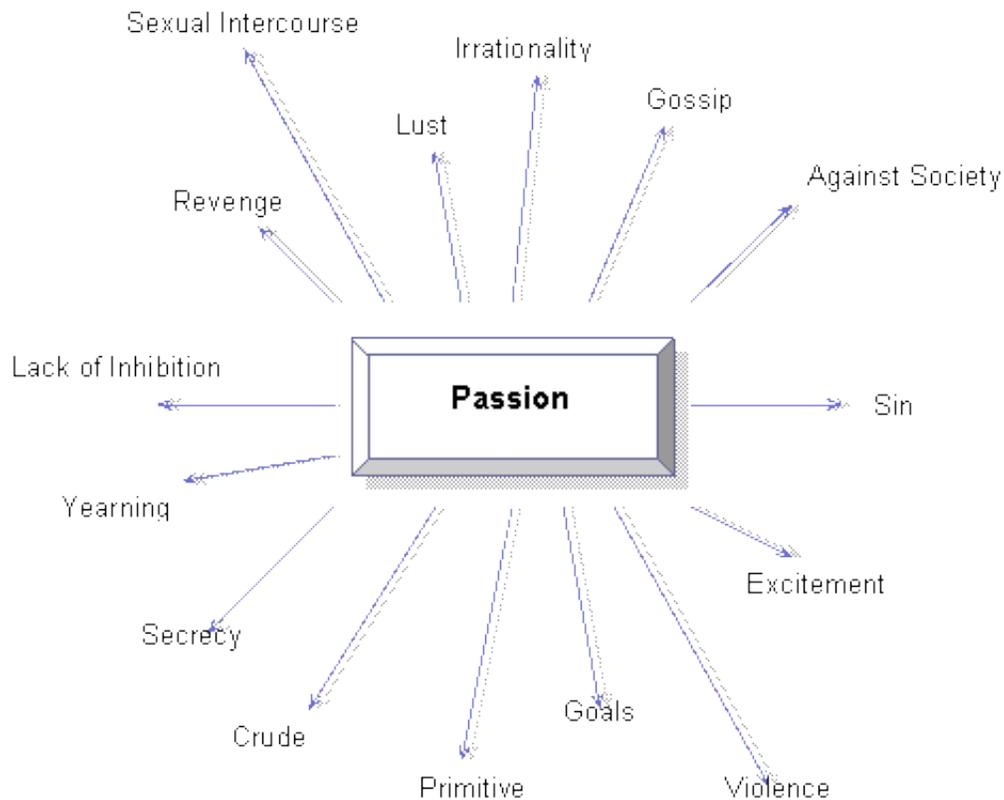


## Motif Tracking: The Crucible – Passions & Desires



### Summary:

Secret passions and desires are a common motif that Miller uses in *The Crucible*. It is used to show how characters turn against society. how sexual intercourse and lust is a common sin in particular in the affair between Proctor and Abigail. It is also clear that these secret passions fuel the Witch Hunt as it is Abigail's desire for Proctor that instigates the hysteria. In the same way, Miller believed that private vendettas and political agendas were driving the Communist Witch Hunt of his own time.

### Quotations:

Page	Quotation	Analysis
19	'Uncle, we did dance; let you tell them I confessed it.'	Dancing within this society would be seen as 'forbidden' as it would suggest freedom and a fun/enjoyable activity. This reflects Abigail's secret desire to be free and to be different from others; she doesn't wish to conform to social expectations.
21	'[Full of breath, shiny-eyed] It is a marvel. It is surely a stroke of hell upon you.'	The audience learns from this quotation that 'gossip' is Mrs. Putnam's passion. [Full of breath, shiny-eyed] shows interest in the topic; she enjoys the scandal. Even though this isn't a secret, it's a passion of hers and shows how the society of Salem vindictively enjoys gossiping about one another and the discomfiture that this can bring.
26	'You drank a charm to kill John Proctor's wife! You drank a charm to kill Goody Proctor!'	Abigail's willingness to kill Goody Proctor shows the depth of her desire for Proctor. It is these secret passions that Miller believes ultimately fuel the witch hunt in both Salem and his own contemporary society.

28	<p>Proctor: [looking at Abigail now, the faintest suggestion of a knowing smile on his face]: What's this mischief here?</p> <p>Abigail: [With a nervous laugh] Oh, she's only gone silly somehow.</p> <p>Proctor: The road past my house is a pilgrimage to Salem all morning. The town's mumbling witchcraft.</p>	<p>The interaction between Proctor and Abigail is flirtatious and shows a lust for one another. [Looking at Abigail now, the faintest suggestion of a knowing smile] implies that Proctor is enjoying the attention from Abigail and the stage directions say that Abigail [laughs nervously] which further emphasises her lust for him. 'The town's mumbling witchcraft' reminds us that it is this secret passion that has sparked the beginnings of a scandal that will ultimately be blow up out of all proportion into the witch hunt.</p>
29	<p>'I know how you clutched my back behind your house and sweated like a stallion whenever I come near! Or did I dream that?'</p>	<p>This is a strong, animalistic image and it reveals the extent of the sexual passion and desire between Abigail and Proctor. They embraced behind the house which shows that their affair was secret and something that would be disapproved of by the rest of Salem.</p>
30	<p>'[In tears] I look for John Proctor that took me from my sleep and put knowledge in my heart! (...) You loved me, John Proctor, and whatever sin it is, you page 30love me yet!'</p>	<p>Abigail believes that their relationship has opened up her eyes; but while Abigail feels that the sexual knowledge she gained has been an epiphany Proctor realises that his affair with her is a sin, which further emphasises his heroic qualities and the way in which his succumbing to base physical temptations is his fatal flaw.</p>
40	<p>'Our opposites are always robed in sexual sin, and it is from this unconscious conviction the demonology gains both its attractive sensuality and its capacity to infuriate and frighten.'</p>	<p>There are certain aspects of the Devil that are attractive; committing a sin is seen to be rebellious and there's a sense of freedom within this. Miller implies that the existence of any set of rules will make attractive the very things forbidden by those rules and thus strict repression is ultimately self destructive. In the case of Salem the strictly Puritanical rules that govern behaviour have repressed the desires of the villagers to such an extent that a seething mass of petty jealousies and secret lusts underlies the superficially devout behaviour of the town and it is from this fertile ground that the hysterical accusations of the witch hunt sprang.</p>

**Key Moment:**

'You drank a charm to kill John Proctor's wife! You drank a charm to kill Goody Proctor!' This moment is crucial as it begins the witch hunt as her desire for Proctor is what drives Abigail to dance in the forest and ultimately attempt to manipulate the court in order to kill Elizabeth.