

By Amelia N Year 10

As the tempestuous storm fell across the land, the dark trees bent together as though they were whispering secrets. The deafening wind challenged the weak homes, their structure being ripped apart from the strong elemental force. It felt as if the ground was going to erupt as people rushed into their homes, praying for a miracle, praying for it to stop. The homeless seeking shelter in churches and ditches, the infants crying as thunder erupted above them, mothers comforting them with a tight hug, animals out of sight, either dead or hidden. Birds flying north, away from the danger. Critical, deadly and treacherous, a river of electricity violently struck the forest, setting fire to the once beautiful cluster of trees, housing creatures and critters. Once a calm place set alight, the flames dancing and mocking as the town fell into distress, praying the rain would battle the orange blaze. The wildfire ran up the hill, ready to conquer the next piece of land. Men swiftly began a chain event of throwing water on the fire, getting showered in appreciation from the stream falling from the clouds.

“Bless you,” Mary replied as her mother let out a sneeze, she tried to stay calm in this mishap, convincing herself that everything would be okay as the outside became smoky. The vociferous shouting overcame her home as a young infant tediously cried. Worryingly, she rushed to the crying baby, knocking over some salt she had recently salvaged as a gasp came from behind her. Her husband rushed to the scene of the crime, sweeping it up into the bowl again, giving her a disappointed glance. Swiftly, she rushed to the crying child, sweeping him up in her arms.

“I must leave Mary, they need me in those fires,” She gave out a kind nod and placed her lips on his cheek, kissing him for a second before he fought the fatal fires. Grief swept over her, yet she had no time, she must prepare her home for safety. Shutting the windows, storing the food and placing all valuable items in a cart, hoping that if they had to escape, they would not leave empty-handed.

Thankfully, the men had saved the town, a large feast was held in celebration. Everyone put on their best outfits as they went to the town hall, she noticed the roads covered in ash and the stench of decay filled her nostrils, yet she had to continue. Entering the large wooden building with only hope in her eyes and wishful thinking in her hands, an aroma of herbs and cooked chicken filled the room as she noticed the tall ceilings tower above her, it felt as if the world was finally peaceful again. A large man stood at the end of the table, dressed in the finest materials, he faintly cleared his voice, evoking the attention of everyone in the hall.

“We have reason to believe tonight’s fires were caused by witches!” He boomed, echoing across the hall, intriguing the citizens, gradually he began reading names of a list, women in the town specifically that had not been on their best behaviour recently. Mary watched as they got dragged away from their seats, pleading for their case to be re-evaluated. Not in panic, she took a sip from her cup, water slowly trickling down her throat, but a sudden pause occurred as she recognized something, “MARY”. Her heart skipped a beat, swiftly she began to beg, yet they did not accept it. Rough arms wrapped around her as she got pulled away,

tears escaped her eyes, trickling down her scarlet cheeks as if they were also begging for forgiveness. Immediately, she looked for her husband, noticing him staring at her with eyes only filled with disappointment. Next her eyes followed the ground, as she got swept away, she saw the ground moving further and further. Feeling the guard's rugged fingers latch onto her frail body, yet she did not scream or cry for help. She only accepted the end, for she was not innocent, her only regret was failing.

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