

THE TRIAL

By

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A modern day Salem Witch Trial

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FADE IN:

EXT. ROAD - EARLY MORNING

ROLLING CREDITS:

A car is driving through a forested road with its headlights illuminating the road. Various shots of the car driving while the sun starts to rise.

CLOSE UP: SIGN THAT SAYS 'ENTERING SALEM'

EXT. HOUSE - DAY

The car pulls up to a house and parks by the curb. A couple gets out of the car.

MATTHEW SATTER (34) - tall, skinny, and clean cut, well dressed man that looks intelligent.

CHRISTINE SATTER (32) - shorter, with long brown hair. She is pretty, dresses plain. Very inviting personality.

Christine walks around the car and Matty opens the back to pull out a few boxes.

CHRISTINE

"That's the last trip, huh?"

MATT

"Yes, thank God."

The two walk up the walkway and enter the house.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Matt sets down the boxes and looks around the house.

PAN: DOWN THE ENTRY WAY TO SEE THE EMPTY HOUSE, FULL OF BOXES.

Christine walks up the stairs, Matt following her.

INT. UPSTAIRS - CONTINUOUS

Christine walks past a room and stops, peering in. The room is decorated in light yellow and has a children's mural on the side of the wall.

(CONTINUED)

Matt hugs her belly which isn't showing yet. Christine turns around and smiles.

CHRISTINE

"A new home. A new job. A new family. What more could I get?"

MATT

"Well, you're not getting a new husband."

Christine laughs and shuts the door to the nursery.

INT. FAMILY ROOM - LATER

It's now nighttime, and Christine and Matthew are sitting on the floor next to boxes, eating ordered out pizza.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NEXT

Christine is unpacking a box. Matthew is hanging up a picture. He hammers a nail into the wall.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT

Matt is unpacking plates and unwrapping glasses and handing them to Christine who puts them away.

CUT TO:

INT. BEDROOM - NEXT

Christine makes the bed. She puts the pillows on.

EXT. HOUSE - MORNING

A mailman stops at their mailbox.

INT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

Christine is looking out the window, noticing the mailman. Confused, she steps outside.

EXT. HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

The mailman drives off and Christine, wearing a long shirt and pajama bottoms, with a sweater on over her, walks to the mailbox and opens it. A letter is there with her name on it.

INT. KITCHEN - NEXT

Christine sits down and grabs a knife from one of the drawers. She slices the top of the envelope and pulls out a slip of paper. Matt walks down the stairs and walks over to her, kissing her head.

MATT

"What's that?"

Christine is reading.

CHRISTINE

"Jury duty."

MATT

"That can't be right."

He grabs the letter and reads it.

MATT (CONT.)

"You don't get Jury Duty your first night you live in a home. Call up the court."

CHRISTINE

"Matt, it's okay. Maybe I'll meet some of the woman around town. What else am I gonna be doing?"

MATT

"Unpacking."

He walks over to get some coffee. She stares down at the letter.

MATT (CONT.)

"When is it?"

(CONTINUED)

CHRISTINE
"Not until October."

He nods his head.

EXTREME CLOSE UP: 'TRIAL' WRITTEN ON THE LETTER.

EXT. HOUSE - THREE WEEKS LATER

Christine gets in the car.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

She sits in her car, dropping the letter in the passenger seat. She buckles her belt.

Christine starts the car and drives.

EXT. CAR - NEXT

The car is driving on a windy road. The trees are all brown from the fall. The car stops at an old building which resembles a church.

Christine gets out of the car and walks into the building.

INT. COURTHOUSE - CONTINUOUS

An older woman smiles at her.

CHRISTINE
"Is this the Milly Hawkins Trial?"

OLD LADY
"Oh yes. They are expecting you right this way."

The woman leads her to a door. Christine walks in.

INT. MEETING ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Christine sees eleven other women sitting by a table. A spot is empty and has her name on it. A thirteenth lady is standing in the corner.

JUDGE FABER (67) - an old lady, with white hair and glasses. Ice cold.

(CONTINUED)

JUDGE FABER

"Christine, you made it. I'm Judge Faber."

CHRISTINE

"Hi."

She sits down.

JUDGE FABER

"In a moment I will lead you all into the jury bench. You will listen to the case and come back here to decide whether Milly Hawkins is guilty of her transgression. Is all understood?"

The ladies nod and agree.

JUDGE FABER (CONT.)

"Okay then."

INT. COURTROOM - NEXT

The courtroom is nearly empty except for a woman sitting in a chair and a few townspeople sitting in the pews.

The jurors walk in and sit in the benches. Christine has a worried look on her face.

BAILIFF

"All rise. The honorable Judge Faber presiding."

The people rise and Judge Faber comes in and sits down.

JUDGE FABER

"Sit down."

The people sit.

JUDGE FABER (CONT.)

"Minnie Hawkins, come towards me."

MINNY HAWKINS (20) - haggard looking young lady. Very homely and unattractive. Long black hair.

Minnie stands and approaches the Judge.

JUDGE FABER (CONT.)

"Minnie Hawkins. You have been accused of bewitching and other witchery. How do you plea?"

(CONTINUED)

Christine is shocked.

MINNY
"Not guilty."

The court gets loud with the angry people shouting at Minny. All eleven jurors, except for Christine, are joining in.

JUDGE FABER
"Order. Order in my court."

Christine looks around and is confused. She is in total shock.

JUDGE FABER
"I call Patricia Dempsey to the stand."

PATRICIA DEMPSEY (47) - older with red hair. Wicked looking.

Patricia walks up and sits in the testimony chair.

JUDGE FABER
"Patricia, state your case."

PATRICIA
"It was about two months ago. I saw Minny running from the woods. The crows were circling her. She's the devil I say! The devil lives in her!"

Minny cries.

MINNY
"It's a lie. A terrible lie!"

JUDGE FABER
"Shut her up!"

The bailiff grabs Minny and shakes her. Christine is baffled.

JUDGE FABER (CONT.)
"I ask you again. How do you plea?"

Minny sits there crying. She is hysterical. She collects herself and wipes her tears.

MINNY
"Not. Guilty!"

The crowd goes wild with shouting again. Bailiff grabs her. The Judge leads the jury out back to the meeting room.

INT. MEETING ROOM - NEXT

The jurors sit down again. Christine seems to be the only one puzzled.

JUDGE FABER
"Decide the verdict."

She leaves. The women all start talking at once. It seems they all say she is guilty. One by one they go around the table and the lady says guilty. Lastly, Christine is left.

CHRISTINE
"What is this?"

They all are looking at her.

SADIE KING (40) - young looking for her age. Blond hair.

SADIE
"You think of her not guilty? Do you side with the devil too?"

CHRISTINE
"No!"

SADIE
"Do you curse the town with the same spells spoken by Minny?"

Some of the other jurors chime in, agreeing with Sadie.

CHRISTINE
"No, no! It's just, witchcraft isn't real."

The women laugh. All of them.

SADIE
"You must be new to Salem then."

CHRISTINE
"I am."

SADIE
"She's a witch, and she shall be hanged. The devil must die."

CHRISTINE
"I can't say she is guilty. I won't."

The room becomes silent. All women look over at Christine.

(CONTINUED)

SADIE

"You must also have the covenant
with her, made in Hell."

The girls shout along with her.

SADIE (CONT.)

"Were you at the witch's sabbath?
You deny to see her guilt. You must
too have a pact with her. You shall
be on trial too!"

The women agree.

CHRISTINE

"No! I don't. She's a witch. She's
guilty. She's a witch!"

INT. COURTROOM - NEXT

The court is silent. All the jurors are seated in the
benches.

JUDGE FABER

"The jury has made a verdict. Minny
Hawkins, you have been
found...guilty of witchery."

Minny is crying. She screams.

MINNY

"No! No, it can't be!"

Christine looks guilty. Suddenly Judge Faber begins to shake
and fall on her knees. Her body slides against the floor and
the doors of the court shut. Minny pokes her head up and her
eyes are pitch black. She stands up and the people begin to
scream. The lights begin to flicker a little. The jurors get
up and run but the doors won't open. Minny has an evil
expression.

CHRISTINE

"My God."

The pews levitate. Glass shatters and people begin to get
impaled by the glass. The lights flicker more. People are
screaming and dying. Minny begins to levitate. Christine is
hit in the head with some flying debris. The whole place is
going into havoc.

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9.

The lights flicker and more and more people fall dead.
Finally the lights go out and screams begin to stop.
Christine is last to be heard screaming at the top of her
lungs.

FADE OUT: