so disapproving of the merchant class *now*, are you?

MAGISTRATE

They can't work their land or run their businesses...

BISHOP

So they can't sell their crops or their wares, so they can't pay their taxes...

CHIEF JUSTICE

And the government seizes the property to resell it for a handsome profit...Beautiful! But the money we're getting now won't last forever. We'll need to preserve our status, so that no one questions our authority. We need...a plan. (*Calls out*) Clerk! (*CLERK enters and bows.*) What's on schedule for tomorrow?

CLERK

Bridghid Goody wishes to see you...(CHIEF JUSTICE doesn't remember)...The widow accused of witchcraft...the merchantwoman who owns 600 acres of land on Ipswich Road?

CHIEF JUSTICE

Ah, yes, her! (*Dismisses the CLERK.*) She wants an appeal—another trial.

MAGISTRATE & BISHOP

Another trial?

MAGISTRATE

What's next? Giving this land *back* to the Indians and *freeing* the slaves? (*ALL laugh.*)

(*The CLERK bursts through the door backwards as MISTRESS MATHERS charges in with FOUR PURITAN WOMEN closely behind her.*)

CLERK

I'm sorry, Milord! They—they—

CHIEF JUSTICE

Mistress Mathers! Deeeeee-lighted to see you—(*glares at CLERK*) On such short notice. (*CLERK ducks down behind the "Evidence Box" SR.*) We were just saying—

MISTRESS MATHERS

I'm not interested in what you were saying but rather what you *will* be doing! The conditions in Salem are unbearable! I demand to know what you intend to do about it! (*With the PURITAN WOMEN right behind her, she crosses to the "Evidence" box that is filled with fans, feathers, and fashion accessories confiscated from the Townswomen. The PURITAN WOMEN eagerly check out the box of goodies. The CLERK slowly stands up, covered in fabric and a frilly hat.*) This here! Devilish specters bespeak the evil at work here in Salem. Such materialistic depravity and lust for pomfriperity will not be tolerated! Will it, ladies?!

PURITAN WOMAN

(*Swoons*) It's positively sinful...(*MISTRESS MATHERS chastises her with a glance.*)

MISTRESS MATHERS

There is an order by which we live. Any deviation from that order creates chaos.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Indeed! This plague of subversive activity caused by people who think they are free to live however they choose must be stopped! What we need is a sure-fire winner! That's it—fire!

MAGISTRATE, BISHOP, MISTRESS MATHERS

Fire?

CHIEF JUSTICE

Yes! Oh, I can see it now! Convicted witches being led through the merchantplace to be burned at the stake in the town square!

BISHOP

They don't do that over here.

CHIEF JUSTICE

Exactly! We accuse, torture, and execute the sinners in no time at all. What we need is a slow, smoldering reminder of what happens to those who disobey our commands. We'll give these poor, weak-minded peasants a show they've never seen on this side of the ocean!

1. TRIAL BY FIRE RAG (*Evil 3, Mistress Mathers, 4 Puritan Women, Clerk*)

MISTRESS MATHERS

ACCUSATIONS OF WITCHCRAFT ARE QUITE SERIOUS.

BISHOP

THE CONSEQUENCES CAN MAKE ONE DELIRIOUS.

MAGISTRATE

THE CHARGES ARE QUITE STARTLING.

CHIEF JUSTICE

INSTILLING FEAR IS JUST SMART MARKETING

TRIAL BY COMBAT IS SOOOOOO PASSÉ.

TRIAL BY FIRE IS THE BEST ONE I SAY!

WE'RE...GON...NA...

HAVE A TRIAL BY FIRE

THIS WIDOW WILL ASCEND

THE SCAFFOLD WE'LL HAVE BUILT!

OR GUILT!

WHETHER SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH

OR REALLY A LIAR

SHE'LL BE PURGED OF SIN IN OUR FIRE...

SHE STILL WANTS TO OWN HER OWN LAND.

SHE CLAIMS SHE DOESN'T NEED A MAN!

INSOLENT CRONES AND WILLFUL LADIES

IS NOTHIN' TO JOKE ABOUT!

THIS IS OUR TRIAL BY FIRE RAG!!!

A STEADY DOSE OF FEAR AND SUSPICION

WE'VE GOT A PLAN!

CHIEF JUSTICE & MAGISTRATE

FOLLOWED BY CHARGES AND FORCED

CONFESSION

CHIEF JUSTICE, BISHOP, MAGISTRATE
WE'LL GRAB HER LAND!

MAGISTRATE

TRIAL BY OIL CAN BE TOO MESSY.

BISHOP

TRIAL BY WATER ISN'T ANY FUN

BISHOP, MAGISTRATE,

ALL PURITAN WOMEN, CLERK

OOOOO, A TRIAL BY FIRE?

OOO, THE FIRE WILL PROVE HER

INNOCENCE—

(ad lib) "Oh, yes, that's right."

OOOOO!

BISHOP & MAGISTRATE

SHE'S SO STRANGE!

ALL PURITAN WOMEN

SHE'S DERANGED!

BISHOP & MAGISTRATE

SIZZLING GROANS FROM PITIFUL

MAIDENS

WILL SURELY SMOKE 'EM OUT!

ALL

THIS IS OUR TRIAL BY FIRE RAG!!!

BISHOP & MAGISTRATE

FOLLOWED BY LENGTHY PLEAS OF

CONTRITION

ALL

WE'VE GOT A PLAN!

BISHOP & MISTRESS MATHERS

THROW IN A LITTLE "DEVIL'S

POSSESSION"

ALL
AND WHEN WE'RE DONE
MAKING OUR POINT
LOOK AT ALL THAT WE'LL HAVE WON
THIS IS OUR TRIAL BY FIRE RAG!

(Dance Interlude)

MAGISTRATE
"WE'VE GOT A PLAN!"

BISHOP
"GRAB THAT FERTILE LAND!" *(Slaps MISTRESS MATHERS on her derriere.)*

ALL
AND WHEN WE'RE DONE
MAKING OUR POINT
LOOK AT ALL THAT WE'LL HAVE WON
THIS IS OUR TRIAL BY FIRE RAG!

(Dance interlude)

WE'RE...GON...NA...

CHIEF JUSTICE

HAVE
A TRIAL
BY FIRE

**BISHOP, MAGISTRATE, ALL PURITAN
WOMEN, CLERK**
WE'RE GONNA HAVE
A TRIAL

ALL PURITAN WOMEN
OOOO, A TRIAL BY FIRE!

THIS WIDOW WILL ASCEND
THE SCAFFOLD WE'LL HAVE BUILT!

THE FIRE WILL PROVE HER INNOCENCE

"That's what I'm talking about!"
WHETHER SHE'S TELLING THE TRUTH
OR REALLY A LIAR
SHE'LL BE PURGED OF SIN IN OUR FIRE

**BISHOP, MAGISTRATE, ALL PURITAN
WOMEN, CLERK**
THIS WIDOW

O, SO LOVINGLY BUILT
TO PURGE HER SOUL OF
HER GUILT

SHE'LL BE PURGED OF SIN IN OUR FIRE

WE WILL SHOW THE TOWN WHY
WOMEN SHOULDN'T OWN LAND.
WE'LL SHOW THE CROWD WHY A
WOMAN SHOULD OBEY A MAN!

AHHH....

CHIEF JUSTICE, BISHOP, MAGISTRATE
THEY'LL NEVER GUESS THE MASTERMINDS
COULD BE WE THREE.

ALL PURITAN WOMEN, CLERK
WHEN THIS MESS IS BEHIND US

CHIEF JUSTICE, BISHOP, MAGISTRATE
WE'LL BE RICH!
HEE-HEE-HEE!

ALL
THIS IS OUR TRIAL BY FIRE RAG!
WE REALLY MEAN IT!

CHIEF JUSTICE & MAGISTRATE
WE FOUND A FEW MALCONTENTS ON OUR SEARCH

BISHOP & MISTRESS MATHERS
IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE I'VE SEEN
THAT MANY PEOPLE IN CHURCH!

ALL
THANKS TO OUR TRIAL BY FIRE—

CHIEF JUSTICE
THE BEST TRIAL WE EVER HAD!

ALL PURITAN WOMEN, CLERK
A WINNER!

BISHOP & MAGISTRATE
IT'S IN THE BAG!

ALL
THIS IS OUR TRIAL BY FIRE RAG!!!!
YEAH!

(Song ends... WILL enters, wearing a cloak; the BISHOP makes the sign of the Cross...)

BISHOP
(Solemnly) Bless you, my children.

WILL
You...wanted to see me?

CHIEF JUSTICE
Indeed. Salem will have a milestone today. The witch, Bridghid Goody, wants another trial. And we're going to give her one...a re-trial...at the stake...

