

[Transcript] Morbid / Episode 496: Half-Hanged Mary

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Hey, weirdos, I'm Ash.

And I'm Elena.

And this is Morbid.

It's like kind of Morbid in the morning, but not like the morning morning.

It's like late morning.

Yeah, I would say.

Yeah.

You know?

It's like 10 30.

Yeah, you know, we're in the middle of, um, we're in the middle of a heat wave, but it's, but it's fallen my heart.

Oh, it's fall everywhere except outside.

Yep.

Um, we started decorating for Halloween yesterday.

I started and finished the other day.

I had Hocus Pocus, The Corpse Bride, and what was the other movie that I had on the background?

Halloween Town.

No, I didn't do Halloween Town yet.

Wow.

Practical magic.

Oh, okay.

Oh, no, I'll do Halloween Town.

I just haven't yet.

We did Hocus Pocus in Halloween Town while we were decorating yesterday.

And we are still not done decorating because let me tell you, decorating with three kids and two dogs means that you don't decorate in one day.

Yeah, no.

It was out of the house.

So I got to do it like all by myself.

And it was, I haven't done that in like a long time.

Like, yeah.

Yeah, it was great.

Yeah.

You know, it was lovely.

I hope you're all decorated for Halloween, everybody, because it's Halloween.

It's spooky season.

Let's go weirdos.

We're here.

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I'm ready for haunted houses.
I have been waiting for this all summer.
Fuck summer.
If you love summer, that's fine for you.
I fucking hate it.
Ever in the fact that we're in a heat wave right now when it is September and we're supposed to be in fall.
Yeah, I'm not enjoying that at all.
In fact, it's like, does that, are we just done after that?
Like, does anybody know?
Nobody knows.
We can't see that far out.
I feel like we can.
Okay, you know.
Okay, next Wednesday, according to my weather app is going to be 69.
See, that's what I'm looking for.
Bring me to the 60s.
As soon as we're out, because even 70, I'm like, even 70 can kind of go fuck itself.
70 could definitely go fuck itself because the sun is still hot when it's 70.
And then you get like that nice like fall breeze that starts to come in.
But if you find yourself in the wrong place outside and the sun is on you, you're just like, fuck, that's not fallish.
Yeah, why am I wearing this chunky sweater?
Exactly.
Exactly.
But let's hope, you know, everybody put their collective brain powers together to make fall appear for us.
Please.
Wiggle your spirit fingers.
I'm requesting this of you.
My God, tomorrow is going to be, or Thursday is going to be 93 fucking degrees.
No, I don't, I don't want to do that.
I don't want to go to there.
I don't want to go to there.
Next week looks chill.
Like 74, 72, 69.
Okay.
All right, so that's the weather with Ash and Alley now.
That's the weather.
Oh, before we start today's pretty, just like bumper episode because it's about a witch trial.
Okay.
But it's like, when you go into which trials, you always go in there being like, which is fun.
And then you go through and you're like, oh, this sucks.
Yeah, because they got like persecuted as fuck.

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Yeah.

But I wanted to quickly shout out someone pretty awesome.

A listener, Corey, who sent us this.

First of all, Corey has an Etsy shop, amazing crocheter.

So good.

Sent me a Papa doll.

I wish that you, Corey could have seen Elena's eyeballs,

Yeet out of her face when she opened this.

And then I immediately said, are you going to sleep with that?

And I, and I, she said, maybe I brought it down to John and I was like, can I, I'm going to put this on our bed.

And he was like, please don't.

He was like, no.

He was like, that's amazing.

But please do not put that on our bed.

It's incredible.

It's sitting right next to me, like as we speak.

With all her other ghost paraphernalia.

With all my other ghost paraphernalia.

And I'm telling you, like Corey, this doll is fucking phenomenal.

He's so cute.

I'll definitely post a picture of it because it's just too good not to.

And the care you put into it is, you're really talented.

The details too.

So I just wanted to shout out Corey's, like all her shop places.

They are all alternative hippie.

I love that.

And it's, it's HIPPY.

Ah, nice.

So, you know, so she has an Etsy shop and it's Etsy.com slash shop slash alternative hippie.

Instagram.com.

She's alternative hippie.

All that good stuff.

So go blow up her shit.

Go blow up her shit because I'm telling you, again, I will post a picture of this doll and you will be like, what the fuck you made that.

It's so cute.

And it was so thoughtful.

And it was like you, you were saying how like, you know, you hadn't listened to ghost before that.

And now like you were, and I think she said the same thing that she was like, I was like, you, I hadn't really gotten into any like newer rock stuff.

And I missed that feeling.

And then I felt it with ghosts.

So like, I love that we all feel that together.

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So that's not a lot.

I just wanted to shout you out because that was really thoughtful and really awesome.

And you literally made my year with it.

So I, again, I wish you could have seen her in his face when she opened that package.

She goes true joy.

Somebody made me a Papa doll.

So thank you so much for that, Corey.

And I hope that your shit gets just like rocked in the best way right now.

And I hope you can't crochet enough to, you know, I hope it just blows up.

So you're awesome.

And go check out alternative hippie or else or else.

Okay.

We don't know.

We don't know what else and what else, but I don't know, but that's it.

Either way, we're going to get into the story now of half hanged Mary.

Oh.

Of Hadley, Massachusetts.

Oh shit.

Hadley, Massachusetts.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Massachusetts really at a time.

Yeah.

We fucked up a lot.

We fucked up.

We fucked up.

Yeah.

I'm going to say they because like they fucked up our people.

Yeah.

You know, like the people doing the fucked up things.

Yeah.

That's not a we thing.

No.

I mean, I was not there.

Yeah.

No.

I was the elder on this podcast, but I was not present during these.

So I will say that.

That was a really, that was a missed opportunity for a good joke on my parts.

So thank you for walking yourself.

No problem.

I was waiting for it.

I was waiting for you to be like, you were there, right?

Well, I try not to do like too much elder abuse to you.

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It's okay.

Sorry.

I feel, I feel okay about it.

Um, but I think we can all agree that there are very few examples of mass hysteria that loom larger than the Salem witch trials of 1692.

100%.

I mean, over 200 people were persecuted during that 19 were executed.

So crazy.

It's so sad.

And it was all for crimes that nobody had actually committed in.

But, you know, we just, everybody ran with it.

And for centuries, it has served as a very important, but often ignored warning against group think against intolerance, you know, all that fun stuff.

Once again, often ignored.

We'd love to believe we're past that, but yeah, you know, really not.

I thought of a great idea.

We should make sweatshirts that say fuck and Putnam.

Oh, 100% because fuck and Putnam.

Okay.

Yeah.

For sure.

Uh, but it was definitely not the only example of witch hunting in Massachusetts for sure.

And in fact, 10 years before the Salem witch trials, there were very similar accusations of witchcraft that were aimed at Mary Webster of Hadley, which was another small village in Massachusetts.

It's in like Western Massachusetts.

Yeah.

I don't think I realized Hadley was like that old of a place.

Yeah.

I mean, every place in Massachusetts is pretty fucking old.

Yeah.

It's old, but by the time the Massachusetts Bay Colony was established in 1630, the existence of witches and, you know, witchcraft and dark magic and all that had been a very prominent source of anxiety and hysteria over in Europe.

Right.

And that was for nearly like two centuries that that was going on.

So that was nothing new.

You covered some of the ones in Europe, didn't you?

We did.

We covered one or two, I think.

Yeah.

We'll definitely cover some more because it really is fascinating.

But although fears of witchcraft had existed in cultures around the world long before, beginning in the late 15th century, public fears and public accusations of witchcraft

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largely spurred by the Catholic Church at the time led to a centuries long period of witch hunts across Europe that led to the executions of not 19, which is bad enough, tens of thousands of innocent people.

That's crazy.

So because there was such a prevalence of fear and black magic and witchcraft at that time, it makes sense that the earliest colonial settlers in Massachusetts Bay Colony would bring all those fears, anxieties, superstitions, all that stuff to their new home too.

Let's bring all this fuck shit right on over.

Yeah.

Let's not start with a clean slate.

No.

Let's just bring it all over.

Never that.

So when the first laws were enacted in the colony in 1641, the general court included a common law statute that quoted directly from scripture and it established quote, if any man or woman be a witch that is hath or consulteth with a familiar spirit, they shall be put to death.

When you truly think about that, like if you're a witch, we're going to kill you.

That's why it's crazy when people say, I'm not really interested in witch trials.

It's like, you're not like that.

I don't get it.

What of that being, those were laws, like that was put into law.

It's wild.

If you consulteth with a familiar spirit, they basically said, if you have a cat.

Yeah.

If you have an animal that sometime is seen around you, we're going to kill you.

That's what that means.

Because we think you're consulting with the devil.

Wild.

Law.

Wild.

Law.

Men.

Unfortunately, there was a law back then.

You know, sometimes it's super tough to fit working out into your fall schedule because it's all back to it.

It's back to school.

It's back to work.

It's back to the grind, but your routine should never feel routine because then it gets super boring and nobody likes boring.

So flip the script a bit this fall by tapping into Peloton's endless variety of exercise options with the Peloton bike or bike plus from intervals to literally metal rides.

I've taken a metal ride, guys.

Do it.

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Your workouts will go from please no to let's go from can't do it to I want to do it.
And Peloton's not just a class.
It's a fitness entertainment mashup that will have you dancing and singing the entire way through and actually wanting to tell people about it after I tell everyone how much I love my Peloton.
I talk about it like a show I love.
It's kind of wild.
And it's not just a fad.
It actually really works.
And you know what?
Do you want proof?
You don't believe me right now?
I'm offended, but I'll give you something to chew on.
90% of Peloton households that join at the start of the year are still active 12 months later.
Me.
I'm one of those households.
Still unsure?
Well, we've got you.
Try Peloton bike or bike plus free for 30 days.
Figure out it's not for you.
Return it for a full refund.
Find your zone with a 30 day worry free home trial of Peloton bikes.
Visit onepeloton.com slash home dash trial.
Roback active wear.
I am quite literally obsessed with it.
If you haven't heard of Roback, it is timed that you check them out.
Roback's quality is absolutely unmatched.
And the only way to describe this active wear is best fit, best feel.
I love it.
Roback has the most comfortable performance polos and hoodies for men, but the good news is for the ladies.
They just released their brand new hoodies and joggers, which I personally got to try.
And it's like lathering your own body in butter, but clothing form.
That sounds weird, but it's awesome.
When we say these are soft, it still doesn't do them justice.
They are that soft.
It's like a cloud.
It's made of clouds, I think.
They are perfect for a relaxing Saturday or a day on the move.
Go golfing with your honey and match him because that'd be cute.
The fit is just right and you won't be able to take them off.
No, seriously, you do have to wash them, but like, I don't know.
It's fine.

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Just leave the butter clouds on your body.

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Now, with laws in place that were literally criminalizing witchcraft and consorting with the devil, it didn't take long for colonial settlers to make good use of them.

We're not going to let those laws just sit on those books.

They're like, no, let's do this.

No, they can't get dusty.

We've got to use them.

In 1648, 35-year-old Margaret Jones, who was a Charlestown midwife and practitioner of medicine, was like herbal medicine and stuff.

Of course.

Was very much accused of witchcraft and put on trial.

Little documentation from her trial has really survived today, but the diary of Governor John Winthrop, who sat on the general court at the time of the trial, does show some of the evidence that was used to convict Margaret.

I remember that name, John Winthrop.

The evidence included the fact that, quote, she was found to have such a malignant touch as many persons, men, women, and children whom she stroked or touched with any affection or displeasure and some things which she foretold come to pass accordingly.

Other things she would tell of as secret speeches, which she had no ordinary means to come to the knowledge of.

Basically, they're saying people got sick after she was around them sometimes, and she knew things.

Before I did.

Right.

And it's like, I don't know, John Winthrop.

It's like, I think you're just a man, John.

His journal also says that Jones' disposition during the trial was also used as additional evidence against her.

It says Jones was very intemperate, lying notoriously and railing against the jury and witnesses. Gee, I wonder why.

And he wrote in simple terms, Margaret Jones' unwillingness to be deferential and demure during what basically was most certainly a fight to keep herself from being hanged for nothing.

Literally nothing.

Was considered by this puritanical society to be proof that she was consorting with the devil.

So because she wasn't demure on the stand and sitting there and going, well, I guess if you say I did it, I suppose I have to admit it.

Sure, Mr. White.

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Yep.

I absolutely did that.

I do that.

They were like, the devil.

It's also like she's on trial for doing her job.

Yeah.

It sounds like.

Which you all took advantage of for a little while until you decided that you wanted to rally against her.

That you were bored because you couldn't do anything in those times.

So you're just going to make her a witch.

That's the thing.

Now Margaret Jones was the first person in Massachusetts and just the second in the colonies to be tried and executed for witchcraft.

And the fact that she was a woman was definitely not coincidental.

No, never.

She was a midwife, a practitioner of medicine, like we said before, and she likely because of those things, like we just kind of touched upon, she definitely held a little bit of power in the community.

Those kind of resources, that kind of expertise, that was pretty specific.

It was not in big supply in the colonies at that point.

So she was going to be looked at as someone to turn to.

It was kind of in the case of Bridget Cleary.

We talked about how the guy who was looked at as the powerful elder who had all this knowledge of folklore and shit, he held power at one point.

And then when he didn't, everything changed.

He made it come back.

Now, and also she used local herbs and other non-traditional medicines.

People started looking at that as suspect.

Of course.

They only looked at it really when it was suspect when their treatments didn't work.

When their treatments worked, suddenly you're a great doctor and midwife and all that good stuff, but when it didn't work, you're a witch.

And also sometimes like medicine, medicine doesn't work.

Yes, sometimes you're just going to die.

Sometimes that's just the way it is.

Now, eight years later, that same community tried and executed a woman named Anne Hibbins for similar things.

Nonsensical, we don't like her.

She's not this demure little wilting flower that we would like her to be.

Exactly.

Because remember in Salem, that seemed to be a lot of the shit.

These women would speak out and speak up against things.

They would speak up for themselves.

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They would speak up for their families for all that stuff.

It was like shut up.

And they were like, shut the fuck up, witch.

And it's like, okay.

Yeah.

We all see it.

We all see it.

Yeah.

But apparently in one of the sources that I'm going to link in the show notes, Bridget Marshall, the author points out witchcraft accusations were actually fairly common during this period in the colonies.

Every town seems to have had at least one official accusation and no doubt many more had local legends and suspicions.

So it was definitely one of those things where there was official accusations which would go to the higher authorities, go on trial, all that stuff.

But you know, it was one of those things where they were like that lady's a witch.

That lady down the street who lives by herself because everyone she loved has died.

She's a witch.

Exactly.

And again, they are like the accusations were common.

But at this point, convictions and executions, I don't know why that was so hard to say.

They were less common at the time.

Right.

You could bring it to a point, but getting a conviction and executing that person was going to take a little more.

But this was also due to the fact that, you know, they were recently established communities removing someone who was like a medicine woman as much as you're claiming that's witchcraft and shit.

Removing anyone from these communities is kind of disadvantages.

You know, it's really becoming a disadvantage for that community at this time because they really only have a handful of people to begin with.

They need to establish themselves first and then they can fuck you over later.

Yeah.

So it's going to fuck this accused witch over, but it's definitely going to fuck everyone else over too.

So they were very aware of that.

I think a lot of times these things were more of a shame you into compliance and submission kind of thing.

So we don't have to take it to the conviction and execution stage.

We're just going to make sure you know that you will become ostracized and we can bring you in.

If you speak out against us.

So like just listen to what we say, become submissive and we'll leave you alone.

Going back to them like not being fully established yet, I'm sure some of these women were like

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the first midwives in their village.

And then when they like got more and more of them, they were like, Oh, now we can fuck with that one that we don't like because we like this one better because she listens to what we say.

Exactly.

It's like, but when they're the only ones, they were just dealing with it.

Right.

Now, like we know now, the reasons why a person would have been accused of witchcraft were very varied and almost always completely irrational.

Um, you know, petty arguments, overactive imaginations, just puritanical shit.

I don't, I don't like your face.

So I would like you to be gone from my view kind of shit.

Like it was all just very like haphazard.

If I don't like this person, I can accuse them of it.

So scary.

Like for example, this is a very interesting one, the case of Mary Parsons, who was a Northampton woman accused of witchcraft by her neighbor in 1656.

Mary and her husband, Joseph Parsons had moved to Northampton from Springfield.

Okay.

So they were already very much outsiders in this newly formed community.

Cause remember it's all brand new.

Um, so immediately the community was a talking as soon as two people come in from anywhere else, you're going to be the target.

Mary also had a son who was actually the first English child born in town.

So that was another thing that was already going to stir up some crazy gossip.

And then the Parsons were also of a higher social class and they had a lot more wealth than their neighbors.

So there was a lot of jealousy already off the bat.

They are batten zero.

Now one day, not long after they came to Northampton, a neighbor named Sarah Bridgeman received

a knock at her door.

She was holding her infant son when she came to answer the door and she said, no one was there, but then she saw two cloaked figures pass by and she became convinced that her child would die.

Sarah Bridgeman's an asshole, just so you know.

I answered the door and no one was there.

So I thought my baby was going to die.

Yeah.

That's a leap.

Seems legit.

That's a leap and a half girlfriend.

The child did die a short time later, which is very unfortunate, of course.

And Sarah became convinced that the death was caused by Mary Parsons and not just like

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the old timing of it all.

Apparently since she had arrived in the village, Bridgeman and Parsons did not get along.

They had feuded right off the bat, which it's like, all right, Sarah, sometimes bitches

aren't going to like you.

And that's just the way it is.

Like move on.

It's fine.

It's for a witch and that they killed your kid.

And you have to involve yourself in their life.

Just move the fuck on.

If you don't like someone, walk away.

Toxic person.

Walk the other way.

Like just leave.

Okay.

But no, we've got to make this a bigger problem.

We've got to make it everybody's problem.

And honestly, it's going to become your problem, bitch.

So she, yeah.

So they've been feuding ever since the Parsons had arrived and Bridgeman spent months telling anyone who would listen that Parsons was a witch and that it was her fault.

And finally, Joseph Parsons, Mary's husband was like, fuck you and decided to file a complaint of slander on his wife's behalf because that's a bad bitch move, especially for a husband back then.

That's a husband.

He was like, don't talk shit about my wife.

Like fuck you, Sarah.

But that is probably not good that he brought this to court because I feel like that's where it's all going to get crazy.

That's the thing.

It was very proactive of him.

Of course.

It was a pretty badass of him.

Totally.

For sure.

I support Joseph.

I am here supporting him.

We stand with Joe.

Team Joseph.

But like you said, not great because of how shitty the system was.

Exactly.

It was great in all other ways.

Not great because of how shitty everybody else was.

Because by bringing those accusations to the attention of the authorities before, it was

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like we were saying before.
It was like shit talking.
Right.
It was shit talking among the community.
It wasn't taken to the official level.
But now it's happened.
It's gotten brought to the authorities.
They know that people are talking.
This poor man was only trying to help his wife and like he probably regretted that every day.
And so it was brought to court.
And Sarah, when she explained it, she said there was a great blow at the door and I was like, what?
Sorry, what?
And she immediately said she sensed a difference in her newborn as soon as that great blow at the door happened.
Okay.
And she said immediately, I was sure my child would die and I was like, I don't know. I feel like that's someone you should talk about with someone else because I don't think that was Mary.
And she said it was because there was wickedness in place.
Wow.
This is real.
I just need like, this is why these kinds of trials and this time period are so fucking fascinating to me because this was a legitimate criminal trial.
And this woman just said, someone knocked on my door, my newborn got fussy.
And so I knew he was going to die because wickedness was in place.
Yeah.
And she said that in a legal trial.
And they went, hmm, they said, that's why they should kill their chimps.
And they said, maybe we should hang this bitch.
Like that's, it's scary.
That was real.
How that, that's fascinating to be like terrifying.
They didn't have enough to do back then.
They sure didn't.
Now.
And that's the thing.
They had enough to do, but it was, and that's the thing, it's like they weren't bored. They were just miserable because it was miserable back then and we'll get into it. But it's like, that's what it was.
It's like, like my numbing shit.
Yeah.
And kids were bored.

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They're bored and miserable.

Now at the trial, a lot of people testified that Sarah Bridgeman's child had actually been frail and sickly since birth.

So there's the that on that.

So they were like, when the child died, unfortunately, it was very tragic, but not a surprise to a lot of people because he was born very sick.

That's sad.

But Bridgeman stuck to her story that Parsons was a witch and had killed her child through her consortment with the devil and the wickedness of it all.

Then we had other people come into the trial saying, you know, there was a yarn spinner that said the yarn she spun for Mary Parsons just ended up in knots, no matter what she did.

And she said that was obviously because she was a witch.

Maybe you just suck at spinning yarns.

Yeah, maybe.

Maybe you're spinning the yarn right now.

I think you are.

See what I did there.

Lies.

Lies.

Liar.

And it's also like, it's just sort of the devil like knots, like, I don't know about that.

Is that what that's supposed to be?

He just likes tying knots.

Yeah, I'm not.

I've never heard about that.

I'm not up on his likes and dislikes, but I didn't know that was one of them.

I haven't heard that in a ghost song, so I'm not so sure.

Did you see the protesters, everybody like, you got to go on TikTok, the protesters at the ghost concert.

I think it was in Texas.

That checks.

Yeah.

Funny.

It's like Mary statue and everything.

It's like, just let people.

There were signs that said, I'm so sorry, Mary, and I was like, what?

What now?

I don't, pretty funny.

Yeah, I'm not going to say too much.

Well, that's, I'm like, like what you like, but like, that's the thing.

Don't listen to the music.

If you don't like it.

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Go home.

You don't have to partake in it.

It's fine.

Well, people, like some people, I feel like everyone now is just like, they're indoctrinating our children for like everything and I'm like, just don't let your kid go to a ghost show.

Your kid isn't going to go to a ghost show unless you bring them to one.

Right.

So unless they're like seeking out you.

But like, that's your fault.

So it's just ridiculous.

It's a little silly.

And honestly, ghost shows are fucking amazing and the people at ghost shows are some of the nicest people I've ever been around.

So there at the ghost, at the ritual that we went to, I thought they call it a ritual.

It's always called a ritual.

I don't think I even knew that.

They call their shows rituals.

That's fun.

I love it.

That really scares the people even more.

At my ritual that we went to, we were loving the people in front of us.

It was this couple, and don't worry, I'll get back to the story.

I promise.

I know Tangents pissed some people off, but here I am, but I just got to tell you because it was lovely.

Yeah.

It was a couple in front of us, a man and a woman, and they were having the fucking time of their lives and they were like so in love and just like dancing with each other and so happy.

And I literally was just their vibe.

That's precious.

I was so happy.

We all said it.

We were all like, these people are lovely to just be around.

I love that.

I love love.

It was delightful.

So shout out to those two people in front of us because they were turning to each other and screaming the words to each other and just dancing and having a ball.

It was just so good.

The guy was so theatrical to every song.

I was like, you're killing me.

I love it.

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It always adds to the experience.

It's just awesome.

When you have people around like that.

And I met a lot of listeners at that show and they were really kind and awesome and it was really cool and you guys rule, but go do a gocho.

But either way, you know, the devil loves knots.

Who knew?

Weird.

But things escalated as well when a woman named Mrs. Hanum, who was another yarn spinner and she apparently worked with the Parsons before, she testified on Sarah Bridgeman's behalf saying that Parsons had, quote, attempted to lure her daughter away from her home.

What?

And it's like, what?

And then another woman came and said, her daughter got ill after she refused to let her daughter work for the Parsons.

So she must have bewitched her out of spite.

Yes, of course.

And then a man came forward and testified and said, well, my cow got sick as fuck after I had some warrants with Mary Parsons and then it died and it's her fault.

I truly can't.

The fact that they thought people just died because they had words with each other.

Well, and what's great about this one, I will say is that the court was able to be like debunked.

Okay.

That's nice.

Debunked because upon further questioning, it was very clear that Mrs. Hanum, the yarn spinner had been feuding with Mary Parsons ever since Mary Parsons complained of the quality of her yarn.

So she was just pissed because her little ego got bruised because she had shitty yarn.

Fuck your yarn.

And she saw this trial as an opportunity to get back at Parsons, which I'm like, people were fucking cutthroat back then.

She didn't like my yarn hang.

Yeah.

She didn't like my yarn.

So my way of getting back to her is having her hang by her neck until she's dead.

Yeah.

Like, damn.

That's normal.

Imagine living your life after that.

I can be petty, but I'm not that petty.

Like imagine standing in that crowd.

You spun some yarn and you know what you did.

And you just sit, you're sitting there and you're like, hmm, you're like, well, well,

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she got hurt.

She said shit about my yarn.

My yarn quality is top notch.

It's like, what the fuck?

Like that's cold-blooded.

Like people were cold-blooded.

So yeah, she was just pissed about the quality of the yarn and she was like, cool, I'm offended.

So I'm going to send you to be executed and offended.

And people also testified that Sarah Bridgeman's baby, like they had said before, had definitely been sick since birth.

So that was just not right.

Under these circumstances, the court, and I think they found that the cow had died of a very normal cow thing that happens.

He was just old.

And I think it was actually the owner's fault.

Like it was like something he had done accidentally that had caused it.

Wow.

So the court ruled in favor of Mary Parsons and were actually told Sarah Bridgeman, you are actually in trouble for lodging these false accusations now.

Oh hell yeah.

So they said, you can either pay Parsons court fees or you can issue a public apology.

I would say you have to do both.

And that petty little bitch was like, I'll pay the fees.

She wouldn't even publicly apologize.

Wow.

Like what a bitch.

People really were petty.

Like such a bitch.

But what's sad though is that although the slander trial may have come to an end, Bridgeman kept spreading rumors about Parsons being a witch and they just kept going for like generations. And basically it undermined the Parsons family social status and any political influence they had in the village for generations.

So it's really sad.

She ruined their legacy essentially just because she didn't like her.

Like that's a petty bitch.

She, I hope she got hers and she's living a bad life in the next one.

And this kind of shows you that although there was a genuine belief in witches and witchcraft, that's the thing.

This wasn't only, I don't like this person so I'm going to fake it.

I still genuinely believe that witches and witchcraft were like evil and that like they were these like, you know, the hooknosed, like, you know, with the ward on the end of the nose kind of thing we see in all the media you see of a note, like they're green and that they have to tell you know that and that they're flying on a broom in the middle of the night, you know, like that kind of stuff.

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They definitely believed that and especially in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. But it was also just as common for this to be the case where it was, you know, consorting with the devil was basically, I'm being petty and I'm going to, you know, settle my petty grievance with you by pretending that you're consorting with the devil.

Right.

Now, getting on to Mary Webster, it kind of seemed like this was partially the case is that people just didn't like her and she was an outsider.

So they decided to make her consult with the devil fictionally as a case.

Fun.

So Mary Webster was born Mary Reeve.

She was born in England circa 1624 and she was brought by her parents, Thomas and Hannah Reeve to the Massachusetts Bay Colony and with it and she was brought there within a decade or two after her birth.

So within her first 20 years, she was brought there.

All right.

Again, a lot of these records are haphazard.

So you just kind of have to piece everything together, but they settled in Springfield.

Now little is known about her early life, but she does and she doesn't appear on record until 1670 and that's when she married 53 year old William Webster of Hadley.

So she relocated from Springfield to Hadley and when that happened, often moving was a big deal.

Of course.

It set you back.

Yeah.

Back then it sets anybody back anyways, but it really sets you back back then.

When people like died on the way to move to a new place.

Yeah.

And they were, the Websters were described as having become poor and having living many years in a small house in the middle highway and were sometimes aided by the town.

Okay.

So nobody's really sure like what the definition of poor was back then because things were so willy nilly.

Like how about it really was?

Yeah.

But I think the fact that they were receiving aid from the town makes them down at the bottom of the ladder.

You know that?

Yeah.

So according to Sylvester Judd, who is an author and who wrote the town history of Hadley, he said Mary's temper quote, which was not the most placid was not improved by poverty and neglect.

And she used harsh words when offended, despised and sometimes ill treated.

She was soured with the world and rendered spiteful towards some of her neighbors.

So here's the thing.

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The thing with Mary is that we see she's in poverty.
She's having to get aid from the town.
She's being treated as such because people are now treating her like shit.
And it's like, so her neighbors are dicks to her and treat her like a piece of shit.
And she's supposed to be like a ray of sunshine.
She's brought here from where she was born.
And it's like, and she's supposed to be this fucking ray of sunshine for you and might like make you happy when you treat her like shit because of something completely out of her control that she's dealing with poverty.
Of course.
Yeah.
Absolutely.
And they even said because of her quote, unpleasant demeanor, her neighbors started referring to her as a witch and she quickly became a target for a lot of harassment.
The seaside town of Ambul is cold, grey and run down.
So when a wild dolphin appears, it's the miracle everyone's been waiting for.
It was like a magical draw.
I'm going and nothing can stop me.
I must meet this dolphin.
Some believe Freddie has healing powers, others that he's an alien.
Everyone wants to swim with him.
It was just out of this world, you know.
Until one day, someone is accused of taking things way too far.
Alan Cooper committed an act of elude, obscene and disgusting nature.
A tabloid scandal leads to a court battle that grips the whole country.
By behaving in an indecent manner with a bottlenose dolphin.
From Wondery and Blanchard House, I'm Becky Milligan.
This is Hooked on Freddie.
Listen to Hooked on Freddie from the 19th of September, wherever you get your podcasts.
Now soon rumors were spreading about Mary and that, you know, she did this, she did that.
She bewitched some cattle and horses so that they stopped and ran back and could not be driven by her house.
In some cases, the rumors had a little bit of truth to them because Mary would try to keep farmers and travelers away from her house and so she would overturn their loads sometimes.
What a...
That's hilarious.
Or she would chase them away.
She was just like, get off my fucking lawn.
Well, she was like, you're all assholes to me.
To me.
Stay away from my house.
I don't believe her.
Fuck you.
Well, and you have to wonder if something happened that she wanted them away from her

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house because that seems like a kind of like a jump, you know.

This is when you find out what they actually do to her and what is very normal.

You're like, yeah, you were probably hurting her physically.

You pieces of shit.

Yeah.

That's what it sounds like.

Now, in one instance, they claimed, and take what you will from this, they claim that, quote, she entered a house and had such influence upon an infant on the bed or in the cradle that the infant was raised to the chamber floor and fell back again three times and no visible hand touched.

Where were the owners of the home?

Yeah.

When she just barged in.

I don't know.

This looks like neglect of an infant or possibly impasse of an infant, and then they just blamed it on Mary Webster.

Like what?

Now, the rumors were growing and growing and apparently.

And so the community was now kind of biting back at Mary.

So either way, the rumors are growing and growing and in response to these rumors, the community is starting to get more and more proactive in their response to her.

So she became the target for what is called which disturbances.

Oh, no.

I don't like that already.

So apparently, so the author I mentioned before, Smith says that when farmers claimed they were unable to drive their cattle by Mary's house, they quote, would enter the house, beat her or threatened to do so.

And then she generally let them pass.

Yeah, because they had beat her.

So she was probably unable to stop them at that point.

So that was called a which disturbance.

They would just enter the suspected which is home and beat the shit out of her to make her whatever was happening stop.

What the?

And then they're always like, and these women were so unpleasant.

And it's like, I would fucking, I would be the epitome of foul and rotten if I were this woman, I would ruin everyone's lives around me.

Do you ever just think like, what are humans?

Like what are we?

I think it all the time.

Like how did it?

How did we get like this?

I think it all the time.

It's a lot.

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I really do.

So they would do that.

That's why when they're like, oh, she would like knock over their loads and stuff.

I'm like, yeah, I would fuck up their livelihood too.

I'd be like, you literally came in my home and beat me.

So fuck off.

Fuck off.

Don't pass my house.

Now, Judd, the author I mentioned before, who did the history of Hadley, described an incident in 1680 where a 16 year old girl named Anne Belding was charged with, quote, purposes and practices against the body and life of Mary, wife of William Webster.

So apparently Anne entered the Webster's home and likely assaulted or attempted assault Mary.

And so she was required to publicly apologize and pay a fine.

She had to pay one pound to Webster and four pounds to the county for doing that.

Why didn't she spend time in jail, y'all?

Because they're just like, you know, like, just say you're sorry.

The fuck?

So over time, the rumors about Mary Webster just grew, they grew, they became more out.

They became way more outlandish, way more detailed.

They were coming from way more people.

But there was one that proved a lot more consequential for Mary's safety than the other ones.

So in the, and you knew this was coming.

I did.

I knew one of those was going to hit different and it was going to be the breaking point.

I was worried.

So in the early 1680s, it was said that Mary entered the house of a neighbor.

Again?

And before she left the house, or excuse me, not long after she had left the house, a hen came flying down the chimney and fell into a boiling pot of water.

Okay.

To me, that just feels real, real colony-esque.

I'm sure hands fell down chimneys all the time.

Like I don't, if I was back then, if you transported me, hi, I'm Elena from 2023.

If you plopped me into 16, you know, 80 or wherever this was in one of these houses in the Massachusetts Bay Colony and suddenly a hen fell down the chimney into a scalding hot thing of water.

I don't think I would really, I'd be like, probably, like, I think I would just look over and be like, yep.

You'd just be like, well, we're having chicken for dinner.

I'd just be like, oh, is that how you guys would get your food?

Like, I don't, how does this-

Is that from Santa?

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That doesn't seem wild to me.
I'm like, hens were probably all over the fucking place.
Yeah.
And they're probably just falling down chimneys and shit.
It's not like our chimneys where it's like this very intricate system.
Yeah, no, it doesn't sound like-
It's just so hole in your roof.
It's just going to fall down.
So to me, I'm like, yeah, okay, like dinner.
But no, because apparently that was a little strange that a hen just fell down the chimney,
which I think is wild.
I do too.
I feel like I agree.
I don't think it'd be that weird.
I don't think it was.
I think they're just using that.
But the real strange thing was that Mary was discovered to have a skulled mark on her body
in the same place that the hen had.
I guarantee someone probably broke into her house, beat her and burned her.
Probably.
Or it's like, I don't know, they were cooking over straight up bonfires back then.
Like, I'm sure everyone got burned all the fucking time by just doing the simplest of
tasks.
Probably.
Like, I'm sure there was all kinds of burns.
But did they make this like a witch mark?
Well, what they assumed was, you know, that because it's in the same place as the hen,
that Mary had been acting in the form of a familiar to spy on her neighbors.
So they're claiming she was the hen.
They're claiming Mary transformed herself into a hen and said, let me eat myself down
the chimney into a boiling pot of water.
Pour my booty in some hot water.
And then she lived.
And then she lived.
Okay.
Because that's the other thing.
Here's my other question here, but we don't have it on record.
So I would like to ask this neighbor from beyond what the fuck's up Kyle, because this hen
fell down your fucking chimney into a scalding thing of water.
I think it died.
And you didn't eat that hen.
They ate that hen.
You're telling me you just let that hen go?
No, they ate that hen.

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Like, we're in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1680 and you're letting free fucking dinner waddle out of your house.

I don't think so.

I think not.

I don't think so.

You sure about that?

You sure about that?

I don't think you are.

I think you ate that for dinner.

And then you said in here claiming that it was Mary Webster.

I don't think so.

So you ate Mary Webster.

So how's she walking around?

If you ate her.

That doesn't make sense.

This whole thing is truly the most.

That's what it should.

And that's, I'm like, no one was logical back then or, you know what?

Here's the thing.

I bet.

Here's the thing.

I bet there were some logical people in there, but they were zipping their fucking lips because they didn't want to be the next one accused or be thought to be consorting with the devil.

That was the thing they just say quiet.

So it's one of those things they just say quiet and let it happen.

And it's like, so we look back and we're like, are you all like just cuckoo?

Like what is going on?

No one stepped in and was like, well, did you eat the hen?

Like no one asked that.

Yeah.

Did you eat said hen that fell and burned their booty in the water?

Did you eat the booty burned hen?

You didn't let that thing leave.

No, of course not.

Why waste a good hen?

Exactly.

It's 1680.

Hell yeah.

Now in March 1683, Mary was brought before the county court in Northampton because of this.

And she was accused of quote being under strong suspicion of having familiarity with the devil or using witchcraft.

What?

Dude, color me guilty.

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But after hearing testimony from some of her neighbors, the county court looked at it and was like, you know what, these look, these look like pretty strong accusations. It seems like everybody thinks you're kind of a bitch. So I think maybe we should, we should look into this further. So they referred it to the court of assistance in Boston for consideration. Oh no. Yeah. They looked at this like, I don't know, it seems like you might have been that hen. And then they were like, and these people say that, that you suck. So I think we should just the fact that they're like, we think you were that hen. Yeah. We'll have a reminder on that. We'll have a burn mark on you. So I'm pretty sure you were that hen that flew down the chimney that they definitely ate for dinner that night. I must go. Like I just don't know. And in April, by the way, Mary Webster is 60 years old. Oh. Now in April, Mary Webster, 60 years old is shipped to Boston, shipping up to Boston. But not in the fun way. Dropkick Murphy style. Not like that though. Where she was held in a local jail cell waiting her trial for witchcraft. She was held there for a month. Oh my God. And you can only imagine the conditions. Think of the worst conditions you can ever imagine. That's what jail was back then. Times 10. Yeah. And that's what they would have you weighed in for your witchcraft trial that you were placed on trial for because assholes didn't like you. I truly can't. And couldn't mind their own fucking business and just stay to their own shit. They had to get in your shit. This is so sad. No, I didn't realize she was 60 and that adds so much more. Yeah. She should have been happily just, you know, she should have been happily just being a bitch kind of curmudgeonly, you know, like just let her let her live. She's a victim of circumstance. Also, just leave her the fuck alone. Don't interact with her.

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Don't pass her house.

She's not trying to hang out with you.

I mean, according to them, she really was.

She really wanted to go into people's houses a lot.

She just said everyone's houses.

She's like, maybe that's the thing.

Maybe she just wanted a fucking friend.

Maybe she did.

And everyone was just being a dick.

She barged in like, let's hang.

You know, maybe she just needed some social cues.

Let's hang out.

Yeah.

Now, again, sat for a month in jail and then her trial began on May 22, 1683 and was heard by Governor Simon Bradstreet and nine of his fellow, you know, powerful men.

The Justices.

Now, after hearing the charges, they said, seems pretty reasonable.

I think we should take this to trial.

Seems pretty reasonable that you became a hen.

Yeah.

They said, we should take this to trial.

And there was an indictment written up in the indictment read, the grand jury being impaneled, they on perusal of the evidences returned that they did indict Mary Webster for that she not having the fear of God before her eyes.

That's always my favorite part of it.

She's always like, you are not, you don't have the fear of God in you.

So you must be an evil piece of shit that we need to kill.

And it's like, huh?

Why is that people still feel that way?

So not having the fear of God before her eyes and being instigated by the devil, hath entered into covenant and had familiarity with him in the shape of a wornage, which is a fisher or wild black cat of the woods and had his imps sucking her and teats or marks found on her.

They love that.

They love a teat.

They love a teat.

And they love an imps sucking.

Oh, they love it.

That's the thing.

I'm like, look inside of yourselves.

Yeah.

I'm not going to king shame here, but like look inside of yourselves and just like come to grips with what you're really focused on.

You guys should just start writing fan fiction about Mary Webster, I think.

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Yeah, just like listen to some like, you know what?
If we had had like book talks, like fairy smut books, rolling around that ruined it.
And if we had had that back then, I think everybody would have been okay.
They would have sat in their houses, read some fairy smut, gotten their shit together
and come out into the world and been a little less wound up.
I think so.
That's all I'm saying.
To be clear, Alina is the one reading the fairy smut.
She just showed me the song.
I don't know anything about Rune other than that.
He's the crown prince.
I'm going to read the Crescent City book because I don't know how I haven't even gotten to
him yet.
No, but is it the song?
Rune Dan and Crown Prince of the, is it the Balgaran or Balgaran Fae?
I haven't gotten to them yet, so I'm reading Crescent City though.
I've been sucked into it, but they need some fairy smut.
So yeah.
So, you know, teats, marks on her, all that good stuff.
And by several testimonies may appear contrary to the peace of our sovereign Lord, the king,
his crown and dignity, the laws of God and his jurisdiction, the court on their serious
consideration of the testimonies did leave her to further trial.
I got to go.
Nonsense.
I must go.
She spent another week sitting in a Boston jail and then was brought back before the court
of assistance on June 1st, where she was formally tried.
And there is one piece of documentation from that trial that we can look at that says,
Mary Webster was now called and brought to the bar and was indicted, to which indictment
she pleaded not guilty, making no exception against any of the jury, leaving herself to
be tried by God in the country.
The indictment, I'm like, he doesn't try though.
Like you guys have to try her.
Yeah, like where is he at?
The indictment and evidences in the case were read and committed to the jury and the jury
brought in their verdict that they found her not guilty.
I didn't see that coming.
She was acquitted.
She was acquitted of the charge of witchcraft, Mary Webster returned to Hadley and all was
supposed to be great.
But you know what?
It was her neighbors that were pissed.
The court acquitted her.
They weren't going to bring her back in, but the neighbors were pissed.

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Now when Mary Webster was first accused of witchcraft and brought before the county court, among the men who examined her and considered the evidence against her was Philip Smith, who was a local judge and a deacon for the town of Hadley.

In his later accounts of the story, Cotton Mather, who everybody remembers, Cotton Mather. That should have like some kind of reverb on it, like scary reverb.

In your brain.

Cotton Mather.

It's like Mather.

Yeah, it's just, it's just some evil in there.

He describes Smith as follows, Mr. Philip Smith, a man of about 50 years, a son of eminently virtuous parents, a deacon of a church at Hadley, a member of our general court, a man of their county court, a select man for the affairs of the town, a lieutenant in the troop, and which crowns all a man for devotion and gravity, and all that was honest, exceedingly exemplary.

You can stop sucking his dick now, like because you know what, Cotton Mather likely never met this man.

Just want to put that out there.

We loved him.

He likely never met Philip Smith, but because Philip Smith was down to get some witches.

He loved him.

Hanging by some ropes, Cotton Mather was like, what a fucking virtuous gift to our entire planet this man is.

And it's like, settle the fuck down, Cotton.

Take all of the seeds, please.

Settle the fuck down.

And by the way, speaking of Cotton Mather, I think I might take another look at the Salem Witch Trials and kind of like revamp our series on it, because I would love that.

I've read more into it, and I have more to say.

There's always more to say with Alina Ricard.

Yeah.

You know, it's happened.

I love it.

So he shit his dick about Philip Smith, even though he'd never met this man ever, did not know what kind of man he was.

So strange.

But you know, despite Mary Webster being acquitted of the charge of witchcraft, which was no easy feat.

No.

But, and this was a court in Boston, so this was a big court.

She probably knew that this wasn't even the end of it.

Oh, yeah.

Smith, Philip Smith maintained that she was a witch.

She was in league with the devil.

He would not be convinced she wasn't.

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And that's why Cotton Mather loved him.

He wasn't going to give up.

Of course.

Right.

Beginning in January, 1864, apparently Philip Smith's health began ailing a little bit, and it was very obvious.

It wasn't like that.

Was that like graceful?

You know.

And they said, he showed such weakness from the weariness of the world that he knew not.

He said whether he might not, he might pray for his continuance here.

So he wasn't even going to pray to live.

Okay.

Because he was so weary of the world.

I mean.

And, and that's what Cotton Mather had written, by the way.

But he didn't know him.

He didn't know.

Got it.

But basically what he was saying was that, you know, his righteous spiritual battles with evil were just taking its toll on him.

And he was such a, we should, you know, wow, like this man, this man is on his deathbed because he's just been fighting this, this righteous war with the devil so hard.

And he doesn't even know if he wants to stay here anymore because it's just been too hard.

This is making my head hurt.

And I'm like, I don't know.

I think it's just the 1600s and he's dying of things you die of in the 1600s.

Probably.

And also when you're that fucking wound up about everybody all the time.

Yeah.

You're probably going to die sooner because your shit is all rocked inside.

So like, you should calm down.

Calm down.

You know what I'm talking about?

People.

Now, like the court records that have since, you know, really been lost time at this point, of course, there's not a lot of documentation about Smith's illness, but according to Bridgette Marshall and the time leading up to his death, the decline of his physical health and body was accompanied by a lot of like emotional and mental issues as well.

He had fits of delirium and they would definitely frighten everybody around him.

Like his nurses, anybody that was watching over his bedside, I'm sure it was terrifying.

I mean, that would be scary now, even with all we know.

But back then that was, I mean, that's what the witch trials basically where it started from.

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Well, and that kind of like happens at the end of your life.

I mean, in certain cases, you know, at the end of your life, nobody, nobody goes out the same way.

You know, it's like that's, and back then you looked at fits and delirium as being magical. I think they were spurned by something evil.

Meanwhile, it was like probably just his body shutting down and like biological processes. But to a puritanical society that was very deeply entrenched in legends and superstitions and religious doctrine, God, the very, and Marshall points out the author, the very visible stroke struggle he endured with his illness, no doubt appeared to the Puritan audience as a fight with the devil.

And with Cotton Mather writing that this is his righteous battle with the devil that is killing him, it's just compounding.

That's so wild that they were like, yeah, he's, he's just fighting it out with the devil.

This isn't just illness.

This is him literally in a cage match with the devil.

Wow.

Now, in his delirium, he would rant like Philip Smith would rant a lot.

He would ramble.

He would, he was very incoherent this, there and everywhere we've all, if you've loved someone that's been at the end of your life, their life, you know, there can be some moments where you're like, I have no idea where you are right now, but you're telling me about it.

Right.

And again, a lot of local people and found, and his neighbors found that they were thinking this was him being possessed.

And this was the effects of black magic, not anything biological.

No, never.

Now, because Smith had been one of the most like loud and aggressive proponents of Mary Webster's guilt, even after her acquittal, many of the men in town concluded that Webster must be to blame for this illness.

I knew that was coming.

Yeah.

They said this is definitely revenge for his having tried to bring her to justice.

And you know, this is all her.

This is like, he's being the target and after him, you better believe the next person on the list is going to be someone else involved in the trial.

That's ridiculous.

And the longer his illness went on, the stranger and more wild the stories of his symptoms became one of the most absurd things that was stated like officially about it.

Is that in his sick room, they claim that medicines had been emptied by unseen hands and that a fire mysteriously appeared under his bed and then stopped.

Was he burned?

I was like, I feel like you should be looking at him if fires are starting under his bed.

What a fire.

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It starts to burn.

Like what's going on there?

What the fuck?

Now, according to our pal Cotton Mathers account of it, who again believed that very much believed that Webster was to blame.

And apparently they decided to test this theory that Mary was to blame.

People in the town came to Philip or excuse me, came to Mary's home and decided to do a witch disturbance on her because remember, if they think you're fucking around, they can just come and beat the shit out of you.

So Cotton Mather wrote an account of this, even though he was not there by holocaust. Some of the young men in the town being out of their wits at the strange calamities, thus upon one of their most beloved neighbors, went three or four times to give disturbance unto the woman this thus complained of.

And all the while they were disturbing of her, which by the way, he was disturbing of her.

Remember what we're saying here.

He's saying all the while while these men came in and beat the shit out of a 60 year old woman in her home, all the while while they were beating the shit out of a 60 year old woman at her home, he was at ease, Philip Smith and slept as a weary man.

These were the only times they had perceived him to take any sleep in all his illness while everyone was beating the shit out of an elderly woman.

That's good.

Yeah, I'm glad he rested easy during that period, but it's her who's consorting with the devil.

Like y'all, you're telling me the only time this man got sleep was when a elderly 60 year old woman because that's elderly back then.

Yeah, it's not elderly now, so don't come for me.

But back in the 1600s, that was you were, you were past your point of like, damn, look at you.

You were a wise one.

Exactly.

But they're beating a 60 year old woman.

This is so upsetting.

And he's sleeping soundly like a fucking baby, but she's the one consorting with the devil.

My God, everybody.

He's just living on his deathbed.

Like let's just look at what's happening here, but nobody's going to speak up.

But again, it was very, very long believed that to stop a witch from, you know, furthering any harm she was doing through magic or her spells was to physically restrain or stop her in some way.

My God.

And when Philip Smith finally died from his illness on January 10th, 1685, a group of young men set upon Mary Webster at her home.

They dragged her from her house and they hung her from a tree by her neck.

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Oh my God.

Yeah.

Yeah.

Now at this time, the gallows and trapdoor had not been invented yet.

So it is very likely and really the only way that they just hanged her from a tree and allowed her to strangle.

Oh my God.

Yeah.

I told you, this is a rough one.

Holy shit.

She lost consciousness.

And when they, when she was no longer moving, they cut her down.

They rolled her body in the snow for some time and then they finally buried her in the snow and left her for dead.

I am without words.

Yeah.

So what we've seen here is that obviously the men of Hadley, it was only men who did this by the way.

That checks.

The men of Hadley were obviously disappointed by the Boston's court decision and certain that Mary was guilty.

So they decided to enact mob justice and they figured they could just get rid of Mary Webster and that this gave them reason.

Once Philip Smith died, it was her fault.

They felt validated.

Picturing that in your head, they broke, I'm sorry, I'm not over this yet.

As you shouldn't be.

They broke into her home, dragged her out, probably hanged her from a tree on her own fucking property.

Probably.

And then rolled her and buried her in the snow.

So she'd probably likely died of hypothermia among other things.

Well, you know, it came to a big surprise to the men that when they came back, she didn't die.

What?

She was still alive.

What a bad bitch.

Yep.

And what's even better is that Mary Webster lived another 11 years before dying of natural causes in 1969 at around the age of 70 or so.

That's my girly right there.

Mary Webster said, fuck you.

She said Dave's Yags.

She said, fuck y'all, she said, fuck y'all, Dave's Yags.

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She said Philip Smith won't be seeing you for a while by holy cannoli.

I did not see that one coming.

Cotton Mather must have shit his dick and on that day, those men.

But I wouldn't give to be now and travel back there with just like an iPhone so you could just like record all their reactions and then pop back here and be like, check out these fuckers.

Assholes.

You know, they all like some of them cried.

Oh, my God.

It's like amazing that she was able to live that long and I'm so happy, but one to go through that and who knows where it ended.

I'm sure people were still breaking into her house and fucking with her after that.

But I'm like, fuck yeah, good for you living out the rest of your fucking days and being like, fuck all you.

Y'all be damned.

Like, damn.

Wow.

Mary Webster.

I didn't see that.

Yeah.

So, you know, the colonial witch trials up to and including those in Salem were definitely about power.

Oh, yeah.

A lot of it.

Obviously there were some cases like Sarah Bridgeman and Mary Parsons that were just jealousy, petty shit grievances, but they were fueled by a religious body as well that sought to use superstition, misogyny at the time, and great fear of the unknown to maintain their stronghold on the colonies.

So again, it goes right back to power and the end of everything.

And keeping everybody.

Keeping everyone in line.

Yeah, exactly.

But nobody, they don't want anyone speaking out against, they believe this, so you're going to believe it and you're going to shut the fuck up if you don't.

This was particularly true for our guy, Cotton Mather, who was one of the loudest and most aggressive proponents of the witch hunts in all of the colonial era.

Now, in 1689, he actually published the account of Philip Smith's illness and death, and he named Smith specifically, but he did not name Mary Webster.

He wouldn't name her.

Wonder why?

He used the account to, among other things, promote the righteousness and virtuousness of Smith and his efforts is, you know, his righteous efforts to rid Hadley of witchcraft.

And he also kept promoting the belief that the colony as a whole was just lousy with witches and practices and practitioners of black magic.

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And again, it's important to remember, like I said earlier, Cotton Mather was not a resident of Hadley.

And it's unlikely that he had ever been there before.

And he definitely didn't know Philip Smith.

Or Mary Webster.

So what the fuck is your, get out of everybody's business, bitch.

He's a busy body.

He didn't know Mary.

He didn't know Philip Smith.

He's never been to Hadley.

What are you doing?

Right.

And of course, he did include some documented facts about the case in his account.

But a lot of what he wrote was just biased, fictionalized shit, just bullshit, and very much just like preaching what he wanted to preach.

Of course.

He wasn't trying to give a historical account of something that happened.

He wanted something that would boost his argument in favor of witch hunting.

And unfortunately it worked.

Because as we know, just a few years later in 1692 and 1693, stories like that of Smith and Webster were used as supporting arguments for the outrageously barbaric witch trials in the village of Salem.

And it actually, again, it ended up being that it was a government-sanctioned murder of 19 people, which like when you really think of that, it's just like your brain can't even.

And most of them were young women who were guilty of literally nothing, but couldn't defend themselves because it was just this hysteric frenzied mob of people that were brought to that point by men like Cotton Mather.

Who were just like, insane.

There's no other way to say it.

Like we just let this group of assholes just create hysteria and then it's like, then these little girls who were fucking bored and everybody just decided, that's what it was, these little girls who are fucking bored and nasty, cruel little fucks.

And then these men who were trying to boost this argument anyways saw that and said, perfect, we can use this.

It's like it all worked together, just a bunch of assholes working together.

What a horrible time to be alive.

Truly.

And when the witch trials came to an end in the spring of 1693, public hysteria had died down and order had started to be restored because that was looked at even by them as like, what the fuck just happened.

And the truth came to light that these young women were, all the people, young women who had made the shit up about like the fits and being attacked inspectors and all that shit that they lied.

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They came forward and said, I made the whole thing up, I was bored.
And the public reaction was fucking horror and revulsion.
They couldn't believe what they had done.
They were like, I can't believe we've been taken so easily by all this bullshit.
How gullible have we been and how cruel have we been?
Like, damn, we suck to the point of murder.
We've murdered young women because we were just easily led.
But even after the order and sanity had been restored to Salem briefly, Cotton Mather and other of those guys, like that were part of this whole thing, some of the judges, some of the people that were into it.
Like the higher up people in society.
They were still advocating for further witch hunts and trials just to try to get that control back over the community.
And luckily they're like, you know, it was kind of at that point, they were kind of like ignored and everybody was like, now you're an asshole.
You have to chill the fuck out guys.
But you know, it's when you look back on it, you're like, wow, that's wild and it blows your mind.
But it's also when you look at 17th century colonies, hysteria is not that wild to think about because when you think about it, colonial life was miserable.
Yeah.
It was incredibly difficult.
Colonists often relied on that dichotomy of good and evil just to explain the hundreds of hardships and tragedies and oppression and awful shit that just fell into their laps on a normal daily basis.
Like their cows dying and hens coming through the roof and falling into boiling pots of water.
But and that is truth.
That is true that it was a shitty time, it was a shitty life, and they were just looking for something to believe in and they were using something else.
But we cannot take away that misinformation and the spread of it and misogyny also played an incredible role in that, incredible.
At the forefront I would say.
And even in the Boston Globe in 1977, Hal Clancy wrote that he talked about the story of Smith and Webster and he described Mary as quote, in 1977, he described her as quote, an aging spinster who wore rags, lived in a shack and got by brewing love potions and peddling hexes. She claimed to possess an evil eye that could dry up a cow at a blink.
Now he made this article has like some of like somewhat of like a humorous tone to it, but it's got tons of factual inaccuracies in it, lies, and it also just completely perpetuates what started the witchcrafts in the first place.
The witch trials.
Nothing.
This, I was like, that article just shows you, whoa, you just literally looked at that whole thing, you saw the lesson there and you just perpetuated it.
Man.

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Like he literally says, basically his view of the history of that whole thing was the only plausible explanation for why Mary Webster's neighbors believed her to be a witch and literally hanged her after she was acquitted for it was because she portrayed herself as such. She did it by being an old spinster, by working with herbs and non-traditional shit, by not being a pleasant flower, by not, you know, preaching whatever it is they wanted her to preach.

She did it.

Literally in 1977, this man is just learning zero.

I was like, holy shit, Massachusetts.

Yeah, that's embarrassing.

Like this Massachusetts is my girl.

Like I ride for her.

Massachusetts is my beast.

She's my bitch.

I love her.

I ride for her.

I love Massachusetts.

We ride it down for her.

But it's proof that some people did not learn from their own shit and it's like, get it together.

In 1977, to be like, she was a fucking witch.

I'm like, this is elderly abuse to like the highest level and you're like, she was a fucking witch.

She made love potions.

I'm like, I don't think they worked.

And also it's like, she was a witch.

They're basically just being like, I don't know, she portrayed herself as one, so.

She could dry up some cows.

Okay.

So should they have hung her from a tree?

And buried her in the snow?

Like are you, is that what you're saying?

You sure about that?

Like you're not sitting here saying like, wow, this six year old woman that was just like trying to live her life by herself, that people kept coming into her home and beating the shit out of her on a regular basis.

Don't act like a witch.

Don't act like a witch.

A damn howl.

Wow.

Damn.

You would, like that sounds like satire, but it's the Boston Globe.

Damn.

Wow.

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But yeah.

So that's the story of Mary Webster and a couple of other witches, but which is quote unquote.

Yeah.

Like that was, I don't know, that was, that was something that was wild and she lived setting.

But the fact that she was like, she lived y'all, I mean, it was like a triumph, but then it's like only a couple years later, we were like, and now for the Salem, which trials where it's going to be really bad.

My God.

Eventually, you know, eventually pouring out for all the witches out there.

Okay.

Yeah, truly.

You know, damn.

Holy shit.

But yeah.

I'm just like shook that that all of that happened.

And then however many years later, he was like, yeah, fuck her, right?

It's true.

Fuck her, right?

Yeah.

So that's the story of Half-Hanged Mary.

That's what she's referred to.

Wolf.

Yeah.

Well, with that, we hope that you keep listening and we hope you keep it weird.

And that's a weird that this because what?

Question mark?

Uh?

Don't be stupid.

Uh?

Think critically, please.

Get a life.

Think critically, please.

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