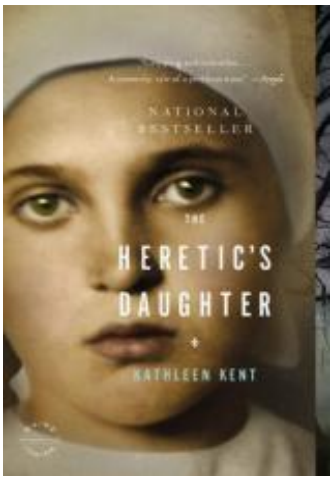
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The Heretic's Daughter

by Kathleen Kent



About the Book

Martha Carrier was one of the first women to be accused, tried and hanged as a witch in Salem, Massachusetts. Like her mother, young Sarah Carrier is bright and willful, openly challenging the small, brutal world in which they live. Often at odds with one another, mother and daughter are forced to stand together against the escalating hysteria of the trials and the superstitious tyranny that led to the torture and imprisonment of more than 200 people accused of witchcraft. This is the story of Martha's courageous defiance and ultimate death, as told by the daughter who survived.

Discussion Guide

1. How was Sarah changed by living with her cousin Margaret? How was she changed by returning to her family?

2. What was it about Martha's character that seemed to antagonize so many neighbors?

3. What do you think was the most compelling reason that Martha was eventually brought to trial?

4. Discuss the various factors that lead to the witch hysteria.

5. Why did Martha choose to take a stand of innocence knowing that a refused confession meant death?

6. Why did Thomas, despite his size and capabilities, not seek to persuade or deter Martha from her course of action?

7. Why did the community of Salem, and the magistrates, so easily believe in and rely on "spectral evidence??

8. How has reading the book changed your opinions about the men and women hanged as witches?

9. Are there modern day "witches??

10. Can we, or should we, redefine the meaning of the word "witch"?

Author Bio

Kathleen Kent is the author of BLACK WOLF, THE PLEDGE, THE BURN and the Edgar Award-nominated THE DIME, as well as three bestselling historical novels: THE HERETIC'S DAUGHTER, THE TRAITOR'S WIFE and THE OUTCASTS. Kent lives in Dallas, TX.

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