

Piece one

Business



My name is Ann Putnam Jr.

It is 1692, and I am 12 years old. My family speaks old English, the proper language. I live in Salem, MA. My best friends are Tituba, Mercy Lewis, and Mary Walcott. We play together when Tituba's master lets her have breaks.

The breaks are five, maybe four minutes long. There are strange goings-on in Salem, Massachusetts. Girls are disappearing, and I do not have the faintest idea where they go. I have seen white figures running through the woods at night, but when I inquire about them, I am answered with different looks, and mysterious glances between my elders. I do not press on the subject though, because children are seen and not heard in this time.

Maybe in the future. But not now. My daily life continues. My lessons, and my work. I work at Ms. Mary's tailor shop, where I repair clothes and listen to gossip.

.." witchcraft, other towns" were the most recent snatches. My lessons are going considerably well and my teacher is pleased. When I get home, I wash and take care of my nine younger siblings. When they are all occupied, I enjoy sitting down and trying to read a memoir.

My grandmother's. I sink into stories of wars, the Pilgrims, and the Natives. It is all very enjoyable and energetic. My grandmother described the crossing over of the Pilgrims. How they braved the rough storms, how many people died just to get to the New World.

She described the Natives, and how we killed them to get food, and the wars between Natives and Pilgrims. The lost battles and the won battles. She

knew everything. She was there, along with my great-grandmother, and her mother. My mother was born weeks into the New World. She fell ill when she was 13, and many thought she would not recover.

As she recovered, she fell in love with a handsome young man, my father. Together they had ten children. Ann, Mary, Anna, John, William, Rebecca, Henry, Frances, Catherine, and Margaret, or Margy, the youngest and most recent. I am the oldest, being twelve. The boys of the family, John and William, act like they run the family now that father is gone. I do my best to listen to them, even though they are only 11, and twins at that.

I reassure myself that God brought them here. They are meant to help us. Father was a gentleman, but he died during my mother's birth to Margy, two years ago. He was shot by a Native hiding in the woods. Nobody found his body until Margy was born, and by then it was too late.

It saddens me, but I know he is watching over me. Mother is an emotional wreck. I feel sorry for her, though she goes about her business like father never died. She claims to "face the darkness" with strength and bravery. She is still young, not yet mid-thirties. My mother's name is Susanna Putnam, my father was John Putnam.