AN ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS’ CONFLICTS IN
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE’S NOVEL “THE SCARLET LETTER”

A THESIS

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AUTHOR’S DECLARATION

I, Hermina Napitupulu declare that I am the sole author of this thesis. Except where reference is made in the text of this thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or awarded another degree.

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Background of Analysis

Literature means writing valued as work of art. It also refers to the composition that tells stories, dramatizes, situations, expresses emotions, analyzes and advocates. Richard Taylor says:

“Literature, like other arts, is essentially an imaginative act of the writer’s imagination in selecting, ordering, and interpreting life experiences.” (1981:1)

Generally, literature can be divided into play, novel and poetry. In this thesis, focus on novel. Richard Taylor (1981:46) says:

“Novel is a normally a prose work with a quite length complexity which attempts to reflect an express something of the quality of value of human experience.”

In other words, novel is long prose works with a great amount of detail on every page. The effect of this detail is that the readers can recognize the complex reality of a character or event in the story.

. According to Robert (1993:20) character is the persons presented in dramatics of narrative work who are interpreted by reader as being endowed with the moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say and what they do in action. From the statement above it can be concluded that character is the way of life on human being. Conflict seems to be natural for
human being because man can not escape from it. It happens so because man can not fulfill all he desires completely. Where the choices fail to satisfy the complete desire, the result will be conflict. Thus, conflict is a matter of choices which results sense of disappointment.

Marcus (2000:366) defines that conflict is incompatibility of ideas, beliefs, roles, needs, desires, values, and so on. While Sanderson (1991:505) defines conflict as an opposition of interest between and among various individuals and social groups, which may or may not be overtly observable, and which may or may not break out into open dispute or physical violence.

In this thesis, I only focus in the main characters’ conflict of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel “The Scarlet letter”. This novel is about the terrible impact a single, passionate act has on the lives of three members of the community: the defiant Hester Prynne; the fiery, tortured Dimmesdale; and the obsessed, vengeful Chillingworth. The unforgettable Hester Prynne with her illegitimate baby, Pearl, clutched in her arms and forced to wear the letter “A” the mark of an adulteress, embroidered in scarlet thread on her bosom as punishment for her sin, discovers strength in the face of ostracism and emerges as a heroine ahead of her time.

This novel is dominantly expressing conflicts experienced by the characters, or the main characters. They are trapped to solve their conflict which appear internally and externally. This is the background as well as one reason why this topic is analyzed in this thesis.
1.2. The Problem of Analysis

The statement of problems in the thesis are:

1. How are the main characters’ inner conflict portrayed in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel “The Scarlet Letter”?

2. How are the main characters’ outer conflict portrayed in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel “The Scarlet Letter”?

1.3. The Objectives of the Analysis

The writer hopes the problems above can be accomplished by these objectives:

1. To explain the main characters’ inner conflict portrayed in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel “The Scarlet Letter”

2. To explain the main characters’ outer conflict portrayed in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel “The Scarlet Letter”

1.4. The Scope of the Analysis

After reading the Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel, The Scarlet Letter, I found that there are many interesting conflicts that can be discussed. But, I just discuss the main characters’ conflict of Hester Prynne, Dimmesdale, Chillingworth and Pearl as in the inner and outer conflict in The Scarlet Letter.
1.5. Significance of the study

Theoretically, the significance of this analysis is to increase the literary understanding in terms of literary works and character through novel and to describe the portrayal of conflict in novel “The Scarlet Letter”. Practically, it has significance for the readers to understand the meaning of conflict.

1.6. The Method of the Analysis

In writing a thesis, there are two kinds of research which can be applied. The first kind is library research, that is a kind of research where the researcher gains the data from books and other references which have relationship with the object of investigation. The second kind of research is field research. In this research, the writer collects the data or information from people in social life, but I only focus on library research.

In writing this thesis, the writer has applied library research to get information and to collect the data by selecting books, which are relevant to the topic. There are some steps in writing this thesis. First, the writer read the novel. Next, she would try to find the main character conflict in that novel. Then, the writer analyzed the text one by one. After that, the data are grouped according to the components of each process. Finally, the writer would draw some conclusion based on the analysis.
1.7. The Review of Related Literature

In supporting the analysis about the conflict characters in Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel “The Scarlet Letter”, I use some books as references, which are related to the novel, such as:

- ‘Theory of Literature,’ Rene Wellek and Austin Warren. This book contains extrinsic and intrinsic approaches to the study of the literature as the method of analyzing the literary works.
- Literature: An introduction to reading and Writing by Edgar Robert and Henry E. Jacob (1955). This book is about the detail explanation of kinds and genres of literature and also discuss about the element of literature.
- ‘Literature: an introduction to novel, poetry and play,’ X.J. Kennedy. This book explains the introduction of studying and appreciation of the novel, poem, and play. Even it has ways to write the three major genres.
- ‘The Scarlet Letter’, Nathaniel Hawthorne. This novel has so many conflicts to discuss, that’s way I am so interesting to analyze that.
CHAPTER II
CLARIFICATION OF TERMS

2.1 General Concept of Novel

There are three major genres of literature poetry, prose, and drama, in which each genre has its own characteristic. In this point, will explain briefly about novel because this genre is the main object in this thesis.

David Grambs (1982:78) mentions in his book extended narrative that tells a story, or uses incidents to dramatize human experience and individual characters. Taylor (1981:62) also says that novel is a prose work of quiet some length and complexity which attempts to reflect and express something of the quality or value of human experience or conduct. A novel according to Reeve (1975:26) is novel a picture of real and manners and of the time in which it was written.

A novel according to the encyclopedia of American International (http://en. Encyclopedia of American International.org literary_novel.14/12/2009) is “Novel tells of even within the range of ordinary of experience and avoids supernaturalism and their stories are original, not traditional or mythic. Novel plots involve numerous character, who usually are not grad or heroic figures often quit the opposite. Most novels use language close to that of the colloquialism of normal daily speech, frequently including jargon, slang, and humorous expression.”
Novel can portray characters and actions which represent of real life dealing with human life, passion or ambition, desire, joy, sadness, feeling, thought, egoism and many related to human life.

In analyzing a novel, one should apply a series of steps in order to get better understanding about the novel, about the theme, plot, characters and setting.

THEME

Theme is simply the moral of your story. It is the message you wish to convey or the lesson you want the reader to learn. Theme is revealed through the values of characters when confronting obstacles and resolving conflict in pursuit of their goal. It can be considered the foundation and purpose of your novel. Without purpose, the story becomes trivial.

CHARACTERIZATION

Perhaps the single most important aspect of a good novel is characterization. The reader must care about your characters in order to care about what happens to them. To achieve this, your characters must be three-dimensional. Like real people, characters have hopes and fears, strengths and weaknesses, and one or more objectives. Even if you don't use all of the information, it helps to write down as many details about your characters as
possible. One way to go about this is to use one of the many character guides that are available.

**PLOT**

Plot is the movement in a story toward the resolution. Nothing happens at random. Every scene should further your plot. Plot is shown through the actions and agendas of your characters. Throughout the story, they overcome obstacles until they finally reach their goal(s). If the novel is well plotted, the stakes will get higher and higher thereby creating tension.

**POINT OF VIEW**

Point of view is who is telling the story. This can be done several ways. In first person, one character is speaking in the "I" voice. Second person, which uses "you," is the least common point of view. Third person, which can be handled in a variety of ways, is the most often used method. In third person limited, the narrator can only go inside the head of the character telling the story. This requires the character to be in every scene which must be told through their eyes. Third person omniscient gives the author the most freedom. Using this, the author can have different point of view characters for different scenes.

**SETTING**

Setting is another aspect traditionally included in analysis of prose fiction, and it is relevant to discussion of other genres. The term ‘setting’ about
the location, historical period, and social surrounding in which the action of the next develops. Setting can be defined as the place and period of the story, the canvas on which dramatic events are drawn in details.

All these elements built a qualified completeness of literary value. One of the elements is character. People in a novel are related to characters; they are members of society, and the author’s distinctive view of how people are related to society and reflected in the presentation of every character.

A novel can be analyzed from several of point of view. It can be analyzed from the moral, social, and religious points of view. In this case, is interested in discussing about the conflict that is dominant in this novel, which it will related to moral and social life.

**General Concept of Character**

Character is very important in real-made creation of literary works such as novel, drama or even some of poems. The nature of character presentation brings a positive impact for readers to find out what is going on and what is it for. Since, the character mirrors quality of person. It can be traced to generalize opinion for man in general. Robert (1983:20) declares that:

“Characters are the persons presented in dramatics of narrative work, who are interpreted by reader as being endowed with the moral and dispositional qualities that are expressed in what they say and what they do in action.”
In fiction, a character may be defined as a verbal representation of human being. Through action, speech, description, and commentary, authors portray characters who are worth caring about rooting for, an even loving, although there are also characters to be laughed, dislike or even hated to quote Robert (1993:131).

Di-Yanni (1990:36) explores how the literary writer presents and reveals the character. He generalizes and lists methods of revealing character in fiction. Firstly, it is narrative summary without judgment. Secondly, it is narrative description with implied or explicit judgment; thirdly, it is about surface details of dress and physical appearance; fourthly, it is about characters actions of what they do and the characters speech of what they say and how they say it; and finally, it is about the characters consciousness of what they think and feel.

There can be simplified that character in fiction is a description or representation of a person qualities. The creation or delegation of character or characters in touch with the actions, gesture, or speeches exiting in the work by so doing, character is a fictions living person that has personal qualities of a real person has.

Not so far different from what the expert say, Millie and Yates (1982:228) declare that, there are at least six methods by which an author can show the characters. They are:

- By what the person say
- By what some one else says
- By his or her action
• By indicating his or her thoughts
• By the way that other people treat him or her
• By the author’s direct words:

A character in a work of fiction may realize in a character in a work of in a number of ways. Character, after all, has been constructed to make out reported actions the words they are give to say and the commentary made of on them by their creator. Something must depend on how they are presented.

**General Concept of Conflict**

Conflict is one of social process which happened in our life which involves some of people or group of people which challenge each other which has inviolacy impact. Actually conflict comes from, cooperation and competition. If competition appears in the middle of our life, maybe can not find conflict. Conflict is must happen in human life. Conflict is not always has negative impact. With the conflict, people can get the best solution in every problem that happened in human life. Sociologically, cooperation and competition do not always work together. When cooperation and competition do not run well, the tendency of conflict happens is greater. Conflict is disappointed situation when the desired wants do not come true. Thus, conflict may have positive and negative aspect. It is positive if the conflict has been resolved in mutual way. And it will be negative if the conflict brings chaotic situation or even disaster.
In extreme, conflict can happen not only to survive and exist but it has the purpose to destroy and to destroy the existence other people or other group that they feel as their enemy.

Based on its role, conflict has the main role in a prose fictions works. One of well definition of conflict, can be drawn easily. One of the well definitions of conflict is as state by Robert (1995:1694);

“Conflict is the opposition between two characters, between large groups of people or between protagonist and large forces such as natural object, ideas, modes of behavior, public opinion, and the like. Conflict may also be internal and physiological, involving choices facing a protagonist.”

To Robert, the conflict is also the sub elements that cause the doubt, create tension and produce the interest of the prose fictions work.

According to Stanford (1999:40), conflicts means a struggle between to opposing forces may be in form of a class of action, ideas, desire and will. Conflict is also a struggle between desires within a person of struggle of a character against him or herself conscience, his or her guilt or simply to decide what he is going to do. In other words, the opponent is he or herself. In daily life, a person is confronted with many problems and obstacles. In process of achieving and maintaining his or she often involve in his or her own conflict. In this kinds of conflict, he or she is facing a kind of complicated situations in which he or she should choose the best alternative according to his/her own consideration.
2.3.1 Outer Conflict

Outer conflict indicates conflicts affecting two or more parties in the physical world. Outer conflict is the conflict between two persons or group, in one of which the hero is the kind person.

Outer conflict may also place between a person and force beyond that person. The outer conflict is always won by the end the opposite group is always the loser.

The outer conflict is mostly found in the Greek and modern tragedy. In Greek tragedies, the heroes like unequal battles with the faith and destiny that drives them relentlessly on to their fate. Outer conflicts are those obstacles that prevent a character from achieving an outer goal. In modern tragedy, the heroes fight for the hopelessness, the battles with the society like its age old customs, convention and rules.

Outer conflict can be divided into four:

1. The conflict between character and others characters
2. The conflict between character and society
3. The conflict between character and nature
4. The conflict between character and his God

As stated above, I recognize that external conflict may be classified into three groups, they are: conflict between man versus man, conflict between a man versus his environment or social force (community, school, church, workable, society, etc) and conflict between man and God. However, the conflict between
characters and other characters appear with their own images and attitudes which may lead them into a conflict. Many popular fictions are based on this conflict.

The conflict between character and society is in which a character’s, or group of main character’s: main source of conflict is social traditions or concepts. It is a struggle between man and social value in his society. In this kind of conflict, the character can come into conflict with the moral principles of society such as traditions, customs, laws, moral codes and accepted beliefs. A struggle against society occurs when a character is at odds with a particular social force or condition produced by society, such as poverty, political revolution, a social convention or set of values.

The conflict between character and nature place is a character against forces of nature and also means a character has from himself separated from nature. It is also strong about struggling for survival in remote locales. In this case the character faces a problem with some force of nature such as cold, storm, radiation. The world seems to be outside, and people seem to be strangers in this world. The world is not going to be reconciled, if they are not going to obey it laws. Because of a conflict of our individuality with the universal nature, people suffer various pains- hunger and thirst, heat and cold and death.

The conflict between character and his God. In this case, the character faces a problem with a force such as fate, God, or luck (good and bad)
2.3.2 Inner Conflict

Inner conflict is the conflict which goes on within the mind of the hero and between him and a goal he has set himself. Inner conflict provides an unstable basis for positive results in the outside world, as he often chooses some aspects of outer environment to match the group within. People who notice that they have repeated negative aspects, may find that understanding they self is a basis for better results.

Thus, inner conflict is more important than the outer conflict since inner conflicts that take place within one person’s mind. Inner conflict are those obstacles that prevent a character from achieving any kind of inner development, growth or even self-worth. In this case, the character faces a physical or emotional problem or struggle. Inner conflict uses up a great deal of energy. There is a drive to do something and brake on it at the same time. It is like having a herd of wild horses jumping around in a little pen. That energy has to move or it will explode or make us tense and sick.

A character’s inner conflict is not just being into minds about something, not just being torn between obvious incompatibles but is about being in a new situation where old attitudes and habits war with delay the need for change. A character’s inner conflict can be between what people thinks they want and what they really want. Conflict must always be resolved, and everything people create need its conclusions.
Internal conflict as a struggle between competing elements within the character, aspect of his/her personality may struggle for dominance. These aspects may be emotional, intellectual and moral. For example: an “emotional” conflict would occur if the protagonist choose an unworthy lover over someone who is devoted. An “intellectual” conflict could entail accepting or rejecting one’s religion. A “moral” conflict might pose a choose between honoring family or country. Such conflict typically leaves the character indecisive and agitated. When such conflicts are resolved, the resolution may be successful or unsuccessful.

All of the explanations above are very essential for me to analyze novel. In this analyzes, uses the outer and inner conflict.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

3.1 The Research Method

Each scientific writing should have a certain kind of method to analyze the problem that is taken. So does this thesis. It uses an approach to discover accurate information about main character’s conflict on Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel entitled “The Scarlet letter”. Data collected can be analyzed using statistical technique and would also be considered quantitative descriptive research. Descriptive research involves describing and interpreting events, conditions or situations of the present. Generally, findings and conclusions only apply to the sample studied. Descriptive research can use qualitative or quantitative methods to describe or interpret a current event, condition and situation.

The research was conducted by two ways; the first way is library research which is done by reading some references related to it and the second way is field research which is done by analyzing the novel.

3.2 The technique for Collecting Data

The data and supporting information are collected by reading all references. Of course, the first step is to read the novel, The Scarlet Letter, as the main source. I read the novel for several times to understand the novel clearly. The I also read other supporting sources related to the topic as mention above.
3.2 The Technique of Analyzing Data

The next step is to analyze the primary data is *Nathaniel Hawthorne’s novel The Scarlet Letter*. The analysis is carried out with the help of other supporting data. The analysis is still in draft form because it may undergo some changes later.
CHAPTER IV
AN ANALYSIS OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS’ CONFLICTS IN
NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE’S NOVEL “THE SCARLET LETTER”

4.1 Hester Pryne, Dimmesdale, Chillingworth and Pearl’s Inner Conflicts

Inner Conflict of Hester Pryyne

Hester Prynne is like a Swiss Army Knife. She constantly makes herself useful, and she is powerful. She uses her innate talents and gifts to transform the meaning of her punishment, and she ultimately becomes a legend in her Puritan society. She is sharp as a knife, adventurous (she crosses the big blue ocean alone, leaving her family behind to live on the frontier), and she is a self-sufficient single mother in one of the gloomiest, most austere moments in America’s history. She finds a way to support her daughter in a time when women were expected to either serve men through marriage or to serve God. She pretty much rocks our world.

At the start of the book, Hester is a young woman with a newborn baby. She has been alone in New England for the past two years because her husband, a wealthy scholar from England, sent her ahead to the Massachusetts Bay Colony while he took care of business at home. The arrival of a baby was sufficient evidence to convict her of adultery. It is difficult to know what kind of person Hester was before the book begins. However, the book opens with her sudden acknowledgment of shame as she stands before a crowd of citizens and realizes, for the first time, that she wears a scarlet A on her dress for all to see her guilt.

For seven years, Hester is weighed down with the burden of guilt and humiliation over her sin and over the public nature of her punishment. Yet, she makes the curious choice to stay in the community where everyone scorns her. Although the narrator never explains why she chooses to remain, he does suggest that people tend to stay near the places where they’ve experienced a significant event that has changed their lives.

Hester chooses to give to the poor, despite her own poverty and despite the fact that the poor also look down on her as a sinful woman. This could be a part of her personal penance, but her generosity also suggests that she is a woman with naturally charitable instincts. She works so diligently and is so kind to others that people begin to reinterpret the scarlet letter. They note that Hester is very capable, and that there is clearly goodness in her – the kind of goodness that protects people from evil.
At the end of seven years, Hester comes to understand that her failure to identify Roger Chillingworth publicly as her husband has cost her lover, Dimmesdale, much anguish and guilt. She realizes that her sin has been tripled: not only did she commit adultery and sin against her husband, but her sin has twisted and corrupted her husband’s soul as he seeks revenge. What’s more, her failure to warn the Reverend Dimmesdale has led to his downfall.

Hester’s conscience is acute, and she feels deeply the wrong she has done to others. However, it is also true, as the narrator points out, that in her isolation, Hester has been wandering in a moral wilderness. Thus, when Dimmesdale claims that he does not have the strength to evade Chillingworth’s evil plan, it is easy for her to suggest that they escape together. This denial of society’s basic mores is evidence that the "scarlet letter" has not done its work, claims the narrator.

(We’d like to point out here that the narrator is somewhat inconsistent. First, he judges Puritan style punishments to be too harsh, then he suggests that Hester Prynne has changed the meaning of the scarlet letter through her diligence and hard work. Yet, the narrator next tries to convince us that Hester has been wandering in a moral wilderness, after all, and that the past seven years of isolation have prepared her for this moment where she quickly jumps on sin’s bandwagon.)

Ultimately, after the death of both Dimmesdale and Chillingworth, Hester is able to escape her identity as a fallen woman. She and Pearl spend many years in the Old World (England). Yet, when she returns to Boston at long last, she voluntarily takes up the scarlet letter A.

There are many possible interpretations for why she does this, but the narrator offers the opinion that Hester returns because the Massachusetts Bay Colony is where "real life" has occurred for her. "Here had been her sin; here, her sorrow; and here was yet to be her penitence." (24.11). So we are able to see Hester’s spirit grow and change over the course of her life.

Read Hester Prynne's Timeline >

**Inner Conflict of Dimmesdale**

Reverend Dimmesdale is one troubled (and multi-faceted) man. A brilliant speaker, a kind man, a wise reverend – everyone loves this guy. He’s pretty much a rock star in the Massachusetts Bay Colony (and that doesn’t seem like such an easy feat in Puritan society). Howsoever, he was also Hester’s illicit lover and the father of her child, Pearl. He remains silent about his sin, even while he publicly urges Hester to reveal the name of her lover.
The narrator indicates that Dimmesdale is one of those individuals who secretly practices self-flagellation (basically, beating himself) to punish himself for his sin. This suggests that he is susceptible to shame, but secretive about it; he prefers to punish himself rather than to be punished by others. It also leaves open the question that emerges later: did Dimmesdale create the mark on his chest himself, or was it put there by the Black Man (Satan), or did it emerge on his skin because of the struggle occurring in his soul?

Dimmesdale is a hypocrite through much of the book. He remains the respected and saintly minister on the outside, but his conscience eats away at him until he can hardly stand himself. He wants people to see him for who he really is. Though he tries to confess his sins to the congregation, they do not take him seriously, because he is never specific about the sins he has committed.

For seven years, Dimmesdale is silent, and his health declines as a result. Today, we would maybe say he’s depressed, and that his depression is so bad that it becomes fatal. In Christian theology, sin leads to death unless an individual accepts God’s free gift of forgiveness (this is the concept of grace). In Dimmesdale’s case, unconfessed sin literally drives him to his demise.

For a few moments, really just two days, we see Dimmesdale turn away from his former commitment to Christian ideals and morality. His decision to run away with Hester leaves him open to all sorts of suggestions from the Black Man. Ultimately, however, Dimmesdale’s better self reasserts itself. Although he has taken seven years to reach the point where he recognizes he is destroying himself with his guilt, the moment does finally arrive.

The Reverend Dimmesdale represents a weak man who sins but fails to accept public condemnation for his sin. His subsequent hypocrisy, however, eats away at him until his health fails. Recognizing that death is imminent, he chooses to purify his soul at the last minute by confessing his sin publicly and revealing the scarlet letter A that has appeared on his chest over his heart. The symbol on his skin suggests that, though we may hide our sins as best we can, they will always surface and be revealed.

**Inner Conflict of Pearl**

Pearl is kind of like Jack-Jack at the end of The Incredibles. Remember how, upon being kidnapped, Jack-Jack transforms into some crazy things, like a mini devil with sharp teeth and horns? While Pearl never undergoes that significant of a physical transformation, she is a very moody girl. A mood ring would get a workout if it ever had to predict her emotions. Hester learns very early on that her daughter has a mind of her own.
After testing both smiles and frowns, and proving that neither mode of treatment possessed any calculable influence, Hester was ultimately compelled to stand aside, and permit the child to be swayed by her own impulses. Physical compulsion or restraint was effectual, of course, while it lasted. As to any other kind of discipline, whether addressed to her mind or heart, little Pearl might or might no be within her reach, in accordance with the caprice that ruled the moment. (6.4)

“Caprice,” is the key word here – it means the tendency to be unpredictable. You never know what Pearl is going to say or do, and she always does exactly what she wants. But can we blame Pearl for being such a live wire? She was born in a prison. Her mother is the most scorned person in all of Massachusetts Bay Colony, and the reason why she is the most scorned person is that she had a child (Pearl) out of wedlock. Pearl has no friends aside from her mother. She is alone and has been alone since day one. This isolation gives her a unique perspective on her society’s cultural and social customs.

Pearl is a smart cookie. But not book smart – more like creepy, can-read-your-mind, Matilda smart. Her perceptiveness can verge on clairvoyance (or, in other words, psychic-ness) at times, but often we readers are grateful to her for voicing our very thoughts or for getting down to the heart of the matter. Although the gossips of the town repeatedly suggest that Pearl, as an illegitimate child, is evil at heart or the daughter of demons, she’s really just seems to be a high-spirited girl, extra sensitive to what is going on in the hearts, minds, and spirits of others. She is often referred to as a fairy, an elf, “an airy sprite,” “a spirit,” or (sometimes) “an imp of evil.”

Pearl has a deep connection to the scarlet letter. She does not understand why Hester wears the letter A but she is very used to it – in fact, she has never known her mother without it. It gives her comfort. She sometimes teases her mother about the letter or about how society views her, but she loves and supports her mom.

She’s really good at goading and prodding the adults around her. With her incredible intuition, she can pick up on dishonesty and on people’s fears and lies. She’s kind of like a walking lie detector. Sometimes, she’s not so friendly and takes pleasure in rubbing things in. When Hester tries to remove the scarlet letter after she and Dimmesdale decide to run away together, Pearl refuses to have anything to do with her until her mom puts the letter back on again.

Pearl’s knowledge and understanding of her mother seems completely tied to the scarlet letter – she’s watched her mother wear the letter and suffer on account of it every single day – it’s almost like a third member of the family. The scarlet letter claimed Pearl as its own when her own father (Arthur Dimmesdale would not). Pearl constantly asks her mother what it means and why she has to wear it,
and while she may know the answers to these questions, it seems almost like Pearl has an affection and attachment to her mother’s punishment. A psychologist would have a field day with Pearl – she’s got a lot going on in that brain of hers.

As Hester and Dimmesdale plan their escape, our narrator powerfully describes Pearl as “the living hieroglyphic” that connects the two of them and that reveals “the secret they so darkly sought to hide” (19.3). She’s like a symbol or an equation that, if someone were to solve her, would reveal the whole truth of Hester and Dimmesdale’s love affair. In many ways, Pearl is exactly like the scarlet letter. Both represent a sin.

Pearl insists that people be truthful, especially Dimmesdale. Other than Roger Chillingworth, she is the only character in the novel who instinctively recognizes and punishes Dimmesdale’s hypocrisy by refusing to kiss him and by washing off the kiss he gives her. She is also the person who offers him mercy and forgiveness when he has finally confessed his sin.

While we never see Pearl again following this confession, we know that she becomes a very wealthy heiress who settles in Europe. More importantly, however, we learn that she takes good care of her mother. For when Hester returns alone to the Puritan society that rejected her for so long, she continually receives lavish gifts and expressions of love from her daughter. Despite her moody, high-strung, and unpredictable behavior, one thing is for certain: Pearl loves her mom.

**Inner conflict of Roger Chillingworth**

Mr. Prynne had been an intellectual, a scholar, who loved Hester dearly and convinced her that she would be happy by his side, despite the fact that she was young and he was so old. When he returns after a two-year absence to discover her adultery, however, he decides to keep his identity a secret from the townspeople so he can sniff out the man who led Hester astray.

Assuming the identity of Roger Chillingworth, a physician, Hester’s husband ingratiates himself with Boston’s elite and its leadership. He is quick to discern that Dimmesdale has a secret, and he makes it his life’s goal to hover near the minister, exacerbating Dimmesdale’s secret shame to the point that Dimmesdale suffers real physical distress. Chillingworth’s evil intentions twist his own soul. He changes from a kindly old man into a devil. There is, perhaps, some evidence that he redeems himself when he leaves all of his money to Pearl upon his death.
Hester encounters her long-lost husband
As Hester Prynne is being publicly shamed for committing adultery, she recognizes her long-lost husband in the crowd of onlookers. Her husband has crossed the ocean after all, and, distraught at what he finds once he gets to the colonies, he decides to make it his life’s goal to figure out whom Hester’s lover is.

Complication
The Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale has a secret
Roger Chillingworth worms his way into the Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale’s confidence. One evening when the minister falls asleep, Chillingworth pokes around under Dimmesdale’s shirt and is delighted with what he finds there. Whatever is there, which the narrator does not reveal to the reader, has marked the Reverend Dimmesdale as guilty. Chillingworth now knows that he has found Hester’s lover.

Climax
Hester and Dimmesdale plan to run away together to make a new life for themselves in the Old World. She urges Dimmesdale to escape at the soonest possible moment but the minister claims he has no energy left even though it means his death. That is when Hester suggests her daring plan – that she will accompany Dimmesdale to the Old World, where they can make a new life together.

Dimmesdale agrees to the plan, and it gives him an energy he has lacked for a long time. Their plan is to leave in three days’ time, board a ship currently in harbor, escape to the Old World, and make a new life for themselves. But first, the minister will give his last sermon, on Election Sunday.

Suspense
The minister gives his Election Day Sermon
On Election Sunday, when Hester and Pearl go to the marketplace to observe some of the holiday proceedings, they are approached by the shipmaster, who lets Hester know that another traveler has secured a berth to sail with him in the morning – Roger Chillingworth. Hester is horrified, understanding then that they will never escape Chillingworth’s need for revenge.

Denouement
The Reverend Dimmesdale confesses his sin publicly on the town’s scaffold. He opens his shirt, revealing the scarlet letter A carved onto his chest. Then he collapses and dies.
After preaching the best sermon of his life, the Reverend Dimmesdale proceeds from the church to the town hall. As he moves through the crowds, everybody thinks they see a saintly glow around him. But some recognize how close he is to collapsing. The Reverend John Wilson tries to offer assistance but Dimmesdale waves him away. When at last Dimmesdale reaches Hester, he asks her for assistance, and she helps him climb up the scaffolding. When he makes his
intent to confess clear, Chillingworth, who has followed them, declares that this alone will satisfy his need for revenge. The minister, holding on to Hester, confesses his sin to the crowd and flings open his clothing to reveal the mark upon his chest – a scarlet letter A. At last, he collapses and dies, but not before exclaiming that he has found peace at last.

Conclusion

Hester returns to Boston

Having made a life with Pearl in England, Hester returns to the society that treated her terribly for so long. She starts wearing in the scarlet A again. This time, however, she is not shunned. She is revered by the community, and she is buried in a grave near Arthur Dimmesdale’s.

**Hester** appears at the prison door with her 3-month-old baby in hand, the token of her shame already inscribed on the bodice of her dress with a scarlet letter A. She is a young woman.

* She refuses to name her lover.
* In prison, Hester has a conversation with her estranged husband, who has taken an assumed name. Again, she refuses to name her lover but she agrees not to reveal Roger Chillingworth’s true identity.
* Hester makes a living sewing, and she is generous to those who are poor.
* Hester goes to the governor’s house to find out if the community really does plan to take her daughter Pearl away from her. She pleads for mercy.
* Hester, Pearl, and Dimmesdale meet up accidentally at night outside the scaffolding where Hester stood in shame before the town. They see Chillingworth, and Dimmesdale doesn’t recognize him as his dear friend – he only sees the evil that is there.
* Hester is shocked to see what has become of Dimmesdale during the long years he has hid his sin, which has gnawed away at him.
* Hester and Pearl run into Chillingworth and Hester beseeches him to leave the minister alone. She is shocked at how evil has transformed the man, twisting him into a fiend.
* Hester resolves to let the minister know who Roger Chillingworth really is.
* Hester and Prynne enter the dark forest in search of Dimmesdale. At last, they meet up with him, and Hester sends Pearl off to play.
* While Pearl is off playing, the minister and Hester talk. They resolve to run away together and make a life for themselves in the Old World, far away from Chillingworth’s accusations.
* Hester throws away the scarlet letter A and undoes her hair. But when Pearl returns, she refuses to come to her mother until she has picked up the scarlet letter and put it back on her bosom. Hester realizes the child is right, after all – until they are gone from this place, she is not free from the letter.
* During Election Day, a New England holiday Hester and Pearl stand apart from the crowd, as always.
* The commander of the ship that Hester and Dimmesdale plan to take to England approaches her and lets her know they have taken another passenger – Chillingworth.
* Hester is stunned and undone. She does not know what to do.
* After the sermon, Hester stands apart as the minister make a procession through the town to hall, where they will feast.
* But Dimmesdale, at death’s door, reaches out to Hester and asks her to help him to the scaffolding. There, he confesses his sin to the crowd of people gathered there.
* As the reverend dies, Hester asks him if they won’t meet in the afterlife as husband and wife. Haven’t they suffered enough in this world? But the minister tells her no.
* Hester and Pearl leave for the Old World.
* After many years, Hester returns and takes up the scarlet letter A again—of her own volition, because nobody would require it of her any further.
* When she dies, Hester is buried near Dimmesdale. A scarlet letter A is carved on their shared gravestone.

* Dimmesdale is part of the group of ministers sitting in judgment over Hester when she emerges from prison. But he exhorts her to reveal the name of the man who was her lover. He suggests that it might be better for that man, too, if he were revealed.
* Dimmesdale slowly begin to change. He holds his hand over his heart as if something there hurts him. He seem to be ailing.
* Dimmesdale and Dr. Chillingworth strike up a friendship. Dr. Chillingworth moves in with Dimmesdale and becomes his personal physician.
* One night, wandering around, Dimmesdale happens to run into Hester and Pearl. He sees Chillingworth and does not recognize the man – Chillingworth looks like an evil apparition to Dimmesdale.
* Dimmesdale looks at the sky and sees a large scarlet letter – the letter A – marked out in dull red light in the sky. It is further proof of his guilt, in his mind.
* One night, Chillingworth observes Dimmesdale asleep. He undoes Dimmesdale's shirt and grins at what he sees there.
* Hester and Dimmesdale decide to run away together. This opens Dimmesdale up to his bad side: he wants to do all sorts of things he has never wanted to do before.
* He has to exert extreme self-control over his tongue to keep himself from destroying other people’s faith and lives.
* On Election Sunday, he preaches his last sermon, proceeds to the scaffolding and, with Pearl holding his hand as a physical connection to Hester, makes a confession to his congregation and to the citizens of Boston.
* Opening his clothing, he reveals the scarlet mark on his chest, over his heart – the mark of his sin, a letter A.
* With this, Dimmesdale dies, but not before telling Hester that this is the mercy of God – that God would not let him die an unrepentant sinner but has been after him for seven years to confess.

* **Pearl** is three months old when her mother carries her from prison to the scaffold where Hester is publicly shamed for her adultery.
  * The governor questions Pearl when she is a few years old. He wants to see if she knows her catechism. But Pearl is stubborn and uncooperative. She fails to respond the way she’s supposed to. The explanation? It is the demon in her!
  * When she is seven years old, Pearl refuses to kiss the Reverend Dimmesdale until he has publicly acknowledged his relationship to her and to Hester.
  * Pearl refuses to come to her mother if she is not wearing the scarlet A. She won’t recognize her as her mother without that symbol.
  * Pearl points out Dimmesdale’s guilty habit of putting his hand over his heart. She wonders what he has done.
  * Roger Chillingworth leaves his estate to her upon his death within a year of Dimmesdale’s dramatic confession.
  * Pearl accompanies her mother to the Old World. The narrator surmises that she marries well and has children, since Hester is observed embroidering a baby garment many years later, when Hester returns to the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

* **Chillingworth** appears on the outskirts of the crowd while Hester endures her ordeal on the pillory.
  * He visits Hester in jail. He says he will find out the identity of her lover, and asks her not to reveal his true identity.
  * Chillingworth insinuates himself into the upper echelons of society. He smells out guilt and becomes a special friend of the Reverend Dimmesdale.
  * But somehow, he can never get Dimmesdale to confess what’s bothering him. Eventually, he manages to get a glimpse of Dimmesdale’s chest under his shirt, and he’s profoundly satisfied by what he sees over Dimmesdale’s hear – we later learn it’s a scarlet A like the one over Hester’s chest.
  * When Hester sees Chillingworth, she is shocked at how anger and vengeance have disfigured him. She reveals that she plans to let Dimmesdale know that Chillingworth is her husband.
  * Chillingworth must have some kind of supernatural cunning because he figures out that Dimmesdale and Hester plan to run away together. He books a passage on the same boat.
  * Chillingworth dies a year after Dimmesdale and bequeaths all his money to Pearl. Perhaps it is his attempt to redeem himself.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION AND SUGESTION

5.1 Conclusion

*The Scarlet Letter* is not only about good and evil but appearance and reality, a theme practiced all throughout the novel. As it is stated at the end of the novel, "no man, for any considerable period, can wear one face to himself, and another to the multitude, without finally getting bewildered as to which may be the true" (p. 216). Dimmesdale and Hester are judged based on appearance, and a gradual revelation of their reality marks them as adversaries to those who want to blur the difference between appearance and reality. The narrator, in the concluding chapter, cries "Be true! Be true! Show freely to the world, if not your worst, yet some trait whereby the worst may be inferred!" (p. 260) to show how the Puritan Culture provides the characters with a setting where "the secret acts of the soul are matters of public concern, in which the [symbolic act of] adultery is a crime against the state," (Ziff, 1966, p. 126) and ironically the letter *A* must be worn to make the secret public, and therefore to intensify the confusion. However, Hester's religion is one of love and affection and with the power she is bestowed, she subverts Puritanical significations to create new ones and therefore takes refuge in her heart to gain more power from the *scarlet letter* and reject the 'sable' culture. Hawthorne shows the reality of the token, what in appearance is a "scorching stigma" (Harding, 1990, p. 247) while in reality and by Hester has changed to a badge of courage, affection and ability. Hester's lover also has the brand of sin on his heart and as a violator of the Puritanical codes.
makes the reality known to all that we are all sinners, yet some are disguised in cloaks as law makers and gods. Hester reveals the fact that under every 'Gules' letter, there lie much deeper meanings than what the 'Sable' culture tries to uphold.

5.2 Suggestion

Literature is the pouring of reality and imagination which people felt and experience. It is a summary of what man is facing in their life. It is not only gives pleasure for the readers, but also teaches something better for man.

The novel The Scarlet Letter, wrote by Nathaniel Hawthorne is connected to society problems. In this novel can see how the society and environment give the punishment for people has done adultery. I suggest to the reader to study the relation of the society and human behavior so he can place himself in the society at the right place and take his part as the individual who lives in society.
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APPENDIXES

Biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne

Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1841
Nathaniel Hawthorne was born on July 4, 1804, in Salem, Massachusetts; his birthplace is preserved and open to the public. William Hathorne, the author's great-great-great-grandfather, a Puritan, was the first of the family to emigrate from England, first settling in Dorchester, Massachusetts before moving to Salem. There he became an important member of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and held many political positions including magistrate and judge, becoming infamous for his harsh sentencing. William's son and the author's great-great-grandfather, John Hathorne, was one of the judges who oversaw the Salem Witch Trials. Having learned about this, the author may have added the "w" to his surname in his early twenties, shortly after graduating from college, in an effort to dissociate himself from his notorious forebears. Hawthorne's father, Nathaniel Hathorne, Sr., was a sea captain who died in 1808 of yellow fever in Suriname. After his death, young Nathaniel, his mother and two sisters moved in with maternal relatives, the Mannings, in Salem, where they lived for ten years. During this time, on November 10, 1813, young Hawthorne was hit on the leg while playing "bat and ball" and became lame and bedridden for a year, though several physicians could find nothing wrong with him.

In the summer of 1816, the family lived as boarders with farmers before moving to a home recently built specifically for them by Hawthorne's uncles Richard and Robert Manning in Raymond, Maine, near Sebago Lake. Years later, Hawthorne looked back at his time in Maine fondly: "Those were delightful days, for that part of the country was wild then, with only scattered clearings, and nine tenths of it primeval woods." In 1819, he was sent back to Salem for school and soon complained of homesickness and being too far from his mother and sisters. In spite of his homesickness, for fun, he distributed to his family seven issues of The Spectator in August and September 1820. The homemade newspaper was written by hand and included essays, poems, and news utilizing the young author's developing adolescent humor.

Hawthorne's uncle Robert Manning insisted, despite Hawthorne's protests, that the boy attend college. With the financial support of his uncle, Hawthorne was sent to Bowdoin College in 1821, partly because of family connections in the area, and also because of its relatively inexpensive tuition rate. On the way to Bowdoin, at the stage stop in Portland, Hawthorne met future president Franklin Pierce and the two became fast friends. Once at the school, he also met the future poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, future congressman Jonathan Cilley, and future naval reformer Horatio Bridge. Years after his graduation with the class of 1825, he would describe his college experience to Richard Henry Stoddard:

I was educated (as the phrase is) at Bowdoin College. I was an idle student, negligent of college rules and the Procrustean details of academic life, rather choosing to nurse my own fancies than to dig into Greek roots and be numbered among the learned Thebans.
Early career

Hawthorne was offered an appointment as weighter and gauger at the Boston Custom House at a salary of $1,500 a year, which he accepted on January 17, 1839. During his time there, he rented a room from George Stillman Hillard, business partner of Charles Sumner. Hawthorne wrote in the comparative obscurity of what he called his "owl's nest" in the family home. As he looked back on this period of his life, he wrote: "I have not lived, but only dreamed about living". He contributed short stories, including "Young Goodman Brown" and "The Minister's Black Veil", to various magazines and annuals, though none drew major attention to the author. Horatio Bridge offered to cover the risk of collecting these stories in the spring of 1837 into one volume, Twice-Told Tales, which made Hawthorne known locally.

Marriage and family

Salem Custom-House where Hawthorne worked

While at Bowdoin, Hawthorne had bet his friend Jonathan Cilley a bottle of Madeira wine that he get married before him. By 1836 he had won the wager, but did not remain a bachelor for life. After public flirtations with local women Mary Silsbee and Elizabeth Peabody, he had begun pursuing the latter's sister, illustrator and transcendentalist Sophia Peabody. Seeking a possible home for himself and Sophia, he joined the transcendentalist Utopian community at Brook Farm in 1841 not because he agreed with the experiment but because it helped him save money to marry Sophia. He paid a $1,000 deposit and was put in charge of shoveling the hill of manure referred to as "the Gold Mine". He left later that year, though his Brook Farm adventure would prove an inspiration for his novel The Blithedale Romance. Hawthorne married Sophia Peabody on July 9, 1842, at a ceremony in the Peabody parlor on West Street in Boston. The couple moved to The Old Manse in Concord, Massachusetts, where they lived for three years. There he wrote most of the tales collected in Mosses from an Old Manse.

Like Hawthorne, Sophia was a reclusive person. Throughout her early life, she had frequent migraines and underwent several experimental medical treatments. She was mostly bedridden until her sister introduced her to Hawthorne, after which her headaches seem to have abated. The Hawthornes enjoyed a long marriage, often taking walks in the park. Of his wife, whom he referred to as his "Dove", Hawthorne wrote that she "is, in the strictest sense, my sole companion; and I need no other—there is no vacancy in my mind, any more than in my heart... Thank God that I suffice for her boundless heart!" Sophia greatly admired her husband's work. In one of her journals, she wrote: "I am always so dazzled and bewildered with the richness, the depth, the ... jewels of..."
beauty in his productions that I am always looking forward to a second reading where I can ponder and muse and fully take in the miraculous wealth of thoughts".[32]

Nathaniel and Sophia Hawthorne had three children. Their first, a daughter, was born March 3, 1844. She was named Una, a reference to The Faerie Queene, to the displeasure of family members.[33] In 1846, their son Julian was born. Hawthorne wrote to his sister Louisa on June 22, 1846, with the news: "A small troglodyte made his appearance here at ten minutes to six o'clock this morning, who claimed to be your nephew".[34] Their final child, Rose, was born in May 1851. Hawthorne called her "my autumnal flower".[35] Middle years

In April 1846, Hawthorne was officially appointed as the "Surveyor for the District of Salem and Beverly and Inspector of the Revenue for the Port of Salem" at an annual salary of $1,200.[36] He had difficulty writing during this period, as he admitted to Longfellow: "I am trying to resume my pen... Whenever I sit alone, or walk alone, I find myself dreaming about stories, as of old; but these forenoons in the Custom House undo all that the afternoons and evenings have done. I should be happier if I could write".[37] Like his earlier appointment to the custom house in Boston, this employment was vulnerable to the politics of the spoils system. A Democrat, Hawthorne lost this job due to the change of administration in Washington after the presidential election of 1848. Hawthorne wrote a letter of protest to the Boston Daily Advertiser which was attacked by the Whigs and supported by the Democrats, making Hawthorne's dismissal a much-talked about event in New England.[38] Hawthorne was deeply affected by the death of his mother shortly thereafter in late July, calling it, "the darkest hour I ever lived".[39] Hawthorne was appointed the corresponding secretary of the Salem Lyceum in 1848. Guests that came to speak that season included Emerson, Thoreau, Louis Agassiz and Theodore Parker.[40]

Hawthorne returned to writing and published The Scarlet Letter in mid-March 1850,[41] including a preface which refers to his three-year tenure in the Custom House and makes several allusions to local politicians, who did not appreciate their treatment.[42] One of the first mass-produced books in America, it sold 2,500 volumes within ten days and earned Hawthorne $1,500 over 14 years.[43] The book became an immediate best-seller[44] and initiated his most lucrative period as a writer.[45] One of Hawthorne's friends, the critic Edwin Percy Whipple, objected to the novel's "morbid intensity" and its dense psychological details, writing that the book "is therefore apt to become, like Hawthorne, too painfully anatomical in his exhibition of them",[46] though 20th century writer D. H. Lawrence said that there could be no more perfect work of the American imagination than The Scarlet Letter.[47]

Hawthorne and his family moved to a small red farmhouse near Lenox, Massachusetts at the end of March 1850.[48] Hawthorne became friends with Oliver Wendell Holmes, Sr. and Herman Melville beginning on August 5, 1850,
when the authors met at a picnic hosted by a mutual friend. Melville had just read Hawthorne's short story collection *Mosses from an Old Manse*, and his unsigned review of the collection, titled "Hawthorne and His Mosses", was printed in the *Literary World* on August 17 and August 24. Melville, who was composing *Moby-Dick* at the time, wrote that these stories revealed a dark side to Hawthorne, "shrouded in blackness, ten times black". Melville dedicated *Moby-Dick* (1851) to Hawthorne: "In token of my admiration for his genius, this book is inscribed to Nathaniel Hawthorne."[51]

Hawthorne's time in The Berkshires was very productive. The *House of the Seven Gables* (1851), which poet and critic James Russell Lowell said was better than *The Scarlet Letter* and called "the most valuable contribution to New England history that has been made" and *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), his only work written in the first person, were written here. He also published in 1851 a collection of short stories retelling myths, *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys*, a book he had been thinking about writing since 1846. Though the family enjoyed the scenery of The Berkshires, Hawthorne did not enjoy the winters in their small red house. They left on November 21, 1851.[52]

**The Wayside and Europe**

In 1852, the Hawthornes returned to Concord. In February, they bought The Hillside, a home previously inhabited by Amos Bronson Alcott and his family, and renamed it The Wayside. Their neighbors in Concord included Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau. That year Hawthorne wrote the campaign biography of his friend Franklin Pierce, depicting him as "a man of peaceful pursuits" in the book *The Life of Franklin Pierce*. Horace Mann said, "If he makes out Pierce to be a great man or a brave man, it will be the greatest work of fiction he ever wrote." In the biography, Hawthorne left out Pierce's drinking habits despite rumors of his alcoholism and emphasized Pierce's belief that slavery could not "be remedied by human contrivances" but would, over time, "vanish like a dream". With Pierce's election as President, Hawthorne was rewarded in 1853 with the position of United States consul in Liverpool shortly after the publication of *Tanglewood Tales*. The role, considered the most lucrative foreign service position at the time, was described by Hawthorne's wife as "second in dignity to the Embassy in London". In 1857, his appointment ended at the close of the Pierce administration and the Hawthorne family toured France and Italy. During his time in Italy, the previously clean-shaven Hawthorne grew a bushy mustache.

The family returned to The Wayside in 1860 and that year saw the publication of *The Marble Faun*, his first new book in seven years.

**Later years and death**
Grave of Nathaniel Hawthorne

Failing health prevented him from completing several more romances. Suffering from pain in his stomach, Hawthorne insisted on a recuperative trip with his friend Franklin Pierce, though his neighbor Bronson Alcott was concerned Hawthorne was too ill. While on a tour of the White Mountains, Hawthorne died in his sleep on May 19, 1864, in Plymouth, New Hampshire. Pierce sent a telegram to Elizabeth Peabody to inform Hawthorne's wife in person; she was too saddened by the news to handle the funeral arrangements herself. Longfellow wrote a tribute poem to Hawthorne, published in 1866, called "The Bells of Lynn". Hawthorne was buried in Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Concord, Massachusetts. Pallbearers included Longfellow, Emerson, Holmes, Alcott, James Thomas Fields, and Edwin Percy Whipple. Emerson wrote of the funeral: "I thought there was a tragic element in the event, that might be more fully rendered,—in the painful solitude of the man, which, I suppose, could no longer be endured, & he died of it."

After their respective deaths, wife Sophia and daughter Una were originally buried in England. However, in June 2006, they were re-interred in plots adjacent to Hawthorne.

Writings

Hawthorne had a particularly close relationship with his publishers William Ticknor and James Thomas Fields. Hawthorne once told Fields, "I care more for your good opinion than for that of a host of critics". In fact, it was Fields who convinced Hawthorne to turn The Scarlet Letter into a novel rather than a short story. Ticknor handled many of Hawthorne's personal matters, including the purchase of cigars, overseeing financial accounts, and even purchasing clothes. Ticknor died with Hawthorne at his side in Philadelphia in 1864; Hawthorne was left, according to a friend, "apparently dazed".

Literary style and themes

Hawthorne was predominantly a short story writer in his early career. Upon publishing Twice-Told Tales, however, he noted, "I do not think much of them", and he expected little response from the public. His four major romances were written between 1850 and 1860: The Scarlet Letter (1850), The House of the Seven Gables (1851), The Blithedale Romance (1852) and The Marble Faun (1860). Another novel-length romance, Fanshawe was published anonymously.
in 1828. Hawthorne defined a romance as being radically different from a novel by not being concerned with the possible or probable course of ordinary experience.\footnote{72} Many of his works are inspired by Puritan New England,\footnote{72} combining historical romance loaded with symbolism and deep psychological themes, bordering on surrealism.\footnote{79}

Hawthorne's works belong to romanticism or, more specifically, dark romanticism,\footnote{80} cautionary tales that suggest that guilt, sin, and evil are the most inherent natural qualities of humanity.\footnote{81} Many of his tales and novels focus on a type of historical fiction, though Hawthorne's depiction of the past is used only as a vehicle to express themes of ancestral sin, guilt and retribution.\footnote{82} His later writings would also reflect his negative view of the Transcendentalism movement.\footnote{83}


Criticism

Edgar Allan Poe, wrote important and somewhat unflattering reviews of both Twice-Told Tales and Mosses from an Old Manse. Poe's negative assessment was partly due to his own contempt of allegory and moral tales, and his chronic accusations of plagiarism, though he admitted, "The style of Hawthorne is purity itself. His tone is singularly effective—wild, plaintive, thoughtful, and in full accordance with his themes... We look upon him as one of the few men of indisputable genius to whom our country has as yet given birth".\footnote{84} Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote that "Nathaniel Hawthorne's reputation as a writer is a very pleasing fact, because his writing is not good for anything, and this is a tribute to the man".\footnote{85} Henry James praised Hawthorne, saying, "The fine thing in Hawthorne is that he cared for the deeper psychology, and that, in his way, he tried to become familiar with it".\footnote{86} Poet John Greenleaf Whittier wrote that he admired the "weird and subtle beauty" in Hawthorne's tales.\footnote{87} Evert Augustus Duyckinck said of Hawthorne, "Of the American writers destined to live, he is the most original, the one least indebted to foreign models or literary precedents of any kind".\footnote{88}

Contemporary response to Hawthorne's work praised his sentimentality and moral purity while more modern evaluations focus on the dark psychological complexity.\footnote{89} Beginning in the 1950s, critics have focused on symbolism and didacticism.\footnote{90}

Selected works

**Novels**

- *Fanshawe* (published anonymously, 1828)[91]
- *The Scarlet Letter* (1850)
- *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851)
- *The Blithedale Romance* (1852)
- *The Marble Faun* (1860)
- *The Dolliver Romance* (1863) (unfinished)
- *Septimus Felton; or, the Elixir of Life* (Published in the *Atlantic Monthly*, 1872)
- *Doctor Grimshawe's Secret: A romance* (unfinished), with Preface and Notes by Julian Hawthorne (1882)

**Short story collections**

- *Twice-Told Tales* (1837)
- *Grandfather's Chair* (1840)
- *Mosses from an Old Manse* (1846)
- *The Snow-Image, and Other Twice-Told Tales* (1852)
- *A Wonder-Book for Girls and Boys* (1852)
- *Tanglewood Tales* (1853)
- *The Dolliver Romance and Other Pieces* (1876)
- *The Great Stone Face and Other Tales of the White Mountains* (1889)
- *The Celestial Railroad and Other Short Stories*

**Selected short stories**

- "My Kinsman, Major Molineux" (1832)
- "Young Goodman Brown" (1835)
- "The Gray Champion" (1835)
- "The White Old Maid" (1835)
- "The Ambitious Guest" (1835)
- "The Minister's Black Veil" (1836)
- "The Man of Adamant" (1837)
- "The Maypole of Merry Mount" (1837)
- "The Great Carbuncle" (1837)
- "Dr. Heidegger's Experiment" (1837)
- "A Virtuoso's Collection" (May 1842)
- "The Birth-Mark" (March 1843)
- "Egotism; or, The Bosom-Serpent" (1843)
- "The Artist of the Beautiful" (1844)
- "Rappaccini's Daughter" (1844)
- "P.'s Correspondence" (1845)
• "Ethan Brand" (1850)
• "Feathertop" (1852)