
There are apples,
buckets of
and heads wet from the dunking.
A witch 'round every corner.
Ladders.
Jury and judge.
A pond of bodies bobbing, condemned.
And nineteen nooses wait.
That seven-gabled house.
Girls run the streets accusing
the accused. In Salem Village,
Goody Proctor bears her child in jail.
Our party pays to tour the next grey house.

Rose, the mother,
as her child rose,
up into the trees,
with her shattered child.

In her arms, the bifurcated child.
“Don’t go, don’t go,” cries
of the husband. “Don’t
leave me. I can’t bear it,”

though surely he could
come if he wanted,
she thought, he could
will himself up, up, to join

them, his small family.
John! But there he stands,
smaller and smaller. “Look
darling child, there’s your father.

Now shut your eyes and forget him.”

Boys, girls, some of them siblings,
spawning in bathtubs all over town.
Drown them?
We stop short, though
let the water run frigid,
our blue hands at their blue backs.

Willed to us by parents who jumped
from the cliffs of their miseries.
Now look at their offspring. *Uphill* deposited
onto our front porches. All over town,
in the shadows of the twin stacks,
we raise them, boiling up water stews,
water broths, water purees. They flourish
and appreciate. What can we do so they'll hate us
and leave?