

## BURNING LITE

LOGLINE: A movie short. In a medieval English town MILDRED HAWKINS, 30, who has a mannish face and a boyish figure, stands accused of witchcraft. She still has attitude despite her predicament. The town crier behaves like a master-of-ceremonies who wants to put on a good show.

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FADE IN:

EXT: A TOWN IN MEDIEVAL ENGLAND.

DAY:

People make their way to the courtyard.

MINSTREL (OC)

Plays a lute as he  
happily sings.

They're going to behead,  
They're going to behead,  
Behead is a way to make one dead,  
They're going to behead,

With a blade stroke down they'll  
remove a crown,  
They're going to behead,  
They're going to behead,

CUT TO:

The Minstrel has his head on a block as he plays his lute.

MINSTREL

Smiles as he plays  
his lute sings.

They're going to behead,  
They're going to behead,  
Behead is a way to make one dead,  
They're going to behead,

The blade swings around and then  
comes down,  
Then rolls down the head,  
Then rolls down the head.

CUT TO:

EXECUTIONER

Swings his ax.

CUT TO:

The CROWD, a mixture of medieval people, looks on in silence. There is the sound of a chop and a head falling.

CROWD

Thunderous applause.

CUT TO:

MILDRED HAWKINS, 30, she has a mannish face and a boyish physique. She is wearing common clothing. Her feet are in stocks. Standing next to her is the TAVERN OWNER, middle aged.

TAVERN OWNER

Just remember you represent the Pigs Guts Tavern so act appropriately. A single blood curdling screech is acceptable but none of that insufferable whimpering. It's best if you take it like a man.

MILDRED HAWKINS

In a stern voice.

Do I look like a man?

OWNER

Quibbles.

Well in some angles and light.

EXECUTIONER, unlocks the stocks and pulls Mildred away.

MILDRED (tracking)

To the Owner.

What about my pay?

OWNER

In a happy voice.

Pay day is on Friday.

The Executioner takes Mildred to a stake and ties her to it. Nearby is the TOWN CRIER who was a scroll in his hand.

TOWN CRIER

Reads from the  
scroll.

Lords and ladies, knaves and  
winches, and assorted low lives.  
Now is our main event.

KNIGHT (OC)

Stop!

MILDRED

Shows relief then  
speaks under her  
breath.

It's about bloody time.

KINGHT, about 30, a handsome man with strong features, riding on a white charger stops just behind the crowd.

KNIGHT

Is there an innocent, fair young maiden here who is wrongfully accused?

TOWN CRIER

Hesitates momentarily the points to Mildred.

MILDRED

Smiles and makes a curtsy as best she can.

KNIGHT

Rolls his eyes and moves his head in disgust. He spots GORGEOUS WOMAN in the crowd.

GORGEOUS WOMAN, about 20 with a beautiful face and a voluptuous figure.

GORGEOUS WOMAN

Smiles and flirts with her eyes.

KNIGHT

Reaches out his  
hand. When  
GORGEOUS WOMAN  
grabs his hand he  
takes her up on his  
horse. He wheels  
his horse around  
and takes off in a  
gallop.

CUT TO:

MILDRED

Shouts

Do you really think she's  
innocent?

KNIGHT (OC)

Shouts

Do you really think I care?

OLD WOMAN

Burn the witch!

CRIER

Now that the hag has spoken we may  
proceed. The fair young maiden  
Mildred Hawkins -

CROWD

Subtle laughter.

MILDRED

Gives a defiant  
look and slaps her  
hand onto her  
forearm.

CRIER

Stands accused of practicing  
witchcraft, engaging in the black  
arts, and cavorting with the devil.

MILDRED

Can't you even pronounce the word  
right, idiot?

CRIER

I can't say that word with  
children about.

CUT TO:

BOY and GIRL, about 6 with light blond hair, step in front of  
the crowd.

CUT TO:

MILDRED

Smiles and wiggles  
her fingers at the  
children.

GIRL

Will you suffer terribly when they  
burn you?

MILDRED

Yes, I'm afraid I will.

BOY & GIRL

Smile and face each  
other.

Oh goodie!

MILDRED

Through her teeth.

What charming little monsters.

STRAW STACKER 1 & STRAW STACKER 2 each get a bale of straw and  
stack them by Mildred. Then go to the straw stack for more  
straw.

MILDRED

Annoyed.

Do you mind? What if I'm  
acquitted?

STRAW STACKER 1

Sarcastically.

Like that's going to happen.

CRIER

She's quite right.

The Straw Stackers stop stacking the straw.

CRIER



The verdict is to be determined in trial by combat. Championing the interest of the Crown is HERMAN THE HEAD SMASHER.

HERMAN THE HEAD SMASHER, large and very muscular, comes out from behind the curtain. He has a sword in one hand and a mace in the other.

HERMAN THE HEAD SMASHER

Roars and knocks  
the head of a  
target dummy with  
his mace.

CRIER

Jumps back.

Holy!

Straw stacker 1 and Straw stacker 2 resume stacking the straw.

Crier

Regains his  
composure.

Who will champion the fair maiden  
Mildred Hawkins?

Scans the crowd.

Knights, squires, peasants,  
beggars, anyone.

Apologetically to  
Mildred in a low  
voice

I'm sorry about this. You know if you say you're a man you could champion yourself.

MILDRED

Disgusted.

Just light the fire.

CRIER

Since no one steps forward to champion the fair maiden Mildred Hawkins the verdict is guilty by default. Executioner proceed.

OLD WOMAN

Burn witch!

The executioner tosses a lit torch onto the straw.

CRIER

It would make a good show if you cast a hex right now.

MILDRED

You mean like turning her into a toad.

CRIER

That's not much of a hex.

MILDRED

Yells.

Your descendants will have bad  
teeth and ugly noses!

CRIER

Good one. You know a wicked  
cackle would really be a good way  
to top this off.

MILDRED

Oh why not.

Cackles wickedly.

CUT TO:

Smoke and black smoke are floating in the air. The Town Crier is  
with the Straw Stackers.

STRAW STACKER 1

Have you seen where the Hag went?

CRIER

No.

Looks down and sees  
a toad.

FADE OUT:

THE END