"I WILL BE YOUR ONLY WIFE, OR NO WIFE AT ALL!" (THE CRUCIBLE) "I'LL TAKE YOU TO THE STARS" (THE DRESSMAKER) HOW DO THE CRUCIBLE AND THE DRESSMAKER DEPICT THE COMPLEXITIES OF LOVE?

When love is tested by reality, it always fails. Blissful ignorance is the only mechanism of success in love, as once these relationships are placed in their respective environments, the "blind faith" in love unravels. Its complex nature leads to the triumphant retribution of Marigold, the dissolving love between John and Elizabeth, or the sacrificial gesture of Teddy. Love is placed inside patriarchal microcosms by both Ham and Miller, to present the danger of asymmetrical relationships. Internal behaviours threaten the survival of love. Jealousy, guilt and insecurity ensure that love can never prevail. Love is presented as an uncontrollable, and convoluted being that dies once placed into its reality.

Installing love into the insular patriarchies, tests the fortitude of love by empowering male figures. The overcoming addiction to power that male's face, shatters the balance needed for a relationship to thrive. The patriarchy that Ham evokes, places the power in Percival Almanac's hands, empowering his hatred for others. Due to their low social status, the "banal housewives in (the) rural province" fall victim to his disturbed actions. His actions of placing "itching powder" in faith's cream, threatening to send Molly to the sanatorium, and Mrs. Almanac's face "lined with pain" from years of abuse, suffocate any love these women could possess for him. Targeting powerful women who threaten his masculinity, triggers his wicked passion to stay in control. Whilst the patriarchy simply empowers Almanac, it creates the Reverend Parris who jeopardises love for power. Parris' "ministry is at stake, and perhaps (his daughter)". This phrasing choice by Miller illustrates Parris' prioritisation of his priesthood over his relationship with his only daughter. Without a patriarchy, Parris would not be the priest, indicated by the "faction sworn to drive (him) from (his) pulpit", as he is seen by many not to be fit for the job, as he "hardly ever mention(s) god any more". This creation of Parris' power, places complexity into his relationships, and ultimately evokes his rejection of reciprocal love, further illustrated by his daughter's life failing to be a priority when she cannot be woken. Ham portrays her dramatized male figures as intoxicated with power, and this addiction leads to an 'at any cost' mentality. This leads them to manipulate and dominate the powerless women in their lives, including their loved ones. Evan Pettyman "positions (Marigold) as he wants her", both metaphorically and physically, thus abusing Marigold's obedient love to ensure she does not fracture his power. This is furthered by the spoon-fed tonic, which sedates not only her body, but her thoughts too. After being placed in a systematically male-biased society, the once happy, smitten couple was tested by Evan's addiction to power. Miller and Ham present love to the complexity of the patriarchy, to illustrate that it can never win whilst male domination remains.

The entangled reality of love requires sacrifice to succeed. Ham and Miller present hyperbolized sacrifices to their audiences, to emphasise how complex love's survival truly is. Whether it is love from the society, a person, or a higher power, desperate measures are taken to grasp onto fleeting love. Abigail "clutches (onto John Proctor) desperately" as a means of survival; both for love, and her own self-preservation. After "placing the light in her eyes", Abigail was prepared to sacrifice everything for Proctor. Her newfound 'white' name, evoked from her now living with Reverend Parris was ready to be "blackened", just for his love. Her willingness to expose her sin of her sexual relations with a married man, and the possibility of being caught mid-spell, naked in the forest, just to capture Proctor's love, encapsulates the complexities of secret love. This drastic gesture is matched by Teddy's grand sacrifice to Tilly. Despite wanting to "take (her) to the stars", Teddy's dreams of his relationship with tilly (the thing he values most), is crushed,

when a leap to prove his love turns south. Whilst Abigail does not physically take her life for her lover, the importance of name in Salem, would metaphorically end her life. Proctor's strong objection to his name being tainted by the witch trials, to the extent that he would prefer to be hanged, indicates the vitality of a good name in Salem. This mentality translates to Abigail's situation, which effectively equates her sacrifice to Teddy's. While Miller's antagonistic representation of Abigail, conflicts the audience's perception of her relationship with Proctor, both teddy and Abigail sacrifice everything they care about, to prove their unsupported love is worth it. Furthermore, similar to Abigail, Teddy is willing to sacrifice his reputation to many, for the love of one. This conflicting decision is placed in both texts to illustrate just how complex and unattainable love is.

Inner demons present themselves as the final test of love's survival; a test that all will fail. The barrier evoked from internal guilt and insecurity implanted by Ham and Miller, clouds and weakens the feeling of love. Proctor's past infidelity manifests in his guilty-conscience, causing a constant strive to redeem himself. Offering to buy a "heifer", or walk the fields of lilacs, Proctor tries to 'break even' with his guilt, however the stress that this redemption places upon John and Elizabeth's relationship is the mechanism that unravels it. Only "receiving" john's kiss, illustrates "a sense of their separation", as he explains his "means to please (her)". Her lack of trust, paired with his thick bids at re-charming her, only further repels Elizabeth. However, her "courage" and defiance stop her from letting Abigail and Proctor be together, ensuring she'll be his "only wife, or no wife at all!". This infers that she will either remain a Proctor or not disturb insular Salem, or she will bruise his name so powerfully that he will never love again. This complex dance of love caused by internal issues, is also found in Ham's depiction of William and Trudy's relationship. Like John's guilt, Trudy's insecurity of status manifests, however she finds solace in her love with William, rather than more problems like proctor. William's Melbourne agricultural education proves him an "asset" to the town, and Trudy quickly wins him over "by allowing him to insert the middle finger". Based on Elsebeth's disgusted reaction to the marriage, Trudy uses William to boost her social status, illustrating that their relationship is founded upon Trudy's inner demon; her insecure nature. Despite her attempts to saviour his love by temporarily mending her insecurities, through having a child and transforming her appearance, William openly states that he "doesn’t love" his wife. John and Elizabeth's relationship was founded upon love, however the infrastructure of Trudy and William's relationship consequently leads to its downfall. Trudy uses love to satisfy her unworthiness, whereas proctors love fails, due to his insatiable need to redeem his infidelity. William and Elizabeth fall victim to their partner's insincerity in love, however their responses vastly differ. Ham realises William's retribution out of anger of Trudy's social injustice during her directorial role in the play, as a sedation and sanatorium admission for Trudy. Contrastingly, Elizabeth grows to forgive John, after his life is placed "at stake", as she recognises the continuity of the love that their relationship was founded upon. However this redemption does not ease Proctor's guilt. Nor does it stop him from choosing death, as another inner demon confronts proctor; the curse of a "blackened name". These inner demons poison love from the inside, and manifest until they ultimately lead to love's undoing.

Love is a complex entity that is tested by the authors in a multitude of ways. The patriarchal setting evokes an unbalanced foundation for love which is then furthered by the sacrifices needed to make love work in the real world. Inner demons corrupt intentions of love and lead to distrust and resentment. Theoretically, love can flourish between two people, however Ham and Miller infect love with realism. And because love becomes so complex when it is entangled in reality, it never survives.