

BLOOD TO DRINK

By Maggie Lou Rader
15 Page Sample

"I'm as innocent as the child unborn."
-Lots of wronged women

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CHARACTERS

ELIZABETH PROCTOR- 30's-40's. A woman who loves her God and her husband. Righteous, devoted, walks the straightened arrow. Terrified of making a mistake. Carries more guilt than sin.

SARAH GOOD- 20's-30's. A woman who inherited her late husband's debts but not her father's wealth. Society has handed her every short stick in the bundle. She's noticed.

BRIDGET BISHOP- 40's 60's. A woman whose reputation proceeds her as men in her life wish she'd committed more sins than she did. She is used to being discussed just because she wore that ONE RED PETTICOAT that ONE TIME... Been accused of being a witch before... it's a vibe she's got.

ANN FOSTER- 60's-80's. A woman who was broken long ago. A woman who wants to rest. A woman who deserves to be left alone. A woman who doesn't say nearly as much as she feels.

GEORGE BURROUGHS- 40's-50's. A minister. Physically strong, emotionally...not so much. Opinionated. Confident. Obstinate. Wants to do good, but way too slow in his growth and who's got time for that? No one in that prison cell.

CONTENT WARNING

Child loss in the form of still birth, miscarriages of justice, descriptions of violence, domestic abuse, deadly misogyny, misogynistic language, insinuations of parental suicide.

A NOTE TO PRACTITIONERS

You know that pressure that folks feel to add an old timey affectation to their voice when doing *The Crucible*? Allow me to release that pressure. These women sound like you and me. Also, you know when predominately male directors ask women to add affectations to their voices in the forms of pitch or trembles to make them sound more vulnerable or sympathetic to the male gaze? Yeah, these women don't do that. They're on top of many things, including their voices.

SYNOPSIS

When Salem, Massachusetts, is seemingly plagued by witches, Elizabeth Proctor, Sarah Good, Bridget Bishop, and Ann Foster find themselves on the wrong side of accusations. They birth and love children, lose and ache for love, hate and finally learn to understand the young woman who put them there. *Blood to Drink* is a dark comedy that tackles internalized misogyny, patriarchal oppression, and the realistic and ever still present 'why' behind America's most famous witch hunt.

SCENE 9

(ANN FOSTER hasn't moved other than to lay down facing away from her new cell mates. The cell formed around her and the voices of SARAH, ELIZABETH, and BRIDGET fade in under the voices of the 'Visionary Girls.')

SARAH: Bread red as raw meat?

...

And blood wine?

...

With 100 witches / attending?

BRIDGET: Leave her / be.

SARAH: With Elizabeth Proctor at the devil's right hand? This Elizabeth Proctor?! Boring, plain 'ole, never-says-nothing-interesting Elizabeth Proctor?!

ELIZABETH: Hey-

SARAH: I'm defending you here!

ELIZABETH: Yeah could you stop, it's making me feel worse.

SARAH: Why aren't you yelling at her? She just made the case for your hanging!

BRIDGET: No one's going to hang-

SARAH: So what's the matter with you?

ELIZABETH: *(to BRIDGET)* I feel sick, can you-

SARAH: You know what she did? What she said about you?

ELIZABETH: I know.

SARAH: Backed up those bitches up like she owed them money.

BRIDGET: That was good.

ELIZABETH: Your input is incredibly selective.

SARAH: Aren't you mad?

ELIZABETH: I mean-

SARAH: So get it out! Do you know what I'd give to tell Abigail Williams what I think of her? Or Ann Putnam or Mercy Lewis or any of those little brats?

ELIZABETH: Yes, but-

SARAH: You actually have that chance so say it for me. Say it for her. Say it for all of us locked in this hell hole.

ELIZABETH: I don't hate her.

SARAH: You should.

ELIZABETH: It's not her fault. She's a symptom, not the disease.

SARAH: Fine, say you hate the disease!

ELIZABETH: The- What?

SARAH: The disease! Say you hate those bitches!

BRIDGET: That's not-

SARAH: Say it.

ELIZABETH: I won't.

SARAH: Say you hate them!

ELIZABETH: I don't hate them!

SARAH: YOU SHOULD.

ELIZABETH: I CAN'T HATE THEM.

SARAH: WHY THE HELL NOT ELIZABETH?

ELIZABETH: BECAUSE THEY'RE RIGHT! About me they.. I can't hate them because they were right, about me, I'm-.. I am a witch.

(All stare in disbelief at ELIZABETH, including ANN.)

SARAH: I knew it! I-knew-it-I-knew-it-I-knew-it-I-knew-it!

BRIDGET: Yeaaaaaah, I'm going to need some more details here.

SARAH: *(Continuous)* You did it didn't you, you did all they said? The devil's baptism, blood wine, red bread and all that?

ELIZABETH: No.. no I didn't do any of that.

BRIDGET: But you say you're a witch-

ELIZABETH: Yes.

BRIDGET: Even though you didn't do any of the witchcraft you've been accused of?

ELIZABETH: No.

SARAH: You crazy? God, they're all crazy,
locked up with loons...

BRIDGET: Yeah, so this is the part where
you should tell us what the hell it is you're
talking about.

ELIZABETH: My husband John... He was married before.

BRIDGET: So?

SARAH: I've been married twice.

BRIDGET: Three times.

SARAH: No, it was just the two.

BRIDGET: I'm talking about me.

ELIZABETH: You've been married three times?

BRIDGET: Am I sensing some judgment?

ELIZABETH: Yes!

BRIDGET: Well stop it.

ELIZABETH: *Three husbands?*

BRIDGET: Are you trying to make me feel bad?

ELIZABETH: YES!

BRIDGET: Well stop or work harder because it was actually four.

ELIZABETH: FOUR?!

BRIDGET: Yes four, but I lied.

SARAH: Why?

BRIDGET: To make it sound better!

ELIZABETH: But lying is a sin!

SARAH: This coming from a witch?

BRIDGET: (*Redirecting*) So you say John's been married before? What about it?

ELIZABETH: He's older than me.

SARAH: So?

ELIZABETH: By about twenty years. He married when he was young, maybe too young. But she was great, wonderful really.

BRIDGET: You knew her?

ELIZABETH: A little. When she died, John had four little ones and the farm so-

BRIDGET: He wasn't single long.

ELIZABETH: Right. So he married again and-

BRIDGET: To you.

ELIZABETH: No, not yet. This was his second wife.

BRIDGET: Wait a second.

ELIZABETH: What?

BRIDGET: What I hear you say is John Proctor can get married three times-

ELIZABETH: Yeah?

BRIDGET: But the thought of me, a woman doing it, has Elizabeth Proctor clutching her pearls.

ELIZABETH: His wives died!

BRIDGET: What do you think happened to mine? Catholic abduction?

ELIZABETH: Abigail Williams said you bewitched them.

BRIDGET: Oh yes, let's start believing Abigail Williams.

ELIZABETH: That's not what I said.

BRIDGET: And can we all take note that no one's accusing John Proctor of witching two partners to death but when Bridget Bishop puts a few in the ground, God knows she must've done it.

SARAH: (You know why that is.)

BRIDGET: (You know I do.)

SARAH: (*To ELIZABETH*) It's because she's a woman.

ELIZABETH: I got that.

SARAH: Oh.

ELIZABETH: John was arrested too!

BRIDGET: It's not the same.

ELIZABETH: He's accused of witchcraft, same as us.

SARAH: But not for nothing he did before.

BRIDGET: They only saw him witching when he started standing in their way.

SARAH: Why is it men never get accused of witching their wives to death?

BRIDGET: Because no one asks questions when the wives of men die.

ANN: And if anyone did-

BRIDGET: They'd find a million justifications before the witchcraft of a man.

ANN: Like the witchcraft of a woman.

BRIDGET: I hear that Ann. I hear that.

ELIZABETH: The Reverend George Burroughs was accused of it.

SARAH: I hate that man.

BRIDGET: What did you say?

SARAH: Turned me away he did!

BRIDGET: Accused of killing his wives?

ELIZABETH: By witching.

SARAH: Spit in my face!

BRIDGET: Which is easier to believe.

ELIZABETH: Than?

BRIDGET: Than the truth.

SARAH: George called me an old hag 'fore I turned 25!

BRIDGET: (*From the magma in her core*) Do not speak his name.

SARAH: Can we get back to why Elizabeth thinks herself a witch?

BRIDGET: Gladly.

SARAH: So he buried his first wife, married his second and?

ELIZABETH: And then.. and then she died too.

SARAH: And that's when he married you?

ELIZABETH: Yes.

(*ELIZABETH cracks with shame.*)

BRIDGET: Is it just me or did she skip the story part / of her story?

SARAH: Yeah, I missed that.

ELIZABETH: Don't you get it?

BRIDGET: Obviously not.

SARAH: You didn't say anything!

ELIZABETH: I grew up across from his farm and saw him every day. Watched him work, kiss his wives, play with his children, and I fell more in love with him every day of my life. He's strong and kind and.. *just* and I *willed* myself into being his wife. I coveted another woman's husband- no *two* women's husband. I wanted to marry John so badly that I wished death upon two women who are now both dead! If that's not witchcraft, I don't know what is!

BRIDGET: So what I hear you say is... you loved John and wanted to marry him, yes?

ELIZABETH: Yes.

BRIDGET: And because of that, you blame yourself for his wives' deaths?

ELIZABETH: Because I'm responsible!

BRIDGET: Did you murder them?

ELIZABETH: I think I did.

BRIDGET: No, did you actually physically murder them?

ELIZABETH: No, but I-

BRIDGET: So what I hear you *say is..* your puppy love grew into real love, and since you had something to gain from their deaths, you must be responsible. And if you're responsible, you must be a witch, is that right?

ELIZABETH: Exactly!

SARAH: Ohmigawd-this-is-the-dumbest-thing-I've-ever-heard-in-my-/entire-life.

ELIZABETH: What?

BRIDGET: Elizabeth?

SARAH: That's-her-deep-dark-secret?

ELIZABETH: What?

SARAH: That she loves her dumb 'ole husband?

ELIZABETH: *What?*

BRIDGET: Girl just.. come here. You didn't do anything wrong.

ELIZABETH: No, I-

BRIDGET: Elizabeth? You didn't do anything wrong. Let yourself off the hook; you are not a witch.

ELIZABETH: You don't know.

BRIDGET: I do know.

ELIZABETH: You can't be sure.

BRIDGET: I can because you didn't do anything.

ELIZABETH: But I wished it!

BRIDGET: So?

ELIZABETH: And the wishes of witches can-

BRIDGET: The wishes of witches are harmless.

ELIZABETH: No they're not.

BRIDGET: Yes they are.

ELIZABETH: Why?

BRIDGET: Because witches are harmless.

ELIZABETH: No they're-

BRIDGET: Yes.

ELIZABETH: How can you say that?

BRIDGET: Because witches aren't real.

SARAH: ... Now, I don't know / about that.

ELIZABETH: No! Blasp/hemy!

SARAH: Big thing to say there.

ELIZABETH: It's sacrilege!

BRIDGET: It's logic.

ELIZABETH: It's sinful!

BRIDGET: It's *true*.

ELIZABETH: *No!* A witch is-

BRIDGET: What? A label slapped on women who cause problems? A distraction from what powerful men do in secret? A means of keeping poor women poor and smart women silent? What if, *what if*... John's wives died because they just died. Bringing babies into the world is dangerous work and it's a real shame what happened to them, but it wasn't anyone's fault, especially not yours.

ELIZABETH: But I hoped- I wished for them to-

BRIDGET: Just consider for a moment, if I'm right.. what would that mean?

ELIZABETH: It would mean... I still coveted someone else's husband.

BRIDGET: (*Raising her voice*) Hey John's first two wives? Lady specters can you hear me? Elizabeth's sorry she coveted you man, okay?

ELIZABETH: That's not-

BRIDGET: *Are* you sorry?

ELIZABETH: Yes!

BRIDGET: Fine. Then I think you've sufficiently shamed yourself into atonement. How else?

ELIZABETH: What?

BRIDGET: How else would witches not being real affect you?

ELIZABETH: I mean, if they're not real... then I shouldn't be in here.

BRIDGET: Right.

ELIZABETH: It would mean I'm innocent.

BRIDGET: And?

ELIZABETH: And so are you.

BRIDGET: And?

ELIZABETH: And so is Sarah, and Ann.. It would mean we're all innocent.

BRIDGET: And?

ELIZABETH: And... Those girls lied... They lied about it all, the stories, the visions, and- (*to ANN*) Wait, you! You too- *You* lied!

BRIDGET: Re-direct, re-direct. What else?

ELIZABETH: That would be.. awful.

BRIDGET: Yeah. And how does that make you feel?

ELIZABETH: I feel.. terrible.

BRIDGET: And?

ELIZABETH: Appalled!

BRIDGET: And?

ELIZABETH: And.. Angry. Very angry.

BRIDGET: Yeah?

ELIZABETH: Furious!

BRIDGET: And who could blame you?

ELIZABETH: Ohmigoodness, ohmigoodness... Those little bitches!

SARAH: Finally!

ELIZABETH: Those LITTLE BITCHES!

SARAH: That's what I said!

ELIZABETH: Those- Those- (*ELIZABETH starts shouting out the window*) Those little BITCHEEEEEES! Abigail Williams and Mary- MARY WARREN YOU'RE BOTH BITCHEEEEEES!!!

SARAH: I think you tapped into something!

BRIDGET: I think you're right.

ELIZABETH: I HATE YOU AND YOUR STUPID FACES! I HATE YOOOOOOU!!!

SARAH: I LIKE HER SO MUCH MORE NOW!

ELIZABETH: AND DAMN ANN PUTNAM AND HER DAMN DAUGHTER TOO! AND, AND THAT DAMN REVEREND PARRIS THAT STARTED ALL OF THIS! *I HATE YOU REVEREND PARRIS!*

SARAH: I HATE YOU TOO!

ELIZABETH: SOOOO MUCH!

SARAH: YOU'RE AWFUL!

ELIZABETH: *AWFUL* AND TERRIBLE AND- AND YOUR SERMONS ARE TOO LONG!

SARAH: YES!

ELIZABETH: AND NEVER MAKE SENSE!

BRIDGET: (*applauding*) This is delightful.

ELIZABETH: BORING! FEAR MONGERING! AND YOUR OWN *WIFE* DOESN'T EVEN LIKE THEM!

SARAH: *YES!*

ELIZABETH: SEEN HER SLEEPING IN THE PEW!

SARAH: WHOO!

BRIDGET: Let it out!

ELIZABETH: I HATE THOSE GIRLS!

BRIDGET: AND THE MEN WHO ENABLED THEM!

ELIZABETH: I HATE THEM TOO!

BRIDGET: LETTING CHILDREN DO YOUR DIRTY WORK!

ELIZABETH: CHILDREN!

BRIDGET: CHILDREN WHO I HOPE ENJOYED THE CRUMBS YOU GAVE THEM!

ELIZABETH: CRUMBS!

BRIDGET: CRUMBS OF POWER DROPPED FROM THE CLUTCHES OF THE PATRIARCHY!

SARAH: COWARDS!

ELIZABETH: I HATE ALL OF YOU!

SARAH: ESPECIALLY MY HUSBAND!

ELIZABETH: YEAH!

SARAH: I HATED HIM EVEN BEFORE HE CALLED ME A WITCH!

ELIZABETH: YEAH!

SARAH: HANG ALL THE HUSBANDS OF SALEM VILLAGE!

ELIZABETH: I MEAN I LIKE MINE BUT I DO HEAR YOU.

BRIDGET: I HATE EVERY HUSBAND I EVER HAD!

ELIZABETH: ALL FOUR?

BRIDGET: DON'T JUDGE!

SARAH: I HATE THIS TOWN!

ELIZABETH: I HATE THIS TOWN!

BRIDGET: I DON'T EVEN LIVE HERE AND I HATE THIS TOWN!

(SARAH starts screaming. ELIZABETH starts screaming. BRIDGET starts screaming. They scream together. ANN who has observed it all has finally found a release valve and rushes to stand and scream. She screams short, loud screams as if her body is remembering how to ache and mourn and express all over again. The other three observe ANN for a moment before joining in again.)

VOICE OF GUARD: Quiet down! Quiet down in there!

(The women stop screaming if only out loud. Their rage simmers. They are wild, primal.)

VOICE OF GUARD: Knock off the racket and make room!

ELIZABETH: *(To the GUARD)* AND I HATE YOU TOO! I-

BRIDGET: Re-direct! Redirect, redirect now.

VOICE OF GUARD: GET BACK AND MAKE ROOM!

(Footsteps. The sound of a heavy metal door. A light suddenly appears on GEORGE BURROUGHS and all four women focus on the man now in their cage. The rage that's been simmering begins to boil. For a moment, this man is all men.)

BRIDGET: Hello.. *George.*