**Act 3 Summary**

[A] person is either with this court or he must be counted against it, there be no road between.

(See [Important Quotations Explained](http://www.sparknotes.com/lit/crucible/quotes.html#CHDFJFGF))

Back in Salem, the court is in session. Giles interrupts the proceedings by shouting that Putnam is only making a grab for more land. He claims to have evidence to back up this assertion. Judge Hathorne, Deputy Governor Danforth, and the Reverends Hale and Parris join Giles and Francis in the vestry room to get to the bottom of the matter. Proctor and Mary Warren enter the room. Mary testifies that she and the other girls were only pretending to be afflicted by witchcraft. Judge Danforth, shocked, asks Proctor if he has told the village about Mary’s claims. Parris declares that they all want to overthrow the court.

Danforth asks Proctor if he is attempting to undermine the court. Proctor assures him that he just wants to free his wife, but Cheever informs the judge that Proctor ripped up the warrant for Elizabeth’s arrest. Danforth proceeds to question Proctor about his religious beliefs. He is particularly intrigued by the information, offered by Parris, that Proctor only attends church about once a month. Cheever adds that Proctor plows on Sunday, a serious offense in Salem.

Danforth and Hathorne inform Proctor that he need not worry about Elizabeth’s imminent execution because she claims to be pregnant. She will not be hanged until after she delivers. Danforth asks if he will drop his condemnation of the court, but Proctor refuses. He submits a deposition signed by ninety-one land-owning farmers attesting to the good characters of Elizabeth, Martha, and Rebecca. Parris insists that they all be summoned for questioning because the deposition is an attack on the court. Hale asks why every defense is considered an attack on the court.

Putnam is led into the room to answer to an allegation by Giles that he prompted his daughter to accuse George Jacobs of witchcraft. Should Jacobs hang, he would forfeit his property, and Putnam is the only person in Salem with the money to purchase such a tract. Giles refuses to name the man who gave him the information because he does not want to open him to Putnam’s vengeance. Danforth arrests Giles for contempt of court.

Danforth sends for Abigail and her troop of girls. Abigail denies Mary’s testimony, as well as her explanation for the doll in the Proctor home. Mary maintains her assertion that the girls are only pretending. Hathorne asks her to pretend to faint for them. Mary says she cannot because she does not have “the sense of it” now. Under continued pressure, she falters and explains that she only thought she saw spirits. Danforth pressures Abigail to be truthful. Abigail shivers and the other girls follow suit. They accuse Mary of bewitching them with a cold wind.

Proctor leaps at Abigail and calls her a whore. He confesses his affair with her and explains that Elizabeth fired her when she discovered it. He claims that Abigail wants Elizabeth to hang so that she can take her place in his home. Danforth orders Abigail and Proctor to turn their backs, and he sends for Elizabeth, who is reputed by Proctor to be unfailingly honest. Danforth asks why she fired Abigail. Elizabeth glances at Proctor for a clue, but Danforth demands that she look only at him while she speaks. Elizabeth claims to have gotten the mistaken notion that Proctor fancied Abigail, so she lost her temper and fired the girl without just cause. As marshal, Herrick removes Elizabeth from the room. Proctor cries out that he confessed his sin, but it is too late for Elizabeth to change her story. Hale begs Danforth to reconsider, stating that Abigail has always struck him as false.

Abigail and the girls begin screaming that Mary is sending her spirit at them. Mary pleads with them to stop, but the girls repeat her words verbatim. The room erupts into a hectic frenzy of fear, excitement, and confusion. Mary seems to become infected with the hysteria of the other girls and starts screaming too. Proctor tries to touch her, but she dashes away from him, calling him the devil’s man. She accuses him of consorting with the devil and pressuring her to join him in his evil ways. Danforth orders Proctor’s arrest against Hale’s vocal opposition. Hale denounces the proceedings and declares that he is quitting the court.

It is a whore’s vengeance. . . .