

roots. She agrees to feign a scandalous betrothal to Sebastian Wengrave so as to overcome his father's objection to Sebastian's marriage to his true love, Mary Fitz-Allard. Moll is shown to be the victim of public prejudice. She proves to be honest and courageous; her reputation as a "cutpurse" is due to her having made a study of thieves' techniques and slanging speech (cant) so that she could serve as a conduit for the restoration of stolen property. What is more impressive to the modern reader, Moll turns out to be something of a feminist, challenging a brazen gallant, Laxton, to a duel because he has mistaken her open, friendly manners as a sign of whorishness.

m.31 Miller, Arthur *All My Sons*. 1947. In *Arthur Miller's Collected Plays*. New York: Viking, 1957.

■ In what the author calls a tragedy of "unrelatedness," Joe Keller does not recognize his kinship with the twenty-one airmen whom he has sent to their deaths by supplying cracked engine heads. Miller has explained the origin of the plot of *All My Sons* in a real-life incident: "During an idle chat in my living room, a pious lady from the Middle West told of a family in her neighborhood which had been destroyed when the daughter turned the father in to the authorities on discovering that he had been selling faulty machinery to the Army. The war was then in full blast. By the time she had finished the tale I had transformed the daughter into a son and the climax of the second act was full and clear in my mind."

m.32 ——— *The Crucible*. 1953. In *Arthur Miller's Collected Plays*. New York: Viking, 1957.

■ The central figure of *The Crucible* is a strong-willed historical victim of the Salem witch trials, John Proctor, who became enmeshed in the prosecutions while attempting to save the life of his wife, Elizabeth. He made the fatal error of arguing in his petition for transfer of the trials to Boston that the actions of the Puritan judges "are very like the Papish cruelties."

Miller turned to the Salem trials as affording a parallel to the hysteria of McCarthyism. He "wished for a way to write a play that would be sharp, that would lift out of the morass of subjectivism the squirming, single, defined process which would show that the sin of public terror is that it divests man of conscience, of himself." John Proctor, as recreated by Miller, keeps his conscience intact. After refusing adamantly to name others as consorting with the Devil, he withdraws at the last moment his own signed confession of guilt: "Because it is my name! Because I cannot have another in my life!" For a discussion of Longfellow's play on a similar theme, see L.34.

m.33 Mishima, Yukio [pseudonym of Hiraoka Kimitake] *The Temple of the Golden Pavilion*. New York: Knopf, 1959.

■ Yukio Mishima's novel, based on a shocking arson case of 1950, traces the growing resentment in the mind of an ugly young novice, Mizoguchi, of the worship of eternal beauty in the Zen Buddhist temple of Kinkakuji in Kyoto. His early obsession with looking at the temple yields to anxiety over the risk of its destruction by an American air raid. At the same time as he commits acts of sadism at the instigation of an American soldier, he