

Silence: A Novel



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BY JULIA PARK TRACEY

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“I am no witch, nor adulteress, thief, nor murderer. They say I have lost my reason, but I know only that my heart is shattered, and in crying it aloud, now I must pay the cost....”

After three grievous losses, Puritan woman Silence Marsh dares to question God aloud in the church, and that blasphemy lands her in trouble—she is silenced for a year by the powers that be. Broken in heart and spirit, Silence learns to mime and sign, but it isn't until a new Boston doctor, the dashing Daniel Greenleaf, comes to her backward Cape Cod village that she begins to hope again. Rather than treating Silence with bleeding or leeches, Dr. Greenleaf prescribes fresh air, St. John's Wort, long walks—and reading.

Silence has half a hope of getting through her year of punishment when the cry of witchcraft poisons the village. Colonial Massachusetts is still reeling from the Salem Witch Trials just 20 years before. Now, after demanding her silence, she is called to witness at a witchcraft trial—or be accused herself.

A whiff of sulfur and witchcraft shadows this literary Puritan tale of loss and redemption, based on the author's own ancestor, her seventh great-grandmother.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Author **Julia Park Tracey's** ancestors and their stories have given her a trail to follow from New York and New England to the deep south and the Pacific Coast. *The Bereaved: A Novel*, the story of her great great grandmother's loss of her children to the Orphan Train was named in the top 100 indie books published in 2023 by Kirkus Reviews. Christian Kiefer, author of the newly released *The Heart of it All*, said: "In *The Bereaved*, Julia Park Tracey reopens America's wounds in prose that is propulsive and resonant. Theodore Dreiser comes to mind, but so, too, the fine contemporary novels of Jo Baker and Maggie O'Farrell."



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