

T H E W I T C H

by

Robert Eggers

10/11/13

WGA # 1220490

Robert Eggers
144 Manhattan Ave 2L
Brooklyn, NY, 11206
603. 978. 2184
robertheppers@gmail.com

Copyright © 2013 Robert Eggers

CHARACTERS:

WILLIAM, an English farmer
KATHERINE, William's wife
THOMASIN, their eldest daughter
CALEB, their eldest son
JONAS, their son, Mercy's twin
MERCY, their daughter, Jonas' twin
SAMUEL, a baby, their youngest son, born in The New World

THE WITCH

FOWLER, William's dog, friend to Caleb
BLACK PHILLIP, William's Billy goat, friend to Jonas & Mercy
BURT, William's workhorse
Nanny Goats, Hens, and a Rooster

THE MINISTER

THE GOVERNOR

THE DEPUTY GOVERNOR

A congregation of Puritans, Militia men, Traders and Trappers

TO THE READER:

This is a tale of witchcraft, told as a simple family of seventeenth century New England might have believed it to be. All of their folkloric and religious beliefs, in this film, are true. It was inspired by various folktales, fairytales and recorded accounts (journals, diaries, court records etc.) of historical witches and possessions from New England and Western Europe before the Salem outbreak in 1692. Much of the dialogue, in fact, comes directly from those sources.

In order to effectively depict this world in which ordinary people understood supernatural occurrences to be an expected part of life, it is essential that all aspects of the film to be carried out with utter naturalism. The characters must appear as real farmers, not actors with dirty faces. Even the supernatural elements must be photographed as realistically as possible. Yet, with all this authenticity and "realism," it is still a folktale, a dream. A nightmare from the past.

BLACK.

TITLE: T H E W I T C H.
 A New-England Folktale.

INT. MEETING HOUSE. SALEM PLANTATION - DAY - 1630s - MARCH

CLOSE ON: THOMASIN (13) listening attentively. Her sweet farm-girl's face is utterly still. Afraid. Tense. Confused.

A low, deliberate, voice echoes through the wooden church:

 WILLIAM (O.S.)

 What went we out into this
 wilderness to find? Leaving our
 country, kindred, our father's
 houses? We have travailed a vast
 ocean... For what?

 For what?

 GOVERNOR (O.S.)

 (overlapping)

 We must ask thee to be silent!

CLOSE ON: CALEB (11), THOMASIN'S brother. He doesn't blink, just listens. Fear in his belly.

 WILLIAM

 (overlapping)

 Was it not for the *pure* and
 faithful dispensation of the
 Gospels and the Kingdom of
 God?

 DEPUTY GOVERNOR (O.S.)

 (overlapping)

 No More!

 MINISTER (O.S.)

 We are your judges, and not you
 ours!

MEDIUM WIDE: THOMASIN & CALEB stand in a row beside the TWINS, JONAS & MERCY (5) and their PREGNANT MOTHER, KATHERINE, WHOSE FACE WE DO NOT SEE. JUST THE CHILDREN.

 WILLIAM (O.S.)

 I cannot be judged by false
 contented Christians under an un-
 separated church! An English
 king's church.

WIDE, REVERSE: WE REVEAL THE GOVERNOR, THE MINISTER AND OTHER BLACK CLOTHED DIGNITARIES sitting at a long table on a raised platform in front of the pulpit. Their dour faces are exasperated.

WILLIAM, back to camera, stands below them in the center of the primitive church. His family by his side.

The whole congregation of about fifty men, women and children are all crammed together, all standing in heavy silence. Men on one side, women on the other.

Their eyes on WILLIAM.

GOVERNOR

Must you continue to dishonor the laws of the commonwealth and the church with your prideful conceit?

WILLIAM

If my conscience sees it fit.

GOVERNOR

Then shall you be banished out of this plantation's liberties!

WILLIAM

I would be glad on it.

Pause.

GOVERNOR

Then take your leave, and trouble us no further.

CLOSE ON: WILLIAM's eyes burn indignantly below his furrowed brow.

WILLIAM

How sadly hath The Lord testified against you.

He turns to walk out of the meeting house.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Katherine.

MED: THE CHILDREN, scared and confused, are yanked through THE THRONG OF ANGRY PURITANS by their FATHER AND MOTHER.

THOMASIN stays still. Shocked.

KATHERINE

Come along now. Come along.

THOMASIN doesn't move. She doesn't want to leave. Her brother grabs her in the commotion.

CALEB
Thomasin! Come.

EXT. SALEM PLANTATION GATE - EARLY MORNING

The view of the pitiful, snow-covered MEDIEVAL-LOOKING VILLAGE disappears as TWO MILITIA MEN slowly close the plantation's tall PALISADE DOORS. A FEW NAUMKEAG TRADERS with painted faces and A ROUGH LOOKING WHITE MAN stand near by with their goods.

THOMASIN, CALEB, THE TWINS, and FOWLER THE DOG, watch the doors close as they rock back and forth sitting in a rickety two-wheeled CART.

WILLIAM walks alongside the workhorse pulling a cart strapped with a trunk, a chair, clinking pots and pans and few other miscellaneous articles. Surely not enough to survive on.

KATHERINE, sits in the cart with the children. She sings:

KATHERINE
(sings)
*I will confess Jehovah with all
heart in secret and in assembly of
the just.*

THOMASIN rests her head on KATHERINE'S PREGNANT BELLY.
KATHERINE strokes THOMASIN'S hair. THOMASIN LOOKS BACK TOWARD
THE PLANTATION.

THOMASIN joins her hymn:

KATHERINE & THOMASIN
(sings)
*Great are the works of our Lord,
sought out of all that in them do
delight.*

EVERYONE joins:

FAMILY
(sings)
*Beautiful and glorious his work is,
and his righteousness endureth
forever...*

All but WILLIAM keep their eyes on the safe PLANTATION WALLS as they head into a VAST UNTOUCHED WILDERNESS. Their song of hope slowly fading away.

Hold.

EXT. WILDERNESS - DAY

THE FAMILY as they travel slowly in the light March snow.

Nature envelopes them.

They walk on.

And on.

Hold.

BLACK.

EXT. A CLEARING - AFTERNOON

WILLIAM LIES FACE DOWN ON THE HALF FROZEN GROUND. HIS EYES CLOSED.

He sits up, the warm afternoon light hitting his hopeful, teary cheeks. He lifts his hands toward heaven.

The wind blows.

KATHERINE takes his hand. THE FAMILY is in a circle, on their knees, in joyful, silent prayer. Their faces beaming.

Before them is a BEAUTIFUL, IDYLLIC NATURAL CLEARING OF ROLLING HILLS...

but... the clearing is surrounded by a FOREST - A DARK AND ANCIENT WOOD. ITS ENORMOUS PINES STAND LIKE GIANTS ABOVE THE FAMILY.

THE PRESENCE OF THE WOOD IS PROFOUND, DISTURBING, OMINOUS.

But the family is wrapped in prayer.

BLACK. HOLD.

AUDIO: The wind blows.

EXT. THE SAME CLEARING - DAWN - NOVEMBER

It is now late autumn. Anorexic CORNSTALKS are scattered across a muddy field.

A FLEDGLING FARM sits on top of a hill at the foot of THE WOOD. MONSTROUS TREES loom over THE RAMSHACKLE COTTAGE. Its crooked clapboards to are beginning to grey and the gabled thatch to brown. Behind the house are a few shoddy structures and scrap-wood fences for keeping in the small amount of livestock. The frame of the INCOMPLETE BARN looks as if it will collapse at any moment. Tools and raw lumber litter the yard.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

CLOSE ON: THOMASIN. Her large blue eyes gaze earnestly toward heaven. Her chin rests on little dirty fingers. She says her words with surprising acceptance:

THOMASIN

O most merciful father: I here
confess I have lived in sin.
I have been idle of my work,
disobedient of mine parents,
neglectful of my prayer. I have, in
secret, played upon thy sabbath and
broken every one of thy
commandments in thought... followed
the desires of my own will, and not
the holy Spirit. I know I deserve
all shame and misery in this life,
and everlasting hell-fire. But I
beg thee, for the sake of thy Son.
Forgive me. Show me mercy. Show
me thy light.

I thank thee that thou hast
defended me this night, and brought
me safe unto this day. These and
all other graces, I beg at thy
hands in that prayer which Christ
himself hath taught me:

INT. FARMHOUSE - MORNING

MED CLOSE: KATHERINE BREAST FEEDS SAMUEL, THE BABY, now 6 months old.

THOMASIN (V.O.)
 Our Father which art in heaven,
 hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom
 come.

EXT. CORNFIELD - DAY

WIDE: WILLIAM AND CALEB have their backs to camera working in a patchy, dying cornfield. Their clothes now well worn. WILLIAM cuts the corn from the stalks. CALEB bundles the chaff into shocks. JONAS AND MERCY fill baskets of with the ears of corn. It is hard repetitive work for all. But they are used to it.

THOMASIN (V.O.)
 Thy will be done even in earth, as
 it is in heaven. Give us this day
 our daily bread.

EXT. GOAT SHED - LATER THAT DAY

MED WIDE: THOMASIN shovels dung out of the shed.

It is heavy. But she is used to it.

THOMASIN (V.O.)
 And forgive us our debts, as we
 also forgive our debtors.

EXT. FARMYARD - AFTERNOON

MED TRACKING: KATHERINE hands THE BABY to THOMASIN. KATHERINE needs both of her hands to stoke the fire of the outdoor bake-oven. THOMASIN walks away with SAM THE BABY, disappearing into the cloud of grey smoke.

THOMASIN (V.O.)
 And lead us not into temptation,
 but deliver us from evil: for thine
 is the kingdom, and the power, and
 the glory for ever. Amen.

BLACK.

AUDIO: THE BABY'S LAUGHTER is heard. Then, THOMASIN'S playful voice:

THOMASIN (O.S.)
 Where's Sam? Where is Sam?

(MORE)

THOMASIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (Pause).

Peeeeeeep...

CUT TO:

EXT. THE EDGE OF THE WOOD - DUSK

THOMASIN (O.S.)
 Boo!

CLOSE ON: SAMUEL, THE BABY, is lying in the grass.

He is stunned, smiling with huge baby eyes and a little wet mouth.

HE SQUEALS WITH LAUGHTER! Too adorable!

THOMASIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 There you are! There you are!

SAMUEL laughs more and more. He is clearly being tickled!

CUT TO:

BLACK.

SAMUEL'S laughter subsides. He breathes heavily, almost panting.

He lets out a quiet half-laugh. He sounds worried.

THOMASIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Peeeeeeep...

CUT TO:

THOMASIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 Boo!

CLOSE ON: SAMUEL. He shrieks with laughter again! He raises his arms up and down in delight and kicks his legs.

CUT TO:

BLACK.

THOMASIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)
 (whispered)
 Where is Sam? Where's Sam? Where is
 that little man?

(pause).
 (MORE)

THOMASIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Peeeeeeep...

CUT TO:

LOW CLOSE ON: THOMASIN, kneeling on the ground. She uncovers her big sparkling eyes in the "peek-a-boo" fashion and shouts:

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

Boo!

Her rosy-cheeked face is frozen in joy.

Suddenly, her eyes register what is in front of her...

Her compelling smile disappears... Her face loses all color...

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

Sam?

CUT TO:

CLOSE ON: Nothing. The dead grass where SAMUEL had been lying.

All is silent except for THOMASIN'S panicking breath. Where is he?

The wind blows.

THE CAMERA slowly tilts up through the tall grass and weeds, toward...

... THE WOOD.

The wild grass that leads to the edge of THE WOOD is MOVING SLIGHTLY, as if something had just run through it.

THOMASIN screams:

THOMASIN (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Sam! Samuel!!

THOMASIN runs into frame and stops, STARING INTO THE OPENING OF THE PRIMEVAL FOREST. IT SEEMS TO BECKON HER.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

SAM!!!

EXT. THE WOOD - NIGHTFALL

The autumn mist is thick. Boney-fingered branches crack in

the wind.

A SMALL HUNCHED FIGURE in a tattered RED CLOAK hobbles quickly through the enormous mossy trees.

A distorted old breath comes from under THE RED HOOD, wheezing, trying to keep pace. From a little lower in the cloak comes the sound of a gargling BABY. One of SAMUEL'S HANDS pokes out.

Dusk is at its end.

INT. THE WITCH'S HOVEL - NIGHT

DARKNESS. It is almost impossible to see.

Passing through the shadows, extremely old and bent HANDS with long dirty talons briefly catch the firelight. They place SAMUEL upon the center of a crude table. Overwhelmed by the dark, he senses the danger. His delicate baby FINGERS open and close reflexively, grasping at the air.

Seen in flickering glimpses, the greasy RED CLOAK falls to the dirt floor. TINY FEET step around THE CLOAK and kick off square-toed shoes. Jagged, fungal toe-nails poke out of soiled wool stockings.

THE OLD HANDS grab the BABY'S COLLAR, tear open his linen shift, and strip it off the child. SAMUEL starts to cry.

THE FIGURE steps away from the table, her back to camera. Hobbling in and out of blackness of the hovel, she takes off her bonnet and scanty grey locks fall to her shoulders, snaking across her bent spine. She removes the rest of her filthy clothes, and for an instant, HER NAKED BODY is revealed... before she moves back into shadow.

HER HANDS reach up to the low THATCH CEILING, over THE BABY, and tear out a mossy clump. Little bits of dirt and reed, and other natural scantlings fall on SAMUEL. BRIGHT MOONLIGHT shines through the hole, bathing the child in its light.

OFF SCREEN, THE OLD WOMAN hums a haunting song. Her HANDS stroke the baby tenderly and pinches the fatty areas around his thighs and biceps.

Her HAND take a LARGE RUSTY KNIFE... she holds it up over the child's breast... she continues to hum her song...

CAMERA ON: The humpback and scabby head of THE OLD WOMAN... She brings the knife up... and then down in a swift motion! (WE DO NOT SEE THE BABY, only the back of THE OLD WOMAN)

AUDIO: CHOP! THE BABY WAILS.

- LATER

Back to camera, THE OLD WOMAN'S SILHOUETTE sits by a low-burning fire.

She grinds at her MORTAR AND PESTLE. One can easily assume its contents.

Scattered beside her are a messy assortment of EARTHEN JARS. Each jar emits a more awful stench than the other.

- LATER

THE FIRE IS OUT.

Illuminated in the dimmest traces of moonlight, THE OLD WOMAN has A THICK BLOODY GREASE in her hands. She rubs this UNGUENT all over her NAKED BODY.

- MOMENTS LATER

She rubs THE UNGUENT on THE WOODEN HANDLE OF A BROOMSTICK. It foams around her thumb and forefinger.

- MOMENTS LATER

CAMERA ON HER BACK: Barely visible, THE NAKED OLD WOMAN stands near the hearth.

She mounts THE BROOM.

She is still.

Suddenly, her head moves. First a jerk, then it slows. Her gaze going upward.

Her eyes roll to the back of her head and her eyelids flutter in and out of the moonlight. Her face remains unseen.

SHE TREMBLES AND COLLAPSES TO THE GROUND.

SHE BREATHES HEAVILY AND RHYTHMICALLY, GROANING AND GROANING, TREMORING IN THE DIRT AND DARKNESS.

SHE GRIPS THE BROOMSTICK FIRMLY.

EXT. THE WITCH'S HOVEL - NIGHT

LOW WIDE: Shadowed by a confusion of twisted branches, THE WITCH RISES AWAY FROM CAMERA - SLOWLY, WEIRDLY, PHANTOM-LIKE - THROUGH THE THATCH SMOKE-HOLE OF HER ROOF, ASCENDING INTO

THE NIGHT TOWARD THE MOON.

Her naked body scrapes against the branches, clicking, clacking and cracking as she rises. "Clickety-clackety, clickety-clackety, clickety-clackety."

BLACK. HOLD.

AUDIO: A rooster crows. Other quite farm noises.

INT. FARMHOUSE, GARRET - DAWN

A WOODEN SHUTTER is unlatched from a small glass-less window.

A WOMAN'S MUFFLED CRYING AND MUMBLING IS HEARD.

Dim dawn light hits CALEB'S gaunt, freckled face. His light eyes are full of worries. Painfully anxious.

The dawn glows red.

CALEB picks up his homespun doublet. He stumbles quietly over and through the pile of sleeping SWEATY-FACED SIBLINGS and straw mattresses on the floor. Dwindling food stores hang from the pitched ceiling, almost knocking his head.

MERCY is curled up with JONAS, who sucks his thumb.

THOMASIN has JONAS' DIRTY FEET near her FACE.

As CALEB takes a big step, THOMASIN moves in her sleep.

CALEB looks down and notices THE SIDE OF HIS SISTER'S BREAST in her somewhat open shift, and her faint armpit hair.

Pause.

Embarrassed, CALEB looks away.

THOMASIN moves again. Blankets rustle.

CALEB look back:

THOMASIN'S face is contorted in pain. Her eyes twitch under her eyelids. SHE IS HAVING A NIGHTMARE.

CALEB hesitates. He kneels down and gently shakes her shoulders:

CALEB
(whispers, almost
inaudible)
Thomasin.

CALEB shakes her again...

CALEB (CONT'D)
(whispered)
Thomasin.

THOMASIN'S EYES OPEN and she gasps clenching her fists.

CALEB puts his hand gently over her mouth. She jerks, disoriented.

CALEB pantomimes a "shh" with his other hand. They pause.

THEY LISTEN TO THEIR MOTHER'S WEEPING AND PRAYING from downstairs...

CALEB uncovers THOMASIN'S mouth. She looks at him.

Pause.

THOMASIN'S face is as mournful as their mother's weeping. Her eyes beg for comfort.

CALEB (CONT'D)
(whispers, almost
inaudible)
Sleep. All will be well. Sleep.

CALEB keeps his eyes on his sister till she reluctantly lies back in bed.

Then, he climbs down the rickety ladder to...

INT. FARMHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

... the ground floor of the family's extremely primitive one-room home. The stench of squalor and smoke hangs in the air.

FOWLER THE DOG, is near an EMPTY WOODEN CRADLE. He is up too.

CALEB steps over his parent's chamber pot, and pushes a wandering HEN away from his shoes that are near his parent's bedside.

He can still hear his MOTHER crying softly from behind the shabby bed curtains. THE DOG whines and tries to peek in. CALEB turns his head to the door and puts on his doublet.

THE FRONT DOOR is half open...

EXT. THE FARM - CONTINUOUS

CALEB walks out the door... past a TALL PILE OF STACKED FIREWOOD... past the chopping block and AXE...

EXT. THE FARM/CORNFIELD - CONTINUOUS

... He continues toward THE SILHOUETTED FIGURE at the bottom of the hill in the CORNFIELD. It's WILLIAM.

CALEB approaches tentatively.

He gently touches WILLIAM'S shoulder...

He is startled and turns:

He sees his son out of the corner of his eye, peeking through his long thinning hair. HE TURNS AWAY.

His smoky voice rumbles:

WILLIAM

Caleb.

CALEB tries to initiate contact.

CALEB

God give you good morrow.

(Pause.)

WILLIAM frowns, biting on a his mustache and beard.

His coarse hand holds an EAR OF INDIAN CORN. His wide-brimmed hat is in the other. THE CORN IS SHRIVELED, HALF GROWN AND ROTTING. A DISGUSTING MALIGNANT FUNGUS is bursting between its kernels.

CHICKENS cluck several yards away.

CALEB (CONT'D)

All are still a-bed.

(Pause.)

Save Mother.

WILLIAM

No ease to rise on a grey day. The Devil holds fast your eyelids.

CALEB

I'll wake 'em.

WILLIAM
Let 'em be.

CALEB looks surprised.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Thy mother's not slept a night
since.

WILLIAM looks at the ground.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
We can search no longer, Caleb. We
cannot. If not a wolf, hunger'd
have taken him yet.

Pause.

WILLIAM looks at the devastated cornfield. Disfigured corpses
of infected corn-ears lay upon the grey soil.

WILLIAM THROWS THE EAR OF CORN HE HAS BEEN HOLDING WITH ALL
HIS MIGHT. It disappears into the hazy dawn.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Let's to The Wood.

CALEB looks very surprised.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I've been a-laying traps for some
while - before even this new
misery.

CALEB
Within The Wood?

WILLIAM
Will you not help thy father?

CALEB
You and mother have always forbid
us to set foot there.

WILLIAM
This is our home now. Fear it not.
Eh? Did not we build our house of
timbers?

(Pause.)
We must conquer this wood. It will
not consume us.

Pause.

CALEB
Perchance you snared that wolf.

WILLIAM
Aye. Fetch thy hat, tis bitter
cold.

WILLIAM smiles hopefully at CALEB again and touches his bare head.

CALEB smiles back and runs toward the house.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
And the gun.

EXT. THE EDGE OF THE WOOD - EARLY MORNING

WILLIAM is only a small speck beneath the THREATENING TREES. The thick trunks moan and creak, swaying ever so slightly in the wind.

He walks quietly into the darkness of THE WOOD.

CALEB stands still, several paces back with FOWLER THE DOG. HE HOLDS HIS FATHER'S MUSKET.

CALEB looks up at the high treetops, afraid to enter.

FOWLER whimpers a little.

WILLIAM calls from within:

WILLIAM (O.S.)
Caleb!

Caleb catches up and crosses THE FORBIDDEN THRESHOLD.

EXT. THE WOOD - EARLY MORNING

Father and son walk in the early morning mist, FOWLER by their side.

Their wooden powder flasks clink and clatter against their bony chests.

Grey leaves crunch beneath their feet.

A dense pine canopy bristles above them, shadowing the forest floor. CALEB'S LESSON echoes through the trees:

WILLIAM

Art thou then born holy and
righteous?

CALEB

No, nay! My first father sinned and
I in him.

CALEB wants to be serious, however, with all the danger and excitement a small but uncontrollable grin has appeared on his face. He recites with pride:

WILLIAM

Art thou then born a sinner?

CALEB

Aye. I was conceived in sin, and
born in - iniquity.

WILLIAM

Good. Then what is thy birth sin?

CALEB

Adam's sin imputed to me, and a
corrupt nature dwelling within me.

WILLIAM

Well-remembered Caleb. Very well.
And canst thou tell me what thy
corrupt nature is?

CALEB

My corrupt nature is empty of
grace, bent unto sin, only unto
sin, and that continually.

CALEB pauses for a moment. THE WORDS OF HIS CATECHISM SINKING
IN.

WILLIAM

Soft now.

They come upon a LARGE OVERTURNED TREE. Its sprawling root
system is far taller than WILLIAM.

CALEB watches WILLIAM find a TRAP he had laid near it.

WILLIAM kicks THE TRAP softly with the toe of his boot.

IT IS SHUT. THERE IS NO CATCH.

WILLIAM hides his disappointment.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
We must lay't again.

CALEB goes to the trap. He stops himself from touching the big iron teeth. He looks imploringly at his father. May I set it?

WILLIAM nods and smiles affirmatively.

CALEB bends down to open the jaws. He struggles a bit.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Now, mind thy hand Caleb. Mind thy hand.

CALEB slows his work... thinking again:

CALEB
Was... was Samuel born a sinner?

WILLIAM pauses.

He nods "yes."

CALEB was expecting that answer.

CALEB (CONT'D)
How might then -

WILLIAM
(overlapping)
We pray he hath entered God's Kingdom.

Pause.

CALEB
What wickedness hath he done?

WILLIAM
Place faith in God - Caleb, mind thy hand, I say.

(Pause.)

We'll speak no more on thy brother.

CALEB
Why?

WILLIAM
-

CALEB

He hath disappeared not one week
past, yet you and Mother utter not
his name.

WILLIAM

Caleb, look to thy work or I'll lay
it myself.

CALEB

Tell me.

WILLIAM

Tell thee what? He is gone, Caleb.

CALEB

(overlapping)
Is he in hell?

WILLIAM

Caleb!

CALEB

Mother will not stop her prayer...

WILLIAM

Hand me that engine!

CALEB

An if died? If I died this day?

WILLIAM

What is this?

CALEB

I hold evil in my heart. My sins
are not pardoned.

WILLIAM

Thou art youngly yet -

CALEB

(overlapping)
An if God will not hear my prayers?

WILLIAM

Caleb -

CALEB

(overlapping)
Tell me!

WILLIAM

Look you, I love thee marvelous
well, but 'tis God alone, not man,
what knows who is a son of Abraham
and who is not. Who is good and who
is evil.

Fain would I tell thee Sam sleeps
in Jesus, that thou wilt, that I
will, but I cannot tell thee that.
None can.

CALEB looks down and starts fiddling with the trap again.

CALEB

But you and Mother... You have made
covenant. You have a place in
Heaven.

WILLIAM

I keep an unfeigned grief for the
want of grace. I can do no more.

(Long pause).

Caleb?

CALEB keeps his eyes on the trap.

CALEB

Where are these from?

WILLIAM

Caleb, list me.

CALEB

I do.

WILLIAM

From Indian Thom and Old Slater,
when last they passed through. Move
it thither.

CALEB

What did you trade?

Very long pause.

WILLIAM

Thy mother's silver cup.

It is clear from CALEB'S face that this was not something to
be traded.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Let's recover the rest.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LATER

CLOSE ON: THOMASIN staring forward intensely. Curious.
Cautious.

Behind her, MERCY rides JONAS like a horse. JONAS makes GOAT
NOISES.

THOMASIN stands in front of her parents' bed. The curtains
are still closed.

She walks forward slowly and peeks in through some frayed
holes in the curtains:

KATHERINE lies on the bed, her hands clenched together, her
eyes closed. She whispers an inaudible prayer.

A sadder face has never been seen.

EXT. FARMYARD - LATER

CLOSE ON: THOMASIN, still affected by the sight of her
mother.

She carries a heavy pail of water on her head, bracing it
with one hand. She can't hold it up very well and the ground
is muddy and upturned. With every step across the farmyard,
water sloshes out of the bucket on to her shoulders, soaking
her. She shudders with frustration.

She puts the bucket down for a moment to wipe her cold nose.

She picks it up again and keeps walking. She's used to it,
but today it is too much.

INT. GOAT SHED - LATER

THOMASIN shovels dung out of the GOAT-SHED. Nanny goats bleat
and walk by her.

In the distance, THE TWINS are heard singing nursery rhymes.

THOMASIN
Jonas, Mercy! Come hither!

THOMASIN keeps shoveling.

Shoveling.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
Jonas! Mercy!!

More shoveling...

THOMASIN stops.

HOLD ON: THOMASIN.

Something swells within her. She throws the shovel down in the dungheap and walks away from her work.

EXT. THE EDGE OF THE WOOD - LATER

THOMASIN kneels at the spot where SAMUEL disappeared.

She runs her fingers tenderly through the grass.

She looks into THE WOOD.

Pause.

How could this have happened?

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - LATER

CALEB & WILLIAM come upon another trap.

No catch.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - LATER

Another trap.

Nothing.

CALEB looks up at his father.

WILLIAM turns around quickly before meeting eyes with his son.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - LATER:

They walk on. CALEB is as anxious as WILLIAM is downtrodden. FOWLER is not with them.

WILLIAM puts his fingers in his mouth and whistles a LOUD WHISTLE.

WILLIAM

Fowler! Fowler! (whistles) Fool of
an animal.

CALEB

Fowler!

Suddenly, FOWLER barks, running through the trees.

WILLIAM and CALEB see him.

THEY SEE SOMETHING ELSE RUNNING TOO. FOWLER is tracking
something!

WILLIAM

Fowler! (whistles) What is't?

FOWLER points.

WILLIAM and CALEB look ahead:

AN ENORMOUS LONG-LEGGED HARE HOPS OUT INTO THE CLEARING.

THE HARE sits very still. ITS FUR IS COARSE AND ODD.

WILLIAM gives CALEB a look instructing him to be quiet.

WILLIAM barks at FOWLER:

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Fowler, bay it!

FOWLER runs after THE HARE!

He chases it in a wide circle around the clearing. Both
running hard as they can.

CALEB hands his father the heavy MUSKET.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Praise God. Look at the size. Make
haste Caleb.

Rushing, WILLIAM spills powder all over the barrel of the
gun.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Fie upon't!

He blows at the powder, probably not hard enough.

CALEB holds the smoldering length of hemp.

CALEB
 Father, there's primer upon the -

WILLIAM
 Peace now, hand me the match.

The match cord goes out.

CALEB
 Ah!

WILLIAM hold his hand out to CALEB.

WILLIAM
 The match.

CALEB
 It died.

WILLIAM
 Light it apace Caleb!

CALEB
 The primer...

WILLIAM
 Caleb!!

CALEB relights the matchcord and puts it in place.

FOWLER chases THE HARE back to where it first appeared.

THE HARE STOPS RUNNING. It breathes softly.

FOWLER is panting.

THEN, THE HARE TURNS TOWARD WILLIAM AND CALEB... AND STARES.

IT STANDS THERE, NOT MOVING, GAZING WITH ITS HYPNOTIC AMBER EYES.

FOWLER barks at THE STRANGE HARE.

CALEB can't believe the sight!

WILLIAM'S finger shakes.

IT STARES RIGHT AT WILLIAM AND CALEB AS IF IT WERE ENCHANTED.

FOWLER keeps barking ferociously.

CALEB watches intently.

THE MATCH CORD is burning steady.

WILLIAM pulls the trigger:

BANG!!

THE MUSKET MISFIRES IN WILLIAM'S FACE.

THE HARE RUNS AWAY.

WILLIAM yelps and puts his hands to his face, falling to the ground.

CALEB

Father!

WILLIAM breathes quickly.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Father?

WILLIAM turns his face into the ground and clenches his fists. His breath slackens.

Silence.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Father?!

WILLIAM sits up, but cannot look CALEB in the eye.

CALEB puts his hand on his FATHER'S shoulder.

CALEB (CONT'D)

We'll make a catch father, I know
it.

WILLIAM gives in and embraces CALEB tightly for a moment.

FOWLER wanders over and kisses WILLIAM'S blackened face.

WILLIAM

Off Fowler.

WILLIAM lets go of CALEB and stands, making embarrassed grunting noises to pull himself together.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - LATER

FATHER AND SON walk completely defeated and empty handed.

The wind whistles through the trees.

The sun is still not shining.

CALEB notices THE VEINS ON WILLIAM'S HAND PULSING.

Only the crunching of leaves beneath their feet.

Crunch, crunch, crunch.

CRUNCH, CRUNCH, CRUNCH.

(at the same time)

CALEB

WILLIAM

Caleb...

Father-

Pause.

WILLIAM

Speak none of this to Mother. None.

CALEB makes an ambivalent noise that sounds similar to an "Aye."

Long pause.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

She -

CALEB

(overlapping)

An if -

WILLIAM

An if what? Go to. I'd not suffer thee to lie. Go to.

(pause.)

When we have brought her home that damnèd wolf, she will be glad on it and all shall be known. But now 'twould be a greater burthen on her heart.

She is over-wrought already.

CALEB nods.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

'Tis heedless to tell of this now. Heedless.

(pause.)

CALEB

Aye.

WILLIAM

Let's not speak on this again.

CALEB nods.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Caleb?

CALEB

Aye, Father.

Pause.

WILLIAM

Now, canst thou tell your father
what is... sin?

CALEB

Transgression of God's Law.

WILLIAM

Aye. Good. Canst tell me... ah...
Canst thou tell me...

CALEB looks at his father. WILLIAM'S mouth stays open for a long pause. Thinking. His hypocrisy clouds his head.

EXT. FARMYARD - DAY

A huge feral-looking BILLY GOAT, with enormous horns and long black hair, bleats and grunts. He bucks wildly, kicking up muck and mud.

The young twins, JONAS and MERCY, chase THE GOAT, waving sticks above their heads, laughing and singing:

JONAS & MERCY

Black Phillip, Black Phillip
A crown grows out his head
Black Phillip, Black Phillip
To nanny queen is wed
 Jump to the fence post
 Running in the stall
Black Phillip, Black Phillip
King of all.

THE HENS are clucking madly, flapping about. THE NANNY GOATS are crying. BURT, THE WORKHORSE neighs in the small half-built horse barn.

EXT. FARMYARD - MOMENTS LATER

CALEB AND WILLIAM, stumbling over the fence, run into the yard.

WILLIAM tries to find a way to cut in and break up the commotion. CALEB flanks him.

WILLIAM
Get thee back! Get thee back!

CALEB
Phillip! Back!

JONAS & MERCY
(sing)
Black Phillip, Black Phillip,
King of sky and land.
Black Phillip, Black Phillip
King of sea and sand.
We are ye servants
We are ye men
Black Phillip eats the lions
From the lions' den.

WILLIAM
How now, you two! Stop this mischief!

WILLIAM runs in front of THE BILLY GOAT and CALEB pulls THE TWINS aside.

Poultry flies wild.

THE GOAT runs toward WILLIAM.

WILLIAM tries to grab its back legs. He misses, nearly falling down.

THE GOAT flies by, chasing the chickens into THE HOUSE

KATHERINE runs out of the house, the GOAT heading toward her.

KATHERINE shrieks.

She runs to THE CHILDREN.

WILLIAM AND THE GOAT run into THE HOUSE. A clatter is heard.

WILLIAM, THE GOAT, AND SEVERAL CHICKENS BURST OUT OF THE FRONT DOOR OF THE HOUSE.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Ope' the gate Caleb, Ope' the gate!

CALEB opens the gate. KATHERINE immediately grabs his arm, tearing him out of the way. She holds him and THE TWINS close to her.

WILLIAM drives THE GOAT in to his stall by his legs. THE GOAT KICKS...

WILLIAM SLIPS AND FALLS IN A BIG PILE OF DUNG!

CALEB AND THE WHOLE FAMILY LOOKS AT HIM.

THE BILLY GOAT is calm. He eats some fodder near WILLIAM. Chickens cluck.

JONAS and MERCY laugh.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I'll have thee quiet.

CALEB watches his father get up.

WILLIAM looks at his wife. Her eyes are cloudy from lack of sleep. She holds CALEB tightly. She's not laughing.

KATHERINE
Whither were you and Caleb this morn?

WILLIAM rises to go towards her tenderly.

She steps back and turns away from her husband.

She calls:

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Thomasin!

WILLIAM goes toward her again.

WILLIAM
Kate...

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
Thomasin! Thomasin!

THOMASIN comes running to the farmyard out of breath.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
(To William)
How could you disappear!
(To Thomasin)
(MORE)

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
 And thee! I told thee to keep watch
 of Jonas and Mercy.

THOMASIN
 I was and I bade them help me and
 they paid me no mind. I was a-
 getting -

Beside her JONAS is pulling on MERCY'S cheek. MERCY tries not
 to laugh.

WILLIAM
 (overlapping, calmly)
 Stop that.

KATHERINE
 (to Thomasin)
 What's the matter with thee,
 Thomasin? What's the matter with
 thee?

Take thy father's rags to the brook
 and wash em.

WILLIAM
 Tis only dung.

THOMASIN
 They would pay me no mind -

KATHERINE
 (overlapping)
 And brush out his woolens. Help
 him!

THOMASIN is shut down.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
 (to Caleb)
 My lamb.

KATHERINE kisses CALEB'S head.

CALEB WATCHES THOMASIN as she helps her father take off his
 soiled clothing. THERE IS SOMETHING TOO FAMILIAR IN THE WAY
 THOMASIN TOUCHES HER FATHER'S BODY AS SHE UNDRESSES HIM. IT
 IS INNOCENT - IT IS SUBTLE - BUT SHE IS TOO OLD FOR IT.

KATHERINE SEES IT TOO.

She keeps with the problem at hand:

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

It gave me such a fright to find thee gone.

(to William)

I'll not be left here alone. Dost hear? The morning's work is well behindhand. Where were you?

Meanwhile, JONAS continues to pull at his sister's cheek. With every tug MERCY'S eyes widen and he holds back laughter.

MERCY can't take it: she lets out a scream, followed by a tearful giggle.

WILLIAM

Jonas! Leave thy sister be!

JONAS

She likes it.

KATHERINE

William?

WILLIAM

Cannot a father spend Godly time with his son?

JONAS gives another tug on MERCY'S cheek and she screams again.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Jonas!

THOMASIN

Father said stop it.

WILLIAM & KATHERINE

Thomasin!

MERCY laughs.

JONAS

She likes it!

MERCY keeps laughing.

JONAS (CONT'D)

See.

THOMASIN

Stop it!

WILLIAM
Stop it each of you! Stop it.

KATHERINE
As you like.

KATHERINE turns cold and walks toward the house.

WILLIAM is stuck. He cannot tell her.

CALEB looks at his father's sad face...

SUDDENLY, CALEB calls out to his mother:

CALEB
We went to find apples!

(Pause.)

WILLIAM'S face goes white.

CALEB (CONT'D)
In the valley. I had thought I had
seen an apple tree in the valley.
Father brought the gun, for if we
glanced that wolf again-

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
Why did you not tell me?

CALEB
Father wanted it a surprise to
cheer you, and so... but, there
were none. I thought I had seen
them.

KATHERINE looks at CALEB and WILLIAM. She clearly doubts this story.

Pause.

CALEB looks imploringly at her.

She smiles hesitantly, and she concedes... barely.

KATHERINE
I like you not outside the farm.
Even to the valley. Dost hear me?

CALEB nods "yes."

WILLIAM

Caleb...

(pause.)

Be a good lad and fetch some water
for Mother. Stray not from the
brook.

CALEB looks knowingly at his father and runs away.

EXT. FARM, CHOPPING-BLOCK - LATER:

AN AXE HEAD splits a LOG.

WILLIAM chops wood furiously! He is half dressed with a linen
sheet wrapped round his waist like a skirt.

Chop!

CHOP!!

CHOP!!!!

EXT. STREAM NEAR THE WOOD - AFTERNOON

The long dead tendrils of a WILLOW TREE hang around THOMASIN.
She wades in a small stream scrubbing her father's shirt and
breeches against some rocks, quietly humming a psalm.

CALEB is nearby, filling buckets with water, WATCHING HIS
SISTER.

THOMASIN'S apron and petticoat are tucked into her belt,
EXPOSING HER BARE LEGS in the water.

CALEB WATCHES HER LEGS...

AND HER SMALL CHEST RISING UP AND DOWN AT THE TOP OF HER
BODICE.

THOMASIN shivers a bit in the cold water as she scrubs.

CALEB holds the wooden bucket still in the stream and watches
her work.

THOMASIN LOOKS UP AND CATCHES HIS GAZE.

CALEB gasps silently and looks to his chores.

THOMASIN
Why are you dallying?

CALEB keeps his eyes on the bucket.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
What then?

CALEB slows his work again, but keeps looking down.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
What?

THOMASIN splashes him with water.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
Caleb?

THOMASIN splashes him again.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
Caleb?

Big splash.

CALEB looks up, hurt and ashamed.

CALEB
Stop it!

THOMASIN
I meant no harm in it.

CALEB turns to go.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
Caleb, I meant no harm. What's the
matter with thee? Come hither.
What's the matter?

CALEB goes to THOMASIN and she takes him in her arms.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
What's the matter with thee? Shhh.

CALEB'S eyes well-up with tears. THOMASIN strokes CALEB'S
hair as he nestles up to her.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
I have seen no apple since we went
from England. I would thou hadst
found em. I so wish for one.

THOMASIN MIMES BITING CALEB'S SHOULDER AND MAKES A

GROWLING/GNAWING SOUND.

They laugh a little, though CALEB tries not to.

THOMASIN starts humming her psalm again, almost rocking CALEB.

They stay for a long time in this innocently incestuous embrace.

For once, all is calm.

Suddenly, they hear something move in the tall grass and bulrushes:

It's the crackle and snap of many branches. (It sounds very like the sound THE WITCH made when she ascended into the air in the beginning of the film.)

CALEB guiltily jumps out of THOMASIN'S arms.

CALEB

Hear that?

THOMASIN

Aye.

The "clickety-clackety" sound again.

CALEB

Who's there?

Long Pause.

A child voice speaks, pretending to be old and scratchy:

MERCY (O.S.)

I be The Witch of the Wood.

THOMASIN

Mercy, come out.

MERCY (O.S.)

I be not Mercy, I be The Witch of the Wood. I have come to steal ye! Hear me stick a-flying through the trees: clickety-clackety-clickety-clakety!

CALEB

Mercy!

THOMASIN
Show thyself!

MERCY runs through the bulrushes...

MERCY
Clickety-clackety-clickety-clakety!

THOMASIN
Why is't when thou dost a wrong, I
am a-washing Father's clothes like
a slave, and thou art playing idle?

MERCY comes out holding a long stick:

MERCY
Because Mother hates you!

THOMASIN
Spoilt child. I'll tell Mother you
have left the farm alone.

MERCY
Black Phillip saith I can do what I
like.

THOMASIN
Devil take your Black Phillip.

MERCY
It's your fault I cannot leave the
yard.

THOMASIN
Quiet thee.

MERCY
I could go to the brook before you
let The Witch take Sam.

CALEB
It was a wolf stole Sam.

MERCY
A witch. I've seen her in her
riding cloak about The Wood!

CALEB
Father showed me the tracks.

MERCY
It was a witch!!

THOMASIN

Aye. It was a witch, Mercy. You speak aright.

CALEB

Thomasin!

THOMASIN

It was I!

MERCY

Liar.

THOMASIN

Twas I what stole him. I'm the witch of the wood.

MERCY

Liar! Liar!!

THOMASIN

I am.

THOMASIN smiles the smile of an older sister who know's her fib is working. And she's not going to stop.

CALEB

List not to her Mercy.

THOMASIN

I am that very witch. When I sleep my spirit slips away from my body and dances naked with The Devil. That's how I signed his book.

MERCY

No!

THOMASIN grows more serious in her play.

THOMASIN

He bade me bring him an unbaptized babe, and I stole Sam, and I gave him to my master. And I'll make any man or thing else vanish I like.

MERCY

No.

THOMASIN

Aye. And I'll vanish thee too if thou displeaseth me.

MERCY

Be quiet.

CALEB

Mercy, she's but telling fantasies.

THOMASIN

Or perchance I'll boil and bake thee since we are lack of food.

MERCY

Stop!

CALEB

Stop Thomasin.

MERCY starts crying.

MERCY

It's not true!

THOMASIN seems very serious now.

THOMASIN

It is, thou thing! How I crave to sink my teeth into thy pink flesh.

MERCY

I'm not afraid of thee!

THOMASIN

I'll make thee afraid before I have done with thee!

MERCY starts to run. THOMASIN runs after her and grabs her arm.

MERCY

Let me go! Let me go! I am not afraid for God hath kept me and will keep me still!

THOMASIN

If ever thou tellst thy mother of this, I will witch thee and thy mother! And Jonas too!

MERCY

Caleb!

MERCY cries and runs again. THOMASIN stops her, she pins MERCY down to the ground. THOMASIN SLAPS HER FACE!

THOMASIN
 Stop thy tears and swear thy
 silence.

MERCY
 I swear it.

THOMASIN
 You will not tell Mother nor
 Father!

MERCY
 I swear!

CALEB
 Thomasin, let her alone!

MERCY gets up.

MERCY
 Get away from her Caleb or she'll
 witch thee!

MERCY runs away.

CALEB looks at THOMASIN.

CALEB
 Why tell Mercy those horrible
 fancies?

THOMASIN
 Dost thou hate me too?

CALEB
 It was a wolf stole Sam.

THOMASIN
 I know.

She holds back her tears.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
 Leave me be. Go tell Mother and
 Father of my wickedness.

CALEB walks toward her.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
 Dost hear me?

CALEB
 Thomaisn, I-

THOMASIN

Leave.

CALEB

-

THOMASIN

I hate thy pity. I need it not.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

WILLIAM'S eyes are closed. With open arms, his hands reach above his head and up to Heaven. His words are not rhetorical. They are in earnest.

WILLIAM

...and forgive us the sins we have
this day committed against thee...

EVERYONE is at the table in prayer.

Food is very scant.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Free us from the shame and torment
which are due unto us for them. We
beseech thee, increase our faith in
the promises of the gospel, our
fear of thy name, and the hatred of
all our sins; that we may be
assured that thy Holy Spirit dwells
in us, that we might be thy
children in thy love and mercy.

For as we hunger for this food of
our bodies, so our souls hunger for
the food of eternal life. Finish
soon our days of sin, and bring us
to everlasting peace through the
purifying blood of thy son, our
Lord and only Saviour Christ Jesus.

ALL

Amen.

WILLIAM puts his arms down.

CALEB looks at his father. WILLIAM keeps his eyes to his food.

THOMASIN looks at Mercy. MERCY looks away with fear.

KATHERINE
Thomasin, where hast thou put the
silver cup?

CALEB looks up from his meal.

THOMASIN
Is't not on the shelf?

KATHERINE
Nay.

THOMASIN
In the six board then.

KATHERINE
T'aint there neither. It has been
disappeared for some while.

(pause.)

Didst lose it?

THOMASIN
I haven't touched it.

KATHERINE
Where has it gone then?

THOMASIN
I haven't touched it.

KATHERINE
I have caught thee trifling with it
before.

WILLIAM
She sayth she haven't touched it
Katherine.

KATHERINE
How thou couldst lose my father's
silver wine cup in this hovel, I
cannot know.

THOMASIN
I have no-

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
Peace child, it is gone. Did a wolf
vanish that too?

THOMASIN'S stomach sinks.

CALEB looks at his father.

WILLIAM keeps his gaze down on his own dinner.

The tension is VERY palpable.

Sounds of the crackling fire fill the silence.

WILLIAM

She haven't touched it Katherine.

WILLIAM takes another bite of food and wipes his beard. Eyes on his plate.

Pause.

KATHERINE

What is amiss on this farm?

KATHERINE looks down.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

It is not natural.

JONAS and MERCY look back at THOMASIN with accusatory eyes.

WILLIAM

Caleb?

CALEB look at his father nervously... Will he make him confess?

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Will you read out the chapter of
The Word to-night?

CALEB nods "yes," relieved.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

We must find some light in our
darkness. To-morrow we will have a
fast day but for our sins.

Everyone is silent.

From outside A GOAT BLEATS.

KATHERINE

Thomasin...

Another bleat. Louder.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Didst not bed them down before
supper? Thomasin?

EXT. FARMYARD - NIGHT

Another bleat, even wilder. The frightening sound echoes in the night.

THOMASIN walks alone with a lantern to THE GOAT SHED. Her cloak has been hastily thrown on.

The darkness of the farmyard is heavy on her.

She can faintly hear CALEB reading from The Bible.

As she walks, something moves in the trees.

She turns her head to the treetops and hears the "clickety-clackety."

Pause.

Her breath quickens.

She walks closer, cautiously, slowly.

A terrible screeching and grunting coming from the GOAT SHED.

She walks closer to the open door... she holds up her lamp...

INSIDE, BLACK PHILLIP IS VIOLENTLY COPULATING WITH ONE OF THE NANNY GOATS. THE NANNY GOAT screams as she tries to pull away from him. He keeps her in the grasp of his strong legs and muddy hooves. BLACK PHILLIP keeps grunting and thrusting.

THOMASIN gasps. She doesn't look away.

INT. FARMHOUSE, CANOPY BED - NIGHT

WILLIAM is in bed staring wide eyed at the wall.

The bed curtains are open and KATHERINE is kneeling on the floor praying by candlelight.

WILLIAM
Love, put out the light.

KATHERINE keeps praying.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
You must sleep tonight. Kate?

KATHERINE finishes her parer and gets into bed.

WILLIAM puts his arm around KATHERINE.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Thou dost remember I love thee?

She KISSES his large farmer's HAND.

KATHERINE

I do.

WILLIAM

List me Kate, I fear thou lookst too much upon this affliction. We must bend our thoughts towards God, not ourselves.

(pause.)

He hath never taken a child from us. Never a one, Kate. Who might earn that grace? We have been ungrateful of God's love.

KATHERINE embraces her husband and buries her face in his chest. WILLIAM comforts her the best he can.

KATHERINE

He hath cursed this family.

WILLIAM

No. He hath taken us into a very low condition to humble us and to show us more of his grace.

Still in his embrace, KATHERINE turns away.

KATHERINE

Was not Christ was led into the wilderness to be ill met by the devil?

WILLIAM

- ?

KATHERINE

We should ne'er have left the plantation.

WILLIAM

Kate -

KATHERINE
We should never have left.

KATHERINE looks at him.

Pause.

WILLIAM
That damnèd church!

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
There is naught hither.

WILLIAM
What need we? Silver Chalices?

This stings KATHERINE.

KATHERINE
How dare you chide me on a cup? Tis
not for vanity that I am grieved of
it.

WILLIAM looks to the wall again. His stomach sinks. He means
to confess:

WILLIAM
Katherine, I must tell thee-

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
We might have sold it.

WILLIAM
What?

KATHERINE
What fool will trade for our corn?

WILLIAM
List me Kate, I-

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
No, listen to me, William:

WILLIAM
Kate -

KATHERINE
William! Our daughter hath begat
the sign of her womanhood...

KATHERINE stops, she picks up her voice and calls above.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Thomasin? Caleb? Are y'abed? Mercy?

Dead silence.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Jonas?

Still silent.

KATHERINE closes the bed drapes.

INT. FARMHOUSE, GARRET - CONTINUOUS

CALEB and THOMASIN are awake, sitting around a burning candle.

JONAS and MERCY are tucked in to their bed, awake too.

They all listen intently to every word of their parents' whispers.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
(whispering)
She's old enough, she needs must
leave to serve another family.

THOMASIN is stunned.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
Nay, I must have each our hands -

KATHERINE (O.S.)
And each our empty stomachs too?

THOMASIN'S face sinks. CALEB want to look at her but he doesn't.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
Twas not her fault. I must tell
thee Kate-

KATHERINE (O.S.)
Aye, it was thine for taking thy
family hither.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
This is Godly land-

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 (overlapping)
 Godly? Our children are being
 fostered up like savages.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
 Kate!

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 How oft I begged and begged thee to
 take Samuel for baptism.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
 There was never - I'd not - They'd
 not baptize outside the
 congregation -

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 (overlapping)
 Our Sam is in hell!

WILLIAM (O.S.)
 Go to.

KATHERINE calms herself.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 God save us, Caleb is well.

WILLIAM hesitates.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
 Aye.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 He is also near the age of...
 apprenticeship.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
 We must keep him still. And
 Thomasin.

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 That corn is trash.

WILLIAM (O.S.)
 We cannot back to that church!

KATHERINE (O.S.)
 We will starve!

WILLIAM (O.S.)
 Peace. You'll wake 'em. Peace. I'll
 take the horse to village tomorrow
 with Thomasin. The Tildens or the
 Whytings, they can make use of her.
 They are good folk. Kate. Kate.
 Stop. We will find food. I know it.

CALEB looks over at THOMASIN.

She is crying into in her pillow.

HOLD ON: CALEB.

BLACK.

INT. HORSE BARN - PRE-DAWN

CALEB, by candlelight, unties THE HORSE'S REINS from a post.

THOMASIN (O.S.)
 (whispering)
 Caleb! Caleb!

He turns and sees THOMASIN walking around the farmyard. She
 sees him!

THOMASIN comes into the barn and quickly hides from the view
 of the farmhouse.

CALEB drops the reins and scrambles away from THE HORSE.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
 What are you doing?

He's caught. He won't look at her.

CALEB
 Go to sleep.

THOMASIN
 What's this? Tell me now!

CALEB

-

THOMASIN sees that BURT THE HORSE has his work-saddle and
 bridle on.

THOMASIN
 Running away then?

CALEB
No.

THOMASIN
Lie not to me.

CALEB
I don't.

THOMASIN
Then what?

CALEB
-

THOMASIN
Tell me! I'll wake mother and
father.

CALEB ignores her.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
As you like.

THOMASIN starts to head toward the house.

CALEB gets scared that she's not bluffing:

CALEB
If thou wilt back to sleep, and
keep silent of this, I promise
thee, you'll need not leave to
serve the Tildens nor any family
else.

THOMASIN
Caleb -

CALEB
(overlapping)
Tis not pity for thee, so chide me
not. I'll be back by mid-day.

CALEB goes over to the horse.

THOMASIN
Let me along with you.

CALEB
I cannot.

THOMASIN gives him a look that she is not to be trifled with.

EXT. THE WOOD - EARLY MORNING

The Wood is still dark.

THOMASIN rides BURT. CALEB is on foot, holding the reins and leading the way with his flickering lantern.

FOWLER trots along beside them.

CALEB has the musket. The match-cord is lit.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - MORNING

CALEB finds one of THE TRAPS by THE LARGE OVERTURNED TREE. He bends down.

THOMASIN

Well?

CALEB turns to her with a smile! They've made a catch!

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - DAY

CALEB and THOMASIN move now with a swifter, more assured pace.

A muskrat and other small game hang from the horse's tack.

Their spirits are light:

THOMASIN

Aye but we did!

CALEB

Nay.

THOMASIN

We did.

CALEB

No!

THOMASIN

We had glass windows in England. We have not been hither so long that you can forget that?

CALEB

As you like, Thomasin.

THOMASIN

You've gone mad!

CALEB

-

THOMASIN

We did.

CALEB

-

THOMASIN

Dost not remember Fowler laying on the floor i'the sun? You must! And the curious-curved shadows upon his back...?

CALEB

Nay.

THOMASIN

You do! And where the sun would shine, would he warm himself.(to Fowler) Wouldn't you, thou idler?

Remember once he lay upon the table, and Father saw him and he saith "we will have him for meat! Kate, Kate! We will roast this beast"(she laughs). You must remember that!

CALEB

I remember that day, but no glass.

Pause.

THOMASIN

Well...

THOMASIN is very frustrated that Caleb cannot remember... and finds herself surprisingly emotional about this window.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

...it was pretty.

Suddenly, FOWLER starts tracking something.

CALEB

What is't boy?

FOWLER POINTS:

CALEB and THOMASIN look ahead.

Standing about fifty yards before them is same giant HARE from yesterday!

BURT IS SPOOKED. He neighs and clomps around, kicking up dirt and tossing his head up oddly. THOMASIN holds tight to the work saddle. CALEB tries to keep his footing.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Burt, calm thee.

THOMASIN pats BURT to calm him and CALEB gives her the reins.

THE HARE stays motionless, looking straight at CALEB.

CALEB carefully prepares the musket.

He takes aim... He shouts:

CALEB (CONT'D)
Fowler, thence!

FOWLER RUNS toward THE HARE, barking loudly!

BURT neighs again, going rampant, nearly knocking THOMASIN off.

THOMASIN
Burt!

THE HARE RUNS DEEP INTO THE WOOD!

FOWLER FOLLOWS HIM AND DISAPPEARS!

CALEB
Fowler Nay! Fowler!

CALEB RUNS AFTER FOWLER!

HE SHOUTS BACK TO THOMASIN AS HE RUNS:

CALEB (CONT'D)
Stand here with Burt!

BURT IS STILL ACTING FRANTIC!

THOMASIN
Caleb, he's gone mad!

CALEB
(overlapping)
I'll straight back!

BUT IT IS TOO LATE...

THE HORSE REARS AND BUCKS AGAIN, KNOCKING THOMASIN TO THE GROUND AND GALLOPS OFF IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION OF FOWLER!

THUD!

THOMASIN IS LEFT UNCONSCIOUS ON THE FOREST FLOOR.

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - LATER

CALEB travels deeper into The Wood, running.

THE TREES have become more indiscernible from one another. Tall seemingly identical trunks stand looming in every direction. He stops, panting. He turns around.

CALEB
Thomasin? Thomasin!

He hears nothing.

He tries to whistle for Fowler like his father does. It comes out airy and quiet.

CALEB (CONT'D)
Folwer!

He attempts to whistle again. It doesn't work.

EXT. FARM YARD - LATER

JONAS AND MERCY are tethered to a long rope tied to the fence so they cannot wander from the farm. THE GOAT-BELLS from the nanny goats have also been tied to them.

TWINS
Caleb! Caleb!

THE BELLS CLANK as they walk.

KATHERINE and WILLIAM are in the distant fields near THE WOOD searching, calling their children's names.

A light rain starts to fall. It plinks on the GOAT-BELLS.

KATHERINE & WILLIAM
(in the distance)
Caleb, lad! Thomasin!

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - AFTERNOON

THOMASIN wakes.

THOMASIN

Caleb?

SHE stand, uneasy. She looks around.

SHE knows where she is. She is near OVERTURNED TREE where Caleb set the first trap.

How did she get there?

She turns back.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

Caleb! Burt?!

Nothing.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

Caleb!!

She runs on toward home!

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - LATER

CALEB holds his musket ready. THE TREES and underbrush have become even more dense and tangled.

He prays aloud as he walks:

CALEB

O God my Lord, I now begin,
O help me and I'll leave my sin.
For I repentant now will be,
From evil I will turn to thee.
None ever shall destroy my faith,
Nor do I mind what Satan saith.

O God my Lord, I now begin,
O help me and I'll leave my sin -

He hears the yelp of the dog. It echoes in the wood.

He runs fast after the noise. He cannot see through the mist.

He keeps running.

Running.

He trips and falls.

IN FRONT OF HIM ARE THE BLOODY REMAINS OF FOWLER, STILL HOT,
STILL BREATHING HIS LAST BREATHS!

EXT. ANOTHER PART OF THE WOOD - DUSK

THOMASIN clumsily weaves through crackling branches.
Daylight is waning.

She breaths heavily, trying to run, but she is exhausted.

All of a sudden, she hears something faint... voices!

They are almost inaudible:

WILLIAM (O.S.)
Caleb! Thomasin!

KATHERINE (O.S.)
Caleb!

She picks up her pace!

EXT. A WINDING PATH - DUSK

CALEB trudges through a strange winding path of dense,
twisting, vines and thorns.

He tries to run, but the rain, fog, and spiky terrain slow
him down.

His stockings get caught on some thorns.

He recoils in pain and drops THE MUSKET.

He tries to disentangle himself, further cutting his fingers
and legs.

He tries to pick up the musket but it is caught in THE
THORNS. He pulls and pulls and it only makes things worse.

His hands bleed more. He is crying.

IN THE DISTANCE IS A SWEET MELODY. A WOMAN HUMMING.

He turns his head to find where the music is coming from.

A few yards in front of him is THE HARE!

THE HARE JUMPS AWAY.

CALEB FOLLOWS, LEAVING THE MUSKET IN THE RAIN.

EXT. THE EDGE OF THE WOOD - THE NEXT MOMENT

THOMASIN comes to the edge of the tree line and sees her

father in the last light of dusk.

THOMASIN
Father! Father!

He hears her and runs toward her!

WILLIAM
Thomasin!

They meet, WILLIAM picks her up in his arms.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Thomasin! My girl.

He hugs her tight in the rain. He rubs his cheek on hers.

WILLIAM looks into her glassy eyes:

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Where is thy brother?

EXT. WITCH'S HOVEL - DUSK

CALEB emerges from the barbed path to see a faint warm light. The humming is more distinct.

Through the mist and rain THE WITCH'S HOVEL becomes visible:

The pointed structure sits up high on four knotted tree trunks. Matted branches overhang its sagging moss-grown thatch-roof, upon which there is no chimney, just a hole puffing smoke. The whole thing looks held together by ill-omened weeds, plants, and sinister roots that grow all over and through the muddy walls like a plague.

A rotting foot-ladder leads up to the slightly open front door. Firelight glows from within.

CALEB continues to walk toward the humming. THE HARE is nowhere to be seen.

He stumbles through a large FIRE PIT with BONES strewn about the ground. Rain plinks on a huge IRON CAULDRON in the center of the pit.

Just then, THE DOOR opens wider...

CALEB stops short.

Out steps a BEAUTIFUL WOMAN (20s) IN A RED CLOAK. She smokes a small CLAY PIPE.

CALEB steps back. He is soaking wet. He tries his best to stop crying, to no avail.

THE WOMAN comes forward and her very dirty, but dainty, bare foot takes one step down the foot ladder.

She leans forward. She reaches her arms out sympathetically toward CALEB.

Her face is greasy, but stunning. Her filthy bodice is cut quite low. There are a few small moles on her ample breast.

CALEB sees this all. He stays still. The rain falls.

THE WOMAN beckons him.

CALEB walks toward her, he is drawn to her. He can't help it.

She crouches on the foot ladder.

CALEB is now face to face with her.

She smiles at CALEB.

Some of her teeth are crooked and browned near the gums, it is startling, but she is beautiful all the same.

She strokes CALEB'S head and embraces him.

Tears still fall from CALEB'S eyes. He trembles.

He looks at THE WOMAN'S face, he looks into her hypnotic AMBER EYES.

She smiles so sweetly.

She draws CALEB NEAR.

SHE KISSES CALEB SENSUALLY ON THE MOUTH!

SHE PULLS HIM IN TIGHTER...

SUDDENLY, HER HAND, NOW OLD AND UGLY, CREEPS AROUND AND GRABS THE BACK OF HIS HEAD LIKE A CLAW. SHE PUSHES HIS MOUTH FURTHER INTO HERS!!

BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

CLOSE ON: THOMASIN standing against the wall, shaking. Guilty. Soaking wet.

KATHERINE

What's the matter with thee
Thomasin? What's the matter with
thee?

THOMASIN cannot move.

WILLIAM

I'll leave at first light and I'll
return not till I find him.

KATHERINE

Twould be better to go to the
village and raise up help. I cannot
bear -

WILLIAM

(overlapping)

Tis a days ride and I have not a
horse. There is not time to be
lost.

KATHERINE

Likely you should have left this
morn then.

WILLIAM

-

KATHERINE

You have no gun, William, nay, not
even a dog. Be not a fool.

THOMASIN watches WILLIAM get up and put on his wet cloak and
hat.

WILLIAM

I am a fool to go. There is none
will help our family.

WILLIAM rummages through the house.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Where's the lanthorn?

He rummages some more. He can't find it.

In frustration, WILLIAM shouts: he throws something across
the room with a bang.

THOMASIN covers her eyes. JONAS AND MERCY cower in the
corner.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Be it so. The moon is bright. Rain bothers me not. I'll be back in a two day -- If any a man will return with me.

MERCY

Don't go Father!

JONAS

(overlapping)

Please you Father, don't go!

KATHERINE

Enough.

(to Thomasin, calmly.)

Tell us why you went into The Wood.

THOMASIN

I promised.

THOMASIN exchanges a quick glance with her father.

KATHERINE

I care not.

THOMASIN

Let me find favor in your eyes.

KATHERINE

Child, tell me and thou wilt.

THOMASIN

I... I..

KATHERINE

Speak!

WILLIAM steps out from the shadows of the room.

WILLIAM

I took thy father's cup.

(pause.)

I sold it. Forgive me Kate. Forgive me Thomasin.

KATHERINE

What is this?

WILLIAM

Kate, I must make a confession...

(pause.)

I, yestermorn, I took Caleb to The Wood.

CUT TO:

EXT. THE FARM - MOMENTS LATER

RAIN pelts down upon the tiny house.

KATHERINE bursts out of the door into the rain.

WILLIAM runs after her.

WILLIAM

'Twas for food - and the pelts for money. Good money.

KATHERINE

(overlapping)

I knew you were false! I knew it!

WILLIAM

I did want it a surprise, twas why I kept silent. I will trap that wolf. Stop! Stop Kate!

WILLIAM grabs hold of her arm.

KATHERINE

You stood by whilst our son lied to me!

WILLIAM

'Twas for thy sake. I love thee Kate.

KATHERINE

You took him to the Wood!

WILLIAM

I will find him.

KATHERINE

You have broken God's covenant. You are a liar. And you have lost another child.

WILLIAM
 (overlapping)
 I will go now!

KATHERINE
 You cannot escape the wood!

WILLIAM
 I will find him!

KATHERINE
 And kill thyself too? Will Jonas be
 the man of the house? Will you damn
 all your family to death?!

WILLIAM
 Kate-

KATHERINE
 (overlapping)
 Let go of me.

THEY struggle.

WILLIAM
 I will find my son!

KATHERINE slaps WILLIAM very hard in the face.

WILLIAM lifts his hand to strike his wife.

THOMASIN (O.S.)
 Father!

THE CHILDREN are gathered by the open door. They watch their
 parents fight in the rain.

WILLIAM sees his children.

He puts his hand down, he picks up KATHERINE in his arms, and
 walks toward the house.

INT. FARMHOUSE - LATER

THOMASIN tends to her father's bloody nose by THE HEARTH.
 WILLIAM shivers in his wet clothes. He looks at his daughter,
 ashamed.

KATHERINE sits on the other side of the fire holding JONAS
 AND MERCY in her arms. She rocks them back in forth.

KATHERINE
Picking apples.

Silence.

THOMASIN looks at KATHERINE.

THOMASIN
Mother, have the goats been bedded
down?

KATHERINE
Nay.

THOMASIN
I will to it.

KATHERINE
Let it wait till the morrow. They
dare not scape with this rain.

THOMASIN
Nay, I will to it. Please you,
Mother.

KATHERINE
Come hither child.

THOMASIN walks to her mother...

KATHERINE embraces THOMASIN along with her other remaining
children.

Pause.

KATHERINE looks at THOMASIN'S yearning face. She kisses her
warmly.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Hurry back.

INT/EXT. GOAT SHED - NIGHT

THOMASIN proudly pets THE NANNY GOATS and soothes them. BLACK
PHILLIP stands by, his horns casting enormous shadows from
THOMASIN'S LANTERN LIGHT.

THOMASIN brings one of THE WHITE NANNIES down to the ground.

No sound but the pitter-patter of the rain outside.

Long Pause.

SUDDENLY, THOMASIN hears the sound of FOOTSTEPS outside in the grass...

More footsteps. Stumbling around.

SHE HEARS THE SOUND of a wooden creak.

THOMASIN is still.

She hears the wood creak again more forcefully.

THOMASIN flees from the GOAT SHED to see what it is...

EXT. GOAT SHED - CONTINUOUS

IT'S CALEB! WET. NAKED. PALE AS DEATH.

He grasps a FENCE-POST trying to stay standing in the pouring rain.

THOMASIN runs to him.

SHE embraces him. He is shivering.

THOMASIN
Caleb. Caleb!

CALEB collapses in THOMASIN'S arms. THOMASIN shrieks:

THOMASIN (CONT'D)
Father! Mother!

THOMASIN brings her lamp to CALEB'S face:

HIS EYES ROLL TO THE BACK OF HIS HEAD. HE OPENS HIS MOUTH WIDE AND SCREAMS AN UTTERLY SILENT SCREAM.

BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE, GARRET - NIGHT

Shutters are closed. Several tapers are lit.

CALEB is in his straw bed breathing stertorously. His eyes are closed. There are several small scabs around his mouth. His lips move slightly, occasionally muttering something inaudible.

THOMASIN wipes the perspiration from his brow.

KATHERINE takes a broad strip of linen and sprinkles it with herbs. Then she holds a taper into the flame of a wood-

candle. The flame billows a thick smoke as KATHERINE drips the hot tallow over the herbs. She places this poulticed cloth over CALEB'S bare stomach and ties it taught with THOMASIN'S help.

JONAS & MERCY sit by his pillow and touch him gently with their tiny fingers.

THE TWINS LOOK AT THOMASIN WITH SUSPICION. THOMASIN tries to ignore this.

KATHERINE gives THOMASIN a small bowl to hold by CALEB'S head. KATHERINE takes her knife and makes a small cut in a protruding vein in CALEB'S temple. BLOOD drips into the bowl.

KATHERINE begins to pray. THOMASIN looks at her father.

WILLIAM stands reticently from a couple paces back, leaning his hand on one of the beams of the garret.

EXT. FARM, CHOPPING-BLOCK - NIGHT

WILLIAM IN THE POURING RAIN, chops wood.

CHOP.

CHOP!

CHOP!!!

EXT/INT. GOAT SHED - MORNING

THOMASIN is in the shed with A PAIL and milking stool, readying one of THE NANNY GOATS for milking.

SHE looks over at THE TWINS:

They sit in the fodder with BLACK PHILLIP.

MERCY looks at his legs, his hoofs. She plays with the long, matted, dung-covered hair on his legs. She still has THE GOAT-BELL tied to her coat. She plays the part:

MERCY

Baa. Baa.

JONAS, also still wearing a bell, lifts up BLACK PHILLIP'S ear and whispers into it.

JONAS

(whispering)

Baa. Baa.

JONAS & MERCY

(whispering)

Baaa. Baaa. Baaa.

MERCY

(whispers)

What ails Caleb, Black Phillip?
What ails him? Did Thomasin make
'im sick in The Wood?

THOMASIN

What say you?

JONAS

Mind thy self. I know what you did
to Sam.

THOMASIN

Go to.

JONAS

Black Phillip saith you are wicked.

MERCY

Aye, he told me too.

THOMASIN

Damn your Black Phillip!

MERCY

He saith you put The Devil in
Caleb, that's why he's sick.

THOMASIN

I'd never hurt Caleb, nor Sam, nor
thee.

MERCY

You beat me!

THOMASIN

It was a jest.

MERCY

You said you'd eat of me!

THOMASIN

Mercy!?

MERCY

Mother and Father will find out.

THOMASIN

What?

JONAS

That you are a witch!

THOMASIN calms down. She ignores them.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Thomasin... do you hear?

THOMASIN continues to ignore him and gets to work.

She grabs one of THE GOAT'S teats.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Thomasin...

She squeezes.

BLOOD SQUIRTS INTO THE PAIL.

THOMASIN is in disbelief.

SHE squeezes again.

MORE BLOOD.

THOMASIN gasps and jumps to her feet ACCIDENTALLY KICKING THE PAIL OF BLOOD TO THE GROUND.

JONAS AND MERCY SEE THE SPILT BLOOD OOZING ACROSS THE STRAW.

THEY LOOK AT THOMASIN IN TERROR, AS IF SHE MADE THIS HAPPEN.

INT. FARMHOUSE, GARRET - MORNING

CALEB lies in his trance-like state, his white face faintly lit by the small garret window. KATHERINE is next to him praying.

WILLIAM creaks sheepishly up the ladder.

KATHERINE

(to herself)

Amen.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

Dost remember John Kempe's boy?
That first winter, he was tormented
of Indian magic.

WILLIAM sighs.

WILLIAM

Tis not the same.

KATHERINE
 (overlapping)
 This is unnatural providence.

WILLIAM
 I know not that.

KATHERINE
 Look at thy son.

WILLIAM
 -

KATHERINE
 Will...

WILLIAM
 What?

KATHERINE
 Think.

WILLIAM
 Think what?

KATHERINE
 Think.

WILLIAM
 I have no thought

KATHERINE puts her face down on CALEB'S chest.

KATHERINE
 Does this look not like
 witchcraft!?
 (Pause).

WILLIAM
 What witch? Who is it that does
 this then? Who? Thy thoughts are as
 a child.

KATHERINE
 -

WILLIAM opens a chest and starts taking things off the beams
 of the garret and putting them inside.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
 What are you doing?

WILLIAM

We'll back to the plantation in the morn. Find a good family for Thomasin. Take Caleb to the Doctor. He will find whether this be some natural ill or no.

KATHERINE

-

WILLIAM

Yet we cannot return beggars. We will scour the field. There may be some fruit yet untouched by this rot.

KATHERINE looks to CALEB.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

I beseech thee Katherine, what canst thou do for him presently?

KATHERINE

How might we all bare it to the village with no horse?

WILLIAM

The little corn with the goats, can fetch a fair price. We'll back with Caleb, sell em, then return with a horse for the twins and Thomasin.

KATHERINE

(overlapping)
You cannot leave them here-

WILLIAM

(overlapping)
No, nay. Thomasin and thee -

KATHERINE

(overlapping)
Forget the crop Will!

WILLIAM

(overlapping)
What? What? What dost thou want!?
Tell me and I'll give it thee!

KATHERINE touches CALEB'S sweaty hair.

KATHERINE

I want to be home.

WILLIAM

Thou wilt be home by candle-time
tomorrow.

KATHERINE

In England.

WILLIAM

-

KATHERINE

Will, I... I also have a confession
to make:

WILLIAM is still.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)

I never wished to be a shrew to
thee. I have become as Job's wife,
I know it, but since Sam, since...
My heart has turned to stone.

(KATHERINE swells, but
keeps her emotions in
check))

I had dreamed once - twas when I
was of Thomasin's years - that I
was with Christ upon earth. I was
so very near him and in many tears
for the assurance of the pardon of
my sins and was so ravished with
his love towards me, I thought it
far exceeding the affection of the
kindest husband. The impression of
it was so deep in my heart, when I
waked, my pillow had turned to
tears.

WILLIAM

-

KATHERINE

And, since Samuel disappeared, I
have such a sad weakness of faith
that I cannot shake it. I cannot
see Christ's help as near. I pray
and pray but I cannot . . . I fear
I cannot ever feel that same
measure of love again.

WILLIAM

(curt)

Thou shalt have of it in heaven.

(MORE)

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

(Pause.)

I'll be i'the field. If you can spare a while, do.

WILLIAM slams the trunk.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

We'll leave at dawn. I promise thee that.

EXT/INT. GOAT SHED - MORNING

THOMASIN tries to cover THE BLOOD with dung.

JONAS AND MERCY watch her.

WILLIAM shouts:

WILLIAM (O.S.)

Thomasin! Jonas, Mercy! Come hither!

THOMASIN turns to THE TWINS.

THOMASIN

Speak not a word!

EXT. CORNFIELD - DAY

WILLIAM AND JONAS are routing through the cornfield destroying the bundled corn shocks. WILLIAM carries a large, mostly empty basket on his shoulder. JONAS crawls around in the dirt, throwing useless finds to the side.

EXT. FARMYARD/CORNFIELD - CONTINUOUS

KATHERINE AND THOMASIN are taking the salvageable ears and hanging them to dry on side of the house. KATHERINE uses a BILLHOOK (a rustic knife like a small machete) to cut the fungus out of the kernels.

THOMASIN is very glad to be working with her mother.

MERCY is behind her singing:

MERCY

(sings)

Black Phillip is a merry merry king
He rules the land with mirth.

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
I cannot abide your songs.

KATHERINE
Please you, Mercy.

MERCY stares at her sister:

MERCY
(sings)
Black Philip has a mighty mighty
sting
He'll knock thee to the earth.
Sing bah bah King Phillip the black
sing bah bah bah bah bah

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
Peace thou thing.

KATHERINE
Mercy. Thomasin.

MERCY
(sings)
Sing bah bah King Phillip the black
He'll knock thee on thy back!

THOMASIN
Enough!

JUST THEN, a terrible SHRIEK is heard from the house!

EVERYONE STOPS AND TURNS.

THEY HEAR CALEB SCREAMING AND SCREAMING AT THE TOP OF HIS
LUNGS!

WILLIAM throws his basket to the ground, KATHERINE drops her
BILLHOOK on the bench outside the front door and they run
inside.

JONAS and MERCY look at THOMASIN and then run toward the
house too.

INT. FARMHOUSE, GARRET - MOMENTS LATER

CALEB SHRIEKS:

CALEB

Get the broad axe and cut off her head.

His eyes are open wide. His head is back. He sweats profusely.

KATHERINE AND WILLIAM try to hold him down.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Get the narrow axe and cut off her head!

THOMASIN and THE TWINS watch dumbfounded.

CALEB is writhing in pain, contorting his body with each of these horrible descriptions:

CALEB (CONT'D)

She's upon me, she kneels.. my belly... my bowels, she pinches... scratches.

She... ch--

CALEB'S face grows red as if he is being CHOKED.

KATHERINE

(overlapping)
Caleb!

CALEB

(overlapping)
Sin! SIN! SIN!!!

WILLIAM

(overlapping)
Thomasin, take the children outside.

KATHERINE holds CALEB and he squirms in her arms.

MERCY

(overlapping)
Father, what's happening?

CALEB

Sin!

KATHERINE

Caleb!

MERCY & JONAS
(overlapping)
Mother! Father!

WILLIAM
(overlapping)
Thomasin! Take them hence!

THOMASIN grabs at JONAS AND MERCY'S hands but they run from her, watching their brother.

CALEB
(overlapping)
God is naught. God is naught.

CALEB breathes heavily. His eyes roll back in his head.

KATHERINE
Who does this to thee? Who does
this?

CALEB keeps breathing heavily, his mouth shuts tight. His teeth are clenched.

KATHERINE tries to open his mouth.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
His mouth is sealed-up.

CALEB'S mouth foams, a bit of BLOOD comes out. He is seizing violently.

WILLIAM
Children, keep from this. Thomasin
help!

JONAS & MERCY
No!

THOMASIN rushes to the bed. She holds CALEB down while WILLIAM tries to open CALEB'S mouth with his fingers.

KATHERINE
He'll break his jaws.

CALEB tightens his bite.

WILLIAM panics. HE TAKES THE KNIFE FROM HIS BELT AND TRIES TO FORCE CALEB'S MOUTH OPEN WITH THE WOODEN HANDLE.

CALEB is groaning, BLOOD spills from his mouth and WILLIAM holds THE KNIFE HANDLE, trying not to cut CALEB or himself.

CALEB keeps breathing hard.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
 What is't? What is't?

THERE IS SOMETHING BEHIND CALEB'S TEETH... PUSHING THROUGH.

WILLIAM pulls the knife away.

CALEB STARTS RETCHING...

HE HEAVES, AND HEAVES...

HE VOMITS UP A SMALL ROTTING APPLE!!

THOMASIN SHUDDERS.

WILLIAM AND KATHERINE pull away in terror.

CALEB subsides.

THE FAMILY WATCHES THE APPLE FALL TO THE FLOOR.

KATHERINE looks at WILLIAM.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
 William?

WILLIAM
 AWAY FROM THIS!

KATHERINE
 He is witched!

THOMASIN
 No!

Pause.

JONAS points at THOMASIN

JONAS
'Tis she!

THOMASIN
No!!

WILLIAM AND KATHERINE TURN TO JONAS.

Pause.

KATHERINE
 What horrible fancy's this?

MERCY
 She told me she stole Sam!

WILLIAM
Silence. Go back to the yard!

JONAS
(overlapping)
She gave him to The Devil in The
Wood.

THOMASIN
They lie!

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
What say you?

MERCY
She meets The Devil in The Wood!

JONAS
She turned Flora's milk to blood.

MERCY
She had bade us keep secret from
you.

THOMASIN
It was but a jest to quiet her. I..

THE TWINS run to their parents.

JONAS
She made bargain with Satan!

MERCY
She signed his book!

WILLIAM
Silence.

THOMASIN goes toward them.

MERCY
(overlapping)
Don't let her near me. She'll place
a curse on me.

JONAS
(overlapping)
Father!

MERCY
Mother!

THOMASIN
 (overlapping)
 They conspire against me.

MERCY
 Thomasin is a witch!

WILLIAM stands.

WILLIAM
 Nay. I'll not hear it.

JONAS
 She is!

WILLIAM pushes the children away from him.

WILLIAM
 I'll have proof of it, or heaven
 help thee. On thy knees!

KATHERINE
 Stop it William!

The children kneel.

WILLIAM
 Look me in the eye daughter. Dost
 thou love the word of God?

THOMASIN
 Yes.

WILLIAM
 Love you The Bible? Love you
 Prayer?

THOMASIN
 Yes! Yes!

WILLIAM
 We are children of sin all, yet I
 tell thee, I have raised up no
 witch in this house.

Let us pray, then we need fear
 nothing. We shall never lie open to
 the wicked one.

Pray for thy brother.

JONAS
 You must believe us.

THOMASIN
Evil, wretches!

THOMASIN starts after the twins!

WILLIAM & KATHERINE
Thomasin!

WILLIAM
Pray!

THE TWINS stand there frozen.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Pray! Our Father, which art in
heaven...

THE TWINS stay still. They stare at CALEB'S bloody mouth and
bedclothes.

KATHERINE
Jonas, pray!

JONAS
I... I cannot remember my prayer.

KATHERINE
What?

MERCY
Nor I.

JONAS
I cannot.

KATHERINE
Stop this nonsense.

WILLIAM
Speak children, Our Father, which
art in heaven, hallowed...

THE TWINS look as if they are in pain.

MERCY'S eyes fill with tears.

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
Pray.

Pray you beasts.

MERCY
Thomasin! Stop!

THOMASIN
Come now? PRAY!!

JONAS
I cannot.

MERCY
(overlapping)
I cannot.

THOMASIN pushes MERCY to the floor!

THOMASIN
Get on thy knees and pray!

MERCY shrieks in pain!

WILLIAM
Damnation!

MERCY
Thomasin, stop!

KATHERINE
I cannot hear this. This is not so!

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
On my life and soul!

MERCY
(overlapping)
Let us pray sister, I crave of
thee!

WILLIAM
Thomasin.... if they speak true...

JONAS & MERCY
(overlapping)
Let us pray Thomasin!!

SUDDENLY: CALEB STARTS TO SCREAM.

JONAS AND MERCY START TO SCREAM THE SAME WAY AS CALEB.

CALEB
A toad. A cat. A crow. A raven. A
great black dog. A wolf.

WILLIAM
(overlapping)
Stop this. Stop

JONAS and MERCY start acting like animals bleating and cawing in a horrifying manner, they do not seem like children.

CALEB
 (overlapping)
 She desires of my blood. She sends
 'em upon me. They feed upon her
 teats, her nether parts. She sends
 'em upon me.

JONAS and MERCY scream in pain doing all the same actions as CALEB.

JONAS & MERCY
 They desire of my blood. They bite
 me, they bite me!

CALEB
 (overlapping)
 My Lord, My Jesus! Save me! She
 sends her Devils...

MERCY
 (overlapping)
 Thomasin!

JONAS
 (overlapping)
 Stop it stop it!

THOMASIN
 I do nothing.

KATHERINE
 Think on Christ!

CALEB
 I am thine enemy, wallowing in the
 blood and filth of my sins.

KATHERINE
 The Lord is my shepherd...

CALEB
 I am thine enemy, wallowing
 in the blood and filth of my
 sins.

WILLIAM
 The Lord is my shepherd,

JONAS

I am thine enemy wallowing in
the blood and filth of my
sins.

MERCY

(overlapping)

I am thine enemy wallowing in
the blood and filth of my sin

WILLIAM & KATHERINE

I shall not want.
He maketh me to rest in green
pasture, & leadeth me by the
still waters.

He restoreth my soul, &
leadeth me in the paths of
righteousness for his Names
sake.

Yea, though I should walk
through the valley of
the shadow of death, I will
fear no evil:

CALEB/WILLIAM/KATHERINE

For thou art with me.

KATHERINE

Caleb!

CALEB shouts:

CALEB

Cast the light of thy Countenance
upon me. Spread over me the lap of
thy love.

JONAS and MERCY silently mouth the words he says and they
tremor on the floor near him.

CALEB (CONT'D)

Wash me in the ever-flowing
fountains of thy blood. Let me ever
be with thee. Wholly thine I am, my
sweet Lord Jesus.

As CALEB'S words grow more intense, he continues to writhe,
and his motions and exclamations seem DISTURBINGLY EROTIC.

CALEB (CONT'D)

O my Lord, my love! Kiss me with
the kisses of thy mouth, how lovely
art thou! ...thy embrace!

MY LORD, MY LOVE, MY SOUL'S
SALVATION, TAKE ME TO THY LAP!!

CALEB collapses completely limp.

JONAS

I love thee Jesus, I love thee.

MERCY
I am thine, Lord.

JONAS and MERCY collapse too, their chests moving heavily up and down.

Pause.

Everyone else is still, trying to process what they have just seen.

THOMASIN looks at her brother:

THOMASIN
Caleb!

She runs to his body and embraces it.

KATHERINE grabs him too.

KATHERINE
Caleb.

KATHERINE tries to rouse CALEB. THOMASIN turns to the twins.

THOMASIN
Jonas, Mercy. Get up. Get up!!!

THOMASIN yanks them up. They fall to the ground, silent, but breathing.

THOMASIN looks back at her brother. He is not moving. Not breathing. KATHERINE turns to WILLIAM:

KATHERINE
He is dead.

WILLIAM
-

THOMASIN
-

KATHERINE
He is dead!

THOMASIN panics!

EXT. FARM, HILLSIDE - AFTERNOON

THOMASIN runs across the fields!

WILLIAM runs after her.

WILLIAM
 Thomasin! Thomasin!

THOMASIN collapses in the grass by AN OLD ENORMOUS OAK TREE.

She sobs.

WILLIAM holds her in his arms.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
 My girl.

They sit for a moment under the tree, catching their breath.
 She buries her head in his chest. He takes her hand.

Pause.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
 This tree will be lovely come
 spring. Remember when we came
 hither?

THOMASIN

-

WILLIAM
 A fine tree.

Next year I'd have sewn a wheat
 field. Started at this tree and
 ended thither. We'd have been a
 proper farm then. I'd have bought
 us a great fat milk cow, finished
 us the barn...

THOMASIN

-

WILLIAM
 You must tell me, Thomasin...

(pause.)

Tomorrow, I cannot keep secret of
 this, a council will be called and
 thy life is... thy life...

THOMASIN
 You will not believe me?

WILLIAM
 I saw The Serpent in my son. You
 stopped their prayer Thomasin-

THOMASIN pushes away.

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
They lie.

WILLIAM
I saw it. I have been blind
Thomasin. Caleb disappeared with
thee!

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
I love Caleb!

WILLIAM
(overlapping))
And who then found him, naked as
sin, pale as death and witched!?

(he calms)
List me Thomasin, the bargain thou
hast made is of no effect.

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
I made no bargain.

WILLIAM
Thy soul belongeth to Christ....

THOMASIN
(overlapping)
I made no bargain.

WILLIAM
...The Devil hath no interest in
thee!

THOMASIN stand in front of him.

THOMASIN
I am no witch, father!

WILLIAM
What did I but see in my house?

THOMASIN
Will you not hear me?!

WILLIAM
I prithee, confess-

THOMASIN
 (overlapping)
 Why have you turned against me?

WILLIAM
 (overlapping)
 Jesus Christ can unwitch us if you
 will but speak the truth to me. As
 I love thee, speak truth!

THOMASIN
 You ask me to speak truth?

WILLIAM
 I beg thee!

Pause.

Thomasin turns cold.

THOMASIN
 You and Mother are planned to rid
 the farm of me.

WILLIAM
 -

THOMASIN
 Aye. I heard you speak of it. Is
 that truth?

WILLIAM
 -

THOMASIN
 You took of Mother's cup and let
 her rail at me. Is that truth?

WILLIAM
 Peace thee.

THOMASIN
 I will not.

WILLIAM
 I am thy father!

THOMASIN
 You are a hypocrite!

WILLIAM
 Hold thy tongue Daughter mine!

THOMASIN

You took Caleb to The Wood and let me take the blame of that too. You confessed not till it was too late. Is that truth? You let Mother be as thy master! You cannot bring the crops to yield! You cannot hunt! Is that truth enough?

WILLIAM

Enough!

THOMASIN

Thou canst do nothing save cut wood!

WILLIAM

Bitch!

WILLIAM grabs THOMASIN and holds her close to his face.

SHE looks imploringly into his eyes:

THOMASIN

And you will not hear me!

WILLIAM

Must I hear The Devil wag his tongue in thy mouth?

THOMASIN'S eyes ignite.

THOMASIN

Ask the twins then.

WILLIAM

-

THOMASIN

Ask them. They spend all day long babbling to that horned beast. They know well his voice.

WILLIAM

Go to!

THOMASIN

The Adversary oft comes in the shape of a he-goat. And whispers. Aye, whispers.

(Pause.)

He is Lucifer, you know it.

(MORE)

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

The twins know it.

WILLIAM
Slander thy brethren no more.

THOMASIN
It is they!

WILLIAM
From my sight.

THOMASIN
I'll not move from this spot till
you put the question to them.

WILLIAM
Get up.

THOMASIN
Twas they and that goat what
bewitched this whole farm.

WILLIAM
Lies!

THOMASIN
Was't a wolf stole Sam? I never saw
no wolf. Mercy told me herself by
the stream "I be the witch of the
wood!"

WILLIAM
Get up. Rise!!

WILLIAM grabs THOMASIN by the shoulder violently and drags
her across the fields.

INT. FARMHOUSE - AFTERNOON

CALEB'S BODY lies on the table. KATHERINE is preparing him
for burial.

WILLIAM bursts through the door and throws THOMASIN to the
ground.

KATHERINE
What is this?

WILLIAM
Speak!

THOMASIN

I am no witch.

KATHERINE

Get her from my sight! I'll not
have her in this house.

WILLIAM

She is no witch, Katherine. What is
the cause, daughter? Tell thy
mother.

THOMASIN looks at JONAS AND MERCY in their parent's bed, eyes
closed, moaning, trance-like.

THOMASIN

I cannot know for certain.

WILLIAM

Thou toldst me well thou knew!

KATHERINE

I cannot look at her.

WILLIAM

Aye, but y'shall: Thomasin?

THOMASIN

-

WILLIAM

Thomasin!

THOMASIN

Jonas and Mercy... they made
covenant with The Devil in the
shape of Black Phillip.

KATHERINE

-

WILLIAM

Dost hear that? Ye Black minions?
Dost hear, yolk Devils?

WILLIAM shakes THE TWINS in their sleeping trance:

WILLIAM (CONT'D)

Wake. Wake from this. Did ye make
some unholy bond with that goat?
Speak if this is pretense!

THE TWINS lie still.

WILLIAM laughs angrily and frighteningly.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Dissemblers! Grave pretenders all.
Hear me this: I will not play a
fool to children's games!

KATHERINE
This is no sport William.

WILLIAM
Yet these lies from our babes'
mouths are but trifles to them.

THOMASIN
I do not lie!

WILLIAM
Silence, creature!

KATHERINE
Thy son is dead. Damned.

WILLIAM
Caleb did but cry Jesus.

KATHERINE
The Devil!

WILLIAM
You know it not!

KATHERINE
The Devil will speak Scripture too.

WILLIAM
You know it not. It is not true!

KATHERINE
We are Damned!

WILLIAM explodes:

WILLIAM
Wake!!

He shakes THE TWINS violently.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
Fetch the billhook Wife and I will
smite thee Jonas as Abraham would
have done his seed!

KATHERINE
William stop this!

WILLIAM picks up Joseph by the scruff of the neck.

WILLIAM
Fetch the billhook and I'll dash
his skull!

JONAS wakes up immediately and screams!

MERCY jumps from the bed, alert, awake.

MERCY
NO!!

JONAS
Father!

THOMASIN
Do you see?! Do you so see now?!

WILLIAM
Damnation!!!

INT/EXT. GOAT SHED - LATER

Hammer! Hammer! Hammer!

WILLIAM hammers old planks over the door of the GOAT SHED. He holds several nails in his teeth. His eyes wet with tears. He must do it. He has no choice.

THE TWINS are screaming.

THOMASIN
No! It is not safe. Not with them!

ALL THREE CHILDREN ARE INSIDE THE SHED WITH THE GOATS.

MERCY
Father!

THOMASIN
Keep me from this goat.

WILLIAM
If that old billy be The Devil, I
would have danced with him myself.

WILLIAM hammers in the last nail.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
 Ill break thee out upon the dawn,
 and we'll set back to the
 plantation.

His children's eyes look at him through the cracks. Their small pleading fingers stretch towards him.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
 Think on thy sins.

INT. GOAT SHED - CONTINUOUS

THOMASIN sits at one end of the shed. JONAS AND MERCY sit at the other with BLACK PHILLIP and the other goats.

JONAS strokes BLACK PHILLIP.

Pause.

THOMASIN
 Are you witches?

Pause.

JONAS
 Does Father think I am one?

MERCY
 Are you?

THOMASIN
 No.

(Pause.)

Doth he really speak to thee?

BLACK PHILLIP moves around in the shadows.

THOMASIN looks at him, guarded at first, but slowly becoming more intoxicated with curiosity.

THE GOAT stares back with his otherworldly rectangular pupils.

EXT. HILLSIDE - SUNSET

The wind blows.

WILLIAM AND KATHERINE stand beneath THE GIANT OLD OAK.

A SMALL, SHALLOW GRAVE has been dug. CALEB'S BODY, wrapped in an old linen sheet, lies inside.

WILLIAM and KATHERINE look on.

They will not cry.

KATHERINE tosses a few brittle sprigs of rosemary upon on his chest.

Pause.

WILLIAM takes up a shovel. He starts to cover the body with earth.

KATHERINE stays still.

Pause.

She steps away...

SHE CLIMBS DOWN INTO THE GRAVE.

WILLIAM stops shoveling.

KATHERINE HOLDS CALEB'S BODY TIGHT.

WILLIAM looks on: She is not crying. Not hysterical. Just still. A living corpse.

KATHERINE looks at WILLIAM hard in the eyes.

Pause.

THE SUN sets behind them, disappearing into THE WOOD.

AUDIO TRANSITION: CHOP! CHOP!! CHOP!!!

EXT. CHOPPING BLOCK - NIGHT

WILLIAM chops wood.

WILLIAM'S WOOD PILE is towering nearly as high as the house. Many of the logs have been haphazardly tossed up top and lean precariously over the edge.

WILLIAM keeps cutting and tossing. He groans and grunts with every angry chop.

INT/EXT. GOAT SHED - AT THE SAME TIME

THOMASIN and THE TWINS watch their father through the cracks of the shed.

-INTERCUT BETWEEN WILLIAM AND CHILDREN THE SHED-

WILLIAM throws the axe to the ground. He whispers to God:

WILLIAM
It is my fault.

He falls hard to his knees. His muscles shake with fatigue.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I confess it. I confess it!!

He scoops up a hand full of earth and holds it tight in his fist. He looks to heaven:

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
O my God, I am false. I am bemired
with the filth of pride. I am. I
know it. Dispose of me as thou
wilt, yet redeem my children.

They cannot tame their natural
evils.

CLOSE ON: THOMASIN, listening. She takes in her father's heavy words.

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I lie before thee a coward and
thine enemy and lick the dust of
thy earth.

WILLIAM brings the fist of dirt to his mouth... and swallows it.

He takes another handful...

WILLIAM (CONT'D)
I beg thee wash them clean in thy
blood. I beg thee my Christ... save
my children. Save them. I beg
thee...

CLOSE ON: THOMASIN, listening.

WILLIAM (O.S.) (CONT'D)
I beg thee... I have not damned my
family. I beg the...

EXT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

THE FARM waits quietly in the moonlight.

No one is outside.

No candle light creeps through the cracks in the door.

The wind blows.

Brittle branches rattle and snap.

The tall trees creek and moan.

Far away is the faintest sound of: "clickety-clackety-clickety-clackety-clickety-clackety-clackety."

It echoes through the forest and the farm.

INT. GOAT SHED - NIGHT

JONAS AND MERCY lie awake in the hay and straw with the sleeping goats.

THOMASIN is asleep on the other side of the shed.

"Clickety-clackety, clickety-clakety"

THE TWINS HEAR IT... IS IT GETTING LOUDER?

THEY CLUTCH EACH OTHER TIGHT.

INT. FARMHOUSE, CANOPY BED - NIGHT

KATHERINE lies on her pillow half asleep. SHE FAINTLY HEARS A GIGGLING BABY. She opens her eyes.

It is utterly black.

She gets out of bed, fumbling to light a taper. She puts it to a dying ember and the taper illuminates her face.

In front of her is THE SILVER CUP! How can this be?

She leans toward it...

THE BABY GIGGLES again.

SHE GASPS AND TURNS behind her:

CALEB sits on a stool holding SAMUEL on his lap. They are clean and healthy, and illuminated by a dim ethereal light.

SAMUEL wears a christening gown.

KATHERINE gets up and goes to them.

CAMERA STAYS ON KATHERINE:

KATHERINE
My lambs. My angels!

Her face glows with joy! Her happy tears wash the grief from her face. She is beautiful.

CALEB (O.S.)
(whispering)
Mother. We have longed to see you
so.

THEY EMBRACE.

KATHERINE goes to her knees and looks up at CALEB. She takes SAM from his arms. SHE laughs!

KATHERINE
As I to thee!

Her eyes light up.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
I must wake thy father! He will be
so glad-

CALEB (O.S.)
(whispering))
No, let him sleep.

CALEB strokes her hair.

INT/EXT. GOAT HOUSE - NIGHT

JONAS and MERCY clutch each other.

The wind blows.

The clickety-clackety through the trees has grown louder. Closer.

Pause.

The clickety-clackety comes again, this time they can hear the branches breaking off and falling upon the roof of the goat shed and on to the ground right next to them.

Then they hear a light THUMP on the grass.

Now footsteps in the grass.

They see SHADOWS moving through the wooden slats of the goat shed.

They hear a SCRATCHING on the wall of the shed.

Someone is trying to open the door.

A figure scuttles around the shed.

They hear the sound of something burrowing or digging.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

CALEB (O.S.)
(whispering)
We would see you oft mother. Would
that please you?

KATHERINE
Aye.

CALEB (O.S.)
(whispering)
I have brought a book for you,
Mother. Will you look at it with
me?

KATHERINE
Aye.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
One moment yet, Samuel is hungry.
Come come, my little Sam.

KATHERINE PUTS SAM TO FEED AT HER BREAST. She smiles and closes her eyes. She holds up the back of his head.

She feels at home again.

EXT. GOAT SHED - NIGHT

MERCY and JONAS see something in the shed crawling around with them. They are squeezing each other's arms in fear.

Jonas lets out a whimper:

JONAS
Flora? Flora?

Pause.

There is something near the nanny goats.

JONAS (CONT'D)

Girl?

THEY MOVE EVER SO SLIGHTLY CLOSER.

THEY GO CLOSER.

THERE IS SOMETHING UNDER FLORA MOVING AROUND RHYTHMICALLY.

A BONEY SPINE OF SOME PALE BEAST IS ROCKING BACK AND FORTH.

MERCY

Flora?

MERCY leans forward...

IT IS THE HUNCHBACK OF THE OLD WITCH! SHE IS SUCKING ON THE GOAT'S TEAT!

JONAS AND MERCY SCREAM!!

THE WITCH TURNS AROUND! HER BLOODY JAWS flash for a moment in the scraps of moonlight within the shed.

SHE REACHES HER BLOODY TALONS TOWARD THEM.

THE CHILDREN KEEP SCREAMING, backing away!

THOMASIN WAKES UP AND SHRIEKS.

THE SOUND OF JONAS AND MERCY'S GOAT-BELLS CLANK AND CLATTER OVER THEIR SCREAMS.

INT. FARMHOUSE - THE SAME TIME

AUDIO OF THE SCREAMING AND CLATTERING CONTINUES...

WIDE: KATHERINE SITS IN THE DARK FARMHOUSE BREAST FEEDING A LARGE BLACK RAVEN.

THE RAVEN FLAPS ITS WINGS.

BLACK.

OVER BLACK: A wooden bang. Bang! Bang!!

INT. FARMHOUSE, CANOPY BED - DAWN

WILLIAM'S eyes open wearily.

The banging is coming from the side of the house.

With each bang the house shakes and wood cracks. Bits of clay crumble off the walls.

WILLIAM hears BLACK PHILLIP bleating loudly.

He leaves the bed and throws on his breeches and boots.

KATHERINE sits up and follows him with her eyes, not leaving her bed.

BLOOD SOAKS HER SHIFT AROUND HER NIPPLE.

EXT. FARMHOUSE - DAWN

WILLIAM leaves the house and goes into the misty farmyard.

BLACK PHILLIP IS BUCKING THE SIDE OF THE FARMHOUSE WITH HIS HORNS. Clapboards splinter off. He bleats and grunts, kicking up dirt.

WILLIAM yells and shoos him away.

WILLIAM

Back. Back!

BLACK PHILLIP starts running madly around the farmyard.

WILLIAM looks ahead.

The thatch on THE GOAT SHED is all torn up; THERE IS A GIANT HOLE IN THE ROOF.

The door William boarded-up has been smashed open. Fodder and dung are spread out all over the ground of the farmyard.

He walks closer.

THE TWO NANNY GOATS LAY DEAD, their udders bleeding.

JONAS AND MERCY ARE GONE.

THOMASIN LIES AWAKE, shuddering in the fetal position, splashed in BLOOD.

BLACK PHILLIP stands there. He bleats again, steam comes from his mouth and nostrils.

WILLIAM goes directly to THE CHOPPING BLOCK and grabs the AXE.

He marches over to BLACK PHILLIP.

THE GOAT runs round him.

WILLIAM runs after it, he raises the AXE high...

WILLIAM takes a swipe and misses THE GOAT.

THE GOAT bucks WILLIAM and knocks him to the ground, taking the wind out of him, then runs across his legs.

WILLIAM heaves and then gets up.

THE GOAT gallops toward THE WOOD PILE.

WILLIAM runs after him, limping. He hacks at BLACK PHILLIP, slicing his shoulder.

THE GOAT SCREAMS AND RAMS WILLIAM INTO HIS HUGE STACK OF FIREWOOD.

BLACK PHILLIP'S HORNS RUN THROUGH WILLIAM'S STOMACH, ONE GOES OUT HIS BACK.

UPON THE IMPACT THE LOGS TEETER, AND AN AVALANCHE OF LOGS TUMBLE DOWN ON WILLIAM.

BLACK PHILLIP runs off.

WILLIAM struggles under the huge pile of wood. BLOOD pours from his mouth, his abdomen and his head.

He moves no more.

THOMASIN walks ghost-like toward her dead father.

She kneels down next to him.

She reaches her hand out to touch his face...

JUST THEN:

KATHERINE (O.S.)
(screaming)
What hast thou done!?

KATHERINE grabs THOMASIN'S HAIR and yanks her to her feet!

THOMASIN shrieks!

She scrambles away from KATHERINE.

KATHERINE looks at William's corpse and the destroyed goat

shed, and THOMASIN stained with blood.

KATHERINE'S face is empty.

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
Where are they?

THOMASIN
I know not what I saw-

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
WHERE ARE THEY?

THOMASIN
I did nothing! She came from the
sky - she -

KATHERINE
(overlapping)
Devil! You have their blood upon
thy hands!

KATHERINE is half-laughing, half-crying:

KATHERINE (CONT'D)
It is you. It is you.

THOMASIN runs rapidly toward the side of the house.

KATHERINE follows her.

THOMASIN stumbles over a basket of corn, she braces herself
against the side of the house

THOMASIN
I am your daughter!

KATHERINE
The Devil is in thee and hath had
thee. You are smeared of his sin.
You reek of Evil. You have made a
covenant with death!

THOMASIN
Mother!

KATHERINE
You bewitched thy brother, proud
slut!

THOMASIN
Stop it Mother.

KATHERINE
 Did you not think I saw thy
 sluttish looks to him, bewitching
 his eye as any whore?

THOMASIN
 What say you to me?

KATHERINE
 And thy father next!

THOMASIN
 Mother!

KATHERINE
 You took them from me! They are
 gone!

THOMASIN
 No!

KATHERINE
 You killed my children!

KATHERINE has THOMASIN pressed right up against the
 clapboards.

THOMASIN
 No!

THOMASIN pushes her mother back.

KATHERINE slaps her in the face!

KATHERINE
 You killed thy father!

KATHERINE slaps and hits her. THOMASIN is forced down on to
 the BENCH by the door.

THOMASIN
 (overlapping)
 Let go! Stop stop. I love you!
 Please, Mother I love you!

KATHERINE
 (overlapping)
 Witch! WITCH!

THOMASIN
 (overlapping)
 Stop it! Stop it! STOP IT!

THOMASIN is struggling to get KATHERINE off of her but she

can't. KATHERINE is using all her force. THOMASIN reaches behind her, for something, anything.... The first thing that reaches her blind fingers is THE RUSTY BILLHOOK. THOMASIN, unknowingly takes it up....

SHE SWINGS IT AND SLASHES HER MOTHER IN THE HEAD!

KATHERINE gives a stunned look and BLOOD gushes from her wound.

THOMASIN is in shock at what's she's done:

THOMASIN
Forgive me. Forgive me. Mother,
mother-

THOMASIN takes a step forward, BUT THEN KATHERINE STARTS TO STRANGLE THOMASIN!

She squeezes her hands tight around her daughter's neck, turning red, trying to scream!

THOMASIN TRIES TO GET HER MOTHER OFF OF HER! SHE CAN'T!

KATHERINE KEEPS STRANGLING HER.

THOMASIN, IN TURN, HACKS AT KATHERINE WITH THE BILLHOOK AGAIN. HER EYES CLOSED.

SHE HACKS AGAIN, AND AGAIN UNTIL SHE CAN GET AWAY!

THOMASIN escapes from her mother's clutches.

KATHERINE collapses on THOMASIN.

THOMASIN lies there with her mother's heavy body on her.

Pause.

THOMASIN is shaking uncontrollably, breathing fast - adrenaline still coursing through her body. THE BILLHOOK drops out of her hand.

She tries to move KATHERINE'S head, but it falls limp.

KATHERINE is dead.

Pause.

THOMASIN lets out quiet, deeply mournful cry.

She hugs her mother's corpse.

Tightly.

Pause.

Then, slowly, slowly, the hug releases and THOMASIN'S face begins to fall numb.

Still trembling, on her back, THOMASIN crawls awkwardly out from under KATHERINE, pushing her mother off her.

THOMASIN gets up and walks slowly, not looking at the bodies.

She walks around the farmyard like a ghost.

She looks out at THE OLD OAK TREE. Out to CALEB'S GRAVE.

Pause.

She is alone.

INT. FARMHOUSE - MOMENTS LATER

Entering the house, THOMASIN takes off her bloody bodice and skirt and leaves them on the floor.

She takes a blanket from her parent's bed and drapes it over her shoulders, covering her bloody shift. She sits at the table.

She puts her head on the table. Empty.

She closes her eyes.

BLACK.

INT. FARMHOUSE - NIGHT

THOMASIN wakes in the same position.

All is dark in the house. The wind blows the door open and shut. Open and shut. Open...

THOMASIN turns to the door. The blanket falls to the floor.

The door beckons her.

EXT. FARM - NIGHT

THOMASIN holds a lit taper and walks barefoot out into the night wearing only her shift.

BLACK PHILLIP stands before her. Breath from his nostrils

catches the moonlight.

The wind blows.

BLACK PHILLIP walks into the shambles of THE GOAT SHED.

INT. GOAT SHED - NIGHT

THOMASIN holds the candle up to see BLACK PHILIP'S face.

NOTE: CAMERA stays on THOMASIN (we never see BLACK PHILLIP'S FACE)

THOMASIN

(whispers)

Black Phillip. I conjure thee to speak.

Speak as thou dost speak to Jonas and Mercy.

(pause.)

Dost thou understand my English tongue?

Pause. Nothing.

THOMASIN (CONT'D)

Answer me.

Pause. Nothing.

THOMASIN is truly alone.

She turns her head and takes a step away.

BUT JUST THEN, A DEEP RESONANT VOICE, QUIET, CALM AND COLD REPLIES:

BLACK PHILLIP (O.S)

What dost thou want?

THOMASIN tuns back, astonished:

THOMASIN

What canst thou give?

BLACK PHILLIP (O.S.)

Wouldst thou like the taste of butter?

A pretty dress?

(MORE)

BLACK PHILLIP (O.S.) (CONT'D)

Wouldst thou like to live
deliciously?

Pause.

THOMASIN

Yes.

BLACK PHILLIP (O.S.)

Wouldst thou like to see the world?

THOMASIN

What will you from me?

BLACK PHILLIP (O.S.)

Dost thou see a book before thee?

BLACK PHILLIP'S hooves step around a massive RED LEATHER BOOK. Centuries old.

AS BLACK PHILLIP'S LEFT HOOF LEAVES FRAME, HIS RIGHT FOOT CROSSES, NOW IN THE SHAPE OF A GAUDY CAVALIER'S BOOT WITH A JANGLING GOLD SPUR.

THOMASIN looks up from the ground, back to BLACK PHILLIP'S face.

THOMASIN

Aye.

BLACK PHILLIP (O.S.)

Remove thy shift.

THOMASIN hesitates... she pulls the thin string on her shift awkwardly and child-like. She closes her eyes. She thinks she is ready. She gives in.

If falls off her body.

(NOTE: WHILE "APPEARING" NUDE TO THE AUDIENCE, THOMASIN'S BREASTS, "ETC." WILL NEVER BE IN FRAME.)

THOMASIN hears THE SPURS jangle around her.

THOMASIN

I cannot write my name.

BLACK PHILLIP (O.S.)

I will guide thy hand.

BEHIND HER CROSSES BLACK PHILLIP, NOW A BEAUTIFUL BEARDED MAN WITH A DARK COMPLEXION.

Only glimpses of his face and gleams from his gold buttons and silk trimmings are seen.

HIS LARGE, RICHLY EMBROIDERED, BLACK LEATHER GAUNTLETS TAKE HER SLENDER WHITE SHOULDERS.

HIS SHINY LOCKS OF SABLE HAIR, COCKEREL FATHERS, AND BLACK LACE SLOWLY SHROUD THOMASIN'S FACE.

BLACK.

EXT. EDGE OF THE WOOD - NIGHT

WIDE, CAMERA ON HER BACK: THOMASIN rides naked on the back of BLACK PHILLIP (a goat again), her hair falls freely behind her. They journey deep into THE WOOD.

INT. THE WOOD - NIGHT

Now within the wood, the "clickety-clackety" of broomsticks flying through trees above their heads is heard.

EXT. THE WITCH'S HOVEL - NIGHT

AS THOMASIN emerges from the path, she sees a freakish sight:

Half-visible in the darkness, still far from THOMASIN, are a dozen women: old women, women in their middle years, young women - all grotesque - some humpbacks and cripples. All appear misshapen and distorted by the night. All of them are filthy and nude or in strange patches and shreds of clothing. They hold broomsticks, poles, distaffs and pitchforks.

THE WITCHES DANCE, gyrating, shaking, and quivering in a trance-like reverie around a cauldron and fire in front of THE WITCH'S HOVEL. Depraved. Subhuman. Bestial.

THOMASIN AND BLACK PHILLIP walk closer to the circle.

WHEN THE COVEN OF WITCHES sees them, they shriek and cackle with delight - their faces contort from their laughter. THEY WELCOME THOMASIN with their eyes.

THOMASIN, still astride BLACK PHILLIP, smiles. SHE JOINS THE CIRCLE, laughing a little too, blushing... then laughs more and more, WITH EVERY GROWING MOMENT HER SORROWS MELT AWAY.

VERY SLOWLY, AS THIS LAUGHTER INCREASES THE WITCHES BEGIN TO LEVITATE AROUND THE FIRE, rising on their brooms and poles...

THEN, THOMASIN AND BLACK PHILLIP RISE TOO... SLOWLY GOING

HIGHER AND HIGHER.

THOMASIN KEEPS LAUGHING, EVER INCREASING IN PLEASURE AND FREEDOM. TEARS ROLL DOWN HER CHEEKS AS SHE LAUGHS. PURE ECSTACY.

THEY RISE HIGHER.

BLACK. THE END.