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close close close close Puritan New England: Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote “Young Goodman Brown” in 1835 but set the story in Puritan New England during the late 17th century. The Puritans broke away from the Anglican Church in England, landing at Plymouth Rock and settling both Plymouth and Boston. They became the dominant Christian sect in New England at the time, although the Quakers and Anabaptists, other Christian groups, also had sizeable communities. Puritans subscribed to an inflexible doctrine that offered little room for error; for example, sinful thoughts and dreams were considered as harmful as actually committing a sin. They also believed that Native Americans, who did not prescribe to Christianity, were regarded as the children of Satan. “Young Goodman Brown” takes place during the time of witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, and examines the hypocritical and inhibitive moral beliefs of the Salem Puritans. Salem Witch Trials: A series of hearings, prosecutions, and executions in the late 17th century, the Salem witch trials condemned twenty people to death based on rumor and suspicion, including Martha Corey and Martha Ingalls Carrier who are referenced briefly in “Young Goodman Brown.” One of the most remorseless judges in the Salem witch trials of 1692 was John Hathorne, Nathaniel Hawthorne’s direct ancestor. It’s likely that Hawthorne felt some responsibility for the actions of his ancestor; not only did he add the “w” in his last name to distance himself from Hathorne, but he also devoted much of his writing career to exploring American Puritanism, often finding more to critique than praise. Need to analyze Young Goodman Brown setting? This essay on Nathaniel Hawthorne’s short story explores the symbols, themes, characters, & setting of Young Goodman Brown. Get a custom essay on Young Goodman Brown Setting Analysis, Symbolism, & Characters IntroductionThe setting in The Young Goodman Brown influences the development of plot and character. The setting of a play is a crucial element in terms of establishing direction, feel and structure that a specific story carries. Usually, a reflection of numerous essential aspects of work; culture, time, location and tone is determined through the setting of the story. That is how an ambience and emotional connotation within readers are created.The characters in Young Goodman Brown are direct and sure by-products of communities and environments in which they live. The story portrays a paradigm of a setting’s significance. It exemplifies the importance of setting as it reflects and applies to the core meaning of the piece. The story’s background provides a historical look into the characters and their lifestyles.For example, one quickly discovers that Brown lives in a puritan society in the 17th century (Crowley 65). Thus, several inferences of the character of Brown can be made. This essay is an analysis of the story’s setting, symbolism and characters.I’ve selected the character of Brown, who contends with aspects of the past. It illustrates how Hawthorne’s setting and symbolism of the Young Goodman Brown contribute to the meaning of the entire piece.Young Goodman Brown: Setting and CharactersGothic elements are used by Hawthorne in the story to make Brown’s experience convincing and engaging. In part, the gothic aspects of the setting contribute to the story’s intention. The setting is mysterious, and this develops conflict in Brown’s mind and builds his character.The setting of the Young Goodman Brown ,(the time and location of the action, dusk and forest) cumulatively assists in the devil destructing Brown’s commitment to Puritanism. The elements of forest and darkness turn to haunt Brown. This increases Brown’s internal problems and fear. Due to fear, Brown begins conceiving evil everywhere along his route through the forest. In other words, the forest as a whole represents a gorge of darkness and unconsciousness for Brown (Lynch 64).With all these devilish elements, the forest at times turns to be part of Brown’s personality. The denser he ventures into the forest, the more he becomes one of his evil. Brown transforms into a devil out of fear as evil exists everywhere. Brown moves too deep into the darkness, period of uncertainty and religious clashes throughout his experience. 1 hour! The minimum time our certified writers need to deliver a 100% original paper Symbolism in Young Goodman BrownNathaniel Hawthorne uses symbolism to create a parallel situation of more in-depth and indirect references. Besides establishing depth resulting from indirectness, symbols enrich Brown’s experience by deepening the conflict in his mind. Also, by utilizing some symbols, Hawthorne violates the fixed conceptual purpose associated with Brown as a character.Young Goodman Brown is full of symbolism. It applies a cluster of symbols which depicts a series of contrasts reflecting both; problems experienced by Brown; and the extent these symbols influence his personality. Dusk and sunrise, for example, indicate two extremes which indicate commencement and end of a journey.Dusk, on the one hand, is the period that proceeds darkness and therefore stands for the coming of evil. Dusk, a time between light and total darkness, depicts times of hesitation which Brown begins to experience after meeting the devil.Further, darkness which is a reflection of evil is purposed to put Brown in a real experience of facing evil. Sunrise, on the other hand, marks the end of the journey. It is a representation of the state of certainty which Brown comes up with by the end of the story. This moment forms clarity in Brown’s belie and attitude towards the village people. This contrast of light and darkness is another good example of symbolism in the Young Goodman Brown.ConclusionIn summary, the Young Goodman Brown is a Puritanism satire. From the author’s point of view, it is a belief system that pursues an ideology that deepens conflicts and divisions. It discards all efforts at establishing any common position among the numerous Christian sects on the one hand, and other beliefs on the other.The aspect of Puritanism, through distrust and doubt, encourages the possibility of splitting societies over religious issues at the expense of unity and togetherness. It tries to expel those who are not Puritans and those who do not conform and looks upon them as sinners. This past attends negatively on Brown’s personality as he obeys out of fear.The story offers historical insight into the character of Brown and his lifestyle. For instance, we quickly understand that Brown lives in a Puritan society right from the onset. We can see Puritanism in some aspects as unrelenting and biased. Puritanism is a Christian sect that looks upon its members as the only devout and looks upon members of other sects as non-conformists. Remember! This is just a sample You can get your custom paper by one of our expert writers The Puritans believe that they are the only ones who should be admitted in the membership of the church. The congregations of such individuals portray the true church. The sect does not tolerate others and relates itself to the devil against general humanity (Lynch 65).This sort of extremism of Puritan principles indicates the spread of puritan ideology and its reception among people. Thus, the bias nature of Puritanism leads to hatred, distrust and segmentation among human beings. According to Lynch (2009; P. 69), puritans established themselves a distrustful society for a vibrant congregation which would later harm them.The main character of Young Goodman Brown is a reflection of the puritan ideology. In him, Hawthorne’s Puritanism is satirized as the dominant faith in his hometown. He looks at Puritanism in a manner to suggest his disillusionment and dissatisfaction with it as a system of belief. In the descriptions of Goodman Brown, Hawthorne seems to discover back his personal experiences with puritans (Lynch 70).Works CitedCrowley, Joseph. Nathaniel Hawthorne. New York: Taylor & Francis, 1971.Lynch, John. Nathaniel Hawthorne. Massachusetts: Salem Press, 2009. Young Goodman Brown is a moral story written by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The story is about Young Goodman Brown’s journey into the forest and his encounter with the Devil. On his journey, Young Goodman Brown meets several other people who are also going to meet with the Devil. Young Goodman Brown is overcome with fear and doubt, and he eventually decides not to meet with the Devil. Young Goodman Brown returns home and finds that his wife, Faith, is also going to meet with the Devil. Young Goodman Brown is overcome with terror and he screams for Faith to come back. The story of Young Goodman Brown is a moral story that teaches about the dangers of temptation. Young Goodman Brown is tempted by the Devil to join him in the forest, and Young Goodman Brown is terrified of what might happen if he meets with the Devil. Young Goodman Brown eventually decides not to meet with the Devil, and he returns home to find that his wife is also going to meet with the Devil. Young Goodman Brown is terrified of what might happen to his wife, and he screams for her to come back. The story of Young Goodman Brown teaches about the dangers of temptation and how it can lead to disaster. Young Goodman Brown is tempted by the Devil to join him in the forest, and he is overcome with fear and doubt. Young Goodman Brown eventually decides not to meet with the Devil, and he returns home to find that his wife is also going to meet with the Devil. Young Goodman Brown is terrified of what might happen to his wife, and he screams for her to come back. The story of Young Goodman Brown is a moral story that teaches about the dangers of temptation. Goodman Brown says that he has to go on this errand because there is an eminent danger and because Goodman Brown fears for his life. When Goodman Brown arrives to the forest, he meets the devil in the form of a man who looks just like him. The devil tells Goodman Brown that many people in the town are wicked, but that Goodman Brown is not as wicked as they are. The devil also tells Goodman Brown that Faith is good and pure, but Goodman Brown does not believe him. When Goodman Brown returns home, he finds that his wife has fainted from fear. Goodman Brown then realizes that he has sinned by not trusting in his wife’s innocence. Young Goodman Brown is about the dangers of letting excessive pride get in the way of our relationships with others. Goodman Brown’s pride caused him to distrust his wife and to live the life of an exile in his own community. Pride can also blind us from the truth, which is what happened to Goodman Brown when he met the devil in the forest. The devil was able to deceive Goodman Brown into thinking that Faith was a good and pure woman, when she was actually just as wicked as everyone else in the town. Young Goodman Brown is a warning against letting our pride interfere with our relationships with others. Goodman Brown has let his sin corrupt him and he can no longer hold onto the good within him. This story is about the dangers of giving into temptation and how it can destroy a person’s faith. Goodman Brown is a representation of humanity, and his fall from grace is a warning to all people. We must be careful not to let our sin consume us because it will ultimately lead to our downfall. This is a moral story that teaches us about the importance of faith and how we need to be vigilant in order to protect it. Nathaniel Hawthorne was a master of writing dark and mysterious stories that contain a moral lesson for his readers. Young Goodman Brown is one of his most famous tales, and it continues to be studied and discussed by people all over the world. Young Goodman Brown is a moral story written by Nathaniel Hawthorne. In the story, Young Goodman Brown must make a choice between good and evil. He chooses to go down the path of evil, and as a result, his life is never the same. This story is about the importance of making the right choices in life, and how those choices can have a lasting impact on our lives. Nathaniel Hawthorne was a master of writing moral stories, and Young Goodman Brown is one of his best examples. If you are looking for a story that will make you think about the choices you make in life, Young Goodman Brown is definitely worth reading. Nathaniel Hawthorne was born in 1804 in Salem, Massachusetts. He was raised in a Puritan household, and this had a significant impact on his writing. Many of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s stories are set in Puritan society, and he often uses these stories to explore the dark side of human nature. Young Goodman Brown is a perfect example of this. Nathaniel Hawthorne died in 1864, but his work continues to be enjoyed by readers all over the world. If you want to read more of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s work, I recommend picking up a copy of The Scarlet Letter. It is one of his most famous novels, and it is sure to impress you. The story follows Young Goodman Brown as he ventures into the forest on an errand for his wife and ends up witnessing a devilish ritual. The story is meant to teach a moral lesson about the dangers of straying from the path of righteousness. Young Goodman Brown learns the hard way that it is dangerous to let temptation lead you astray, and that evil can be found even in those who seem to be good. This is a valuable lesson that everyone can learn from. Young Goodman Brown is a great example of how easy it is to get caught up in sin and how quickly one can lose their way. Everyone makes mistakes, but it is important to learn from them and not to repeat them. The lesson that Young Goodman Brown teaches us is to stay on the path of righteousness and to avoid temptation, lest we end up like him. An analysis of the setting in Nathaniel Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" In the story of "Young Goodman Brown" setting plays an important role. It provides symbolism to certain events and provokes emotions amongst the characters, especially those of Goodman Brown. The story of "Young Goodman Brown" is that of a man on an adventure to feed his curiosity and to visit the dark side of his Puritan town. Once he arrives at the destination of his adventure, he realizes that many of his elders have followed in the paths of evil and that holiness and innocence has been vanquished from his once thought to be holy Puritan town. The central idea of "Young Goodman Brown," is the conflict in Goodman Brown between joining the devil and remaining "good." It is a very difficult journey for Brown, as he travels through the woods, all the while thinking of the "good" things (like his wife Faith) he would be leaving behind. This internal conflict ultimately destroys the Young Goodman Brown and creates a new man. At the beginning of the story Goodman Brown sets out on his journey at sunset; to set out at sunset is symbolizing darkness, which in turn symbolizes evil, which begins the setting for the story of "Young Goodman Brown." As Brown is leaving he kisses his wife, Faith, goodbye; the name Faith is intentionally used to symbolize the faith in god that they both share and also what Brown is leaving behind to go on his journey. Brown's wife, Faith, is also wearing pink ribbons in her hair, which give the impression that she is an innocent godly woman. Right before Brown leaves on his journey Faith says, "pr'y thee, put off your journey until sunrise." (309). This is showing that sunrise is a more pleasant and peaceful time to go on a jou... ... middle of paper ... ...ed by the devil tempting Brown to join the dark side. The way in which the devil lures Brown is by convincing him that his relatives and town's people have already crossed over to the dark side and denied their faith. The struggle that Brown is now facing is whether to follow is relatives and town's people or to follow his faith in god and deny the devil, that is Brown's internal conflict. These internal and external conflicts are what turned Brown into a dynamic character by the end of the story. Instead of believing and trusting that his relatives and friends are godly, he now knows that they have all been tempted by the devil and many have crossed over to the dark side; he went from being trusting to skeptical of his friends and his faith. Works Cited Hawthorne, Nathaniel. "Young Goodmam Brown", The Story and Its Writer, 4th ed. Ed. Ann Charters. Boston: In the short story of “Young Goodman Brown” by Nathaniel Hawthorne, the setting is a very important aspect in providing symbolism to certain events. The setting of a dramatic work or story is defined as the overall setting of a narrative detailing the general location, historical time, and social undermining in which its action occurs. The setting of a story is just as important as the characters that are involved within the story. It is a necessary aspect that has influence on every narration. Which is a subject that has not gained much attraction and attention as other parts of the story, but is certainly a very interesting topic to discuss. This essay will give an in-depth analysis of the various techniques that Hawthorne used to convey ...show more content... He finds that all of the good people are participating in a frantic satanic ritual and god forsaken acts that forsake God himself. One of the key points in “Young Goodman Brown”, is the battle of whether or not Goodman Brown should remain good or joining the devil. The journey for Goodman Brown is very difficult, as he traverses through the woods at night, all while contemplating of the good things such as his wife Faith who he leaves behind. This internal conflict causes a destruction of the Young Goodman Brown and results in the creation of a completely different man. From the beginning of “Young Goodman Brown”, he sets off on his adventure right at sunset. But to set out on sunset means to go during darkness. In describing it in that sense, it is symbolizing evil, which establishes the setting of the story. When Goodman Brown is beginning his journey into the woods, he tells his wife, who is aptly named Faith goodbye. Hawthorne intentionally names her Faith because it symbolizes the faith in God that he and his wife share, and to also depict what Goodman Brown leaves at his house while he goes on his adventure. His wife is wearing pink ribbons in her hair, which implies that she is a pure, innocent woman. Before Goodman Brown begins his departure into the woods, she tells him not to go until sunrise. This implies that going during a sunrise is much more peaceful and pleasant rather than going during sunset when it is otherwise Hawthorne sure found some strange ways to commemorate the town where he was born. In the autobiographical sketch that opens The Scarlet Letter, Hawthorne made his native Salem look like a cross between a retirement community and a slum. Whether the colonial Salem of "Young Goodman Brown" comes off any better is up to you. But one thing is certain: in Hawthorne's book, "commemorate" didn't mean "record every last littlest detail." You can learn a couple things about Puritan life from "Young Goodman Brown," but they might not be new. (Look, they're all going to pray at the meeting house!) If you want much else, make sure your copy has good footnotes, or visit your friendly neighborhood Shmoop.Otherwise, you're out of luck.For one, you couldn't draw a half-decent map of Salem using "Young Goodman Brown." And you'd have worse luck drawing a map of the forest that young Goodman Brown explores. The forest is meant to be a disorienting, dreamlike place. Mapping it is the last thing that you, or young Goodman Brown, should be able to do.Names Have (Not) Been Changed to Protect the (Not) InnocentThat said, Hawthorne has an interesting way of compensating for the vague and confusing places in his story. He's very specific about when his story is set. "Young Goodman Brown" takes place at the end of the 17th century, around the time of the Salem Witch Trials. How do we know this? Because some of Hawthorne's minor characters—like Deacon Gookin, Goody Cloyse, Martha Carrier—were real citizens of Salem. That said, we can't get a good idea what the real deacon Gookin or the real Martha Carrier were like from reading "Young Goodman Brown." Instead, we're supposed to see the names of these historical people and realize that witchcraft is in the air. Latest Posts Click here to chat with me! Livechat Leave a Feedback Image not available forColor: To view this video download Flash Player The setting is one of the most important elements in "Young Goodman Brown". It is fraught with symbolism and as a setting, it is what gives the story its chilling, haunting quality. The setting of Goodman Brown's "Young Goodman Brown" is in the 17th century Puritan settlement of Salem in Massachusetts. The story takes place at the period where Christianity was the only religion in that place and non-Christians were persecuted and prosecuted by the Puritans. In the story, Goodman Brown takes an evening journey into the forest which is the devil's domain with the purpose of meeting with the devil. The forest Brown is walking in is dark, evil looking and mysterious. The forest is used as a place where evil, sin, and temptation can manifest itself. In the middle of his journey, Brown meets an old man and according to the narrator, Goodman thinks that the person is the devil himself. However, he does not want to make this clear so he addresses the man with the term "the devil" he replies to being called so. This confirms Goodman's fears and suspicions about the true nature of the old man he has met. When Goodman sees his wife Faith in the forest he believes that his whole community back in Salem has turned to evil and worshipping the things of the devil. Not even people like Goody Close who had helped him in his catechism endeavors and Deacon Gookin are good anymore. The fact that taking the journey in the forest changes the whole perception of his community members helps in building up the plot as it makes the story more interesting and moving to the reader. Therefore, the physical setting of the story holds a lot of importance in developing the plot of "Young Goodman Brown".1.1. Historical ContextThe seventeenth century was a period of great change in the New World. As we have already discussed, the American colonies had been founded with the hope of creating a "city on a hill," a society that would be a model of Christian virtue and order, led by "saints" and "Purified" not only from Catholicism but from the corruption of the Old World in general. The phenomenon of witchcraft can be seen as a direct attack by the devil on a Puritan colony. Witches had shown themselves in league with the devil in Salem. Hawthorne's own ancestors played a role in the Salem witchcraft trials—and not on the side of the accused. This creates a time in American history where people like Young Goodman Brown feared not just the devil's temptations, but their own society's real hypocrisy and corruption. Such hypocrisy is reflected in the characters of the story: Goody Cloyse, for example, who is described as a "very pious and exemplary dame," is revealed to be a worshipper of the devil. And though "Deacon Gookin was to be deacon and leader of their church," we are told that "Good old Deacon Gookin had long been taking this young woman to his arms." These descriptions serve to undermine the claims to piety and morality held by these characters and by Puritan society in general. The Puritan colony in New England was known for a fascination with the devil. In 17th century America, Christianity was the law and the Puritans had a specific brand of religion that they followed. Every person's life was focused around God, both privately and publicly. The ministers, both state and church, were given the authority to enforce godliness and order. Hell was believed to be a real place-a "lake of fire"-where sinners should expect to spend eternity. Throughout "Young Goodman Brown," the characters and their actions demonstrate this obsession with placing morality into a simplified view of good and evil. This stark difference from the modern, nuanced view of morality helps to embed the story's sense of time and also allows the reader to see Goodman Brown's internal struggle in a dramatic light. The belief in the opposite of God has been made real to the Puritans by the witchcraft of New England because it was through the devil and witches that the Puritans said "Ah, this is evil." So when Goodman Brown feels "'Ah, asbington//'51 evil is the nature of mankind.', the story of Adam and Eve" and at the end when his belief "'heaven'55 and 'Faith'55" are said with "'a hoary corpse'55" and "'We have been familiar wilb devilish" powers', he show the devil has broken that sacred bond between him and God. I think it may emphasize the view of God to Puritans as a father and so he really feels let down and hurt because the people around him "'We have been familiar with devilish" powers'55". He finds it hard to get his head round that they have also betrayed a father like figure and maybe even more surprising, they have betrayed the place in which the sacred bond was formed.1.2. Physical SettingThe story takes place in Salem, Massachusetts. In my 1800 symbols, Salem, Massachusetts will be preferred because that place is the first social gathering place of Puritans. The entire story occurs during the night with particular focus on the forest and the demonic ceremonies that take place in it. By appropriating its own character, the forest represents the natural world and, above all, it refers to wilderness. What is important is that in the story, the wilderness is almost as endless as the myth. The forest is composed of predominantly trees; however, there are thick underbrush and open paths as well. Brown made an effort not to deviate to the darker spaces of the forest by walking in the moonlight when he can see everything clearly. Because the moon is often connected to a greater power and is a symbol of good things, the moonlight and the open paths can be seen as an area without fatal outcomes. Nevertheless, each moment he goes under a thicker shroud of leaves, there is a hint of trouble. This is of course when he is shown as walking towards a ceremony site because at that exact moment, Hawthorne explains that Brown is making his way down a dense and remote forest. When the moment he enters the murderer's ceremony or a pact is made between Brown and the devil, Hawthorne writes "as if a darker cloud were drawn across the sky." That suggests the idea of being closed in or dwelling in a claustrophobic environment. Also, Hawthorne mentions Brown is moving deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness, so the natural ways and game now seemed liers. In the last scene, at midnight, the whole forest is compared with a "great black mass." The word "mass" refers to an enclosed space and it is most commonly used to describe religious services or some religious gatherings. The religious connotations of the word are applied here and it means that the forest is no longer just a forest, it is the embodiment of evil. The setting of the forest in the minds of the readers becomes an ambiguous space which can mean many things just as a dream can hold many meanings for the dreamer since it is different for different people. Nevertheless, setting still holds important subjects and ideas in the story and as it was outlined above, there are many things the forest can relate to.1.3. Time SettingHistorical records indicate that Nathaniel Hawthorne was born on July 4, 1804, in Salem, Massachusetts, at the historical place of Jeremiah Lee Mansion. The house was originally home to the sea captain and Revolutionary War leader, Jeremiah Lee. Hawthorne was the second child and only son of Captain Nathaniel Hawthorne and his wife, Elizabeth Clarke Manning. Meanwhile, there are conflicting reports and records on when Hawthorne actually wrote "Young Goodman Brown." General consensus seems to put his creative period between 1833 and 1835, but others claim that the short story did not materialize until later in his career. Nevertheless, scholars agree that "Young Goodman Brown" is a product of Hawthorne's life experiences, especially his own struggle with his Puritan legacy and his involvement in the Transcendentalist Movement. It is in this rich historical context that "Young Goodman Brown" can be best understood. As a setting and background to the story, Hawthorne's description of the town is typical of a town in the Puritan era. But it has also been noted by many that it is strikingly similar to Salem, Massachusetts, where a famous witch trial occurred. There is no question that the Salem witch trials, an event in 1692 that led to the deaths of 22 men and women, deeply affected Hawthorne's opinions and lifestyle, as well as those of countless other citizens and future cultures. Maisa G. believes that the witch trials may have forever altered the New England conscious. Also, many have agreed that the opinion Hawthorne was making in "Young Goodman Brown" is that it was "perilous to his soul" for a man of his age group to be "seen in her [Faith's] company.2. SymbolismYoung Goodman Brown: Analysis of setting, symbolism, and characters "Young Goodman Brown: Analysis of Setting, Symbolism, and Characters" provides a comprehensive analysis of Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story. The analysis begins by discussing the historical context, physical setting, and time setting of the story. It then delves into the symbolism behind various elements in the story, such as the forest, the pink ribbon, the staff, and the serpent. Finally, the analysis explores the different characters in the story, including Young Goodman Brown, Faith, the Devil, Goody Cloyse, and Deacon Gookin. Overall, this analysis provides a deep understanding of the setting, symbolism, and characters in "Young Goodman Brown." The first and most obvious symbol that Hawthorne creates is the title character, Young Goodman Brown. He represents immaturity, and when he ventures into the forest he is "alone in the society of the wild Indian and the Intolerant Puritan" (186). He displays a preoccupation with sin and his own guilt. When he says "There is no good on earth; and sin is but a name. Come, devil; for to thee is this world given" (187), it shows his fixation with sin and with his own sense of guilt. The first impression the reader gets from Goodman is one of a seemingly pure, albeit naive, young man who is unexposed to the hypocritical world of the Puritan. But after Goodman's famous walk into the forest, Goodman emerges a tainted and cynical person with a disregard for what many people would normally consider "holiness" in the Puritan religion. The mysterious man who appears to Goodman and gives Goodman his staff is also a significant symbol in the story. He is likely to be the devil. This encounter can be seen as Goodman coming of age and realizing the true nature of the society he is a part of. The mysterious man tells Goodman that he has helped his family sin.2.1. The ForestThe forest in "Young Goodman Brown" represents the wild, uncivilized, and inhospitable nature of the world outside of the community. Specifically, the forest is a symbol of the devil and his work. The narrator mentions that the forest is a place where no "godly" people would venture. In this setting, Hawthorne is able to develop both a literal reading of the forest as a real place and a symbolic reading of the forest as a representation of the fear and unknown that Goodman Brown experiences in his mind. While the characters discuss the forest in the literal sense as a place just outside of Salem, the narrator describes the forest in quite symbolic terms, as the place "where no church had ever been gathered or solitary Christian prayed." This metaphor, along with the idea of Goodman Brown's journey as developmental of his mind and soul, suggests that the forest works as a symbol of the unknown and of the unexplored realm of the inner self. In the essay "A Byronic Hero in Hawthorne's 'Young Goodman Brown'", the author Michael Dunne argues that the author of the short story presents Goodman Brown as a Byronic hero, rather than a stereotypical Puritan hero. He states, "Goodman Brown's initiation into the realm of evil allows him to become a Byronic hero: he will return to Salem in a rebellious attitude toward his fellow citizens and will exhibit traits of the typical 'Byronic' protagonist, such as a rebellious spirit and disrespect for mass opinion." The ability for Hawthorne to present Goodman Brown as a Byronic hero depends on the fact that he undergoes a realization and transformation. It can be understood that the forest and Goodman Brown's experience within it marks the beginning of such a transformation. The darkness and the fear that the unknown elements of the forest cause to be symbolic of the fear that humans have of the unexplored realm of the human mind. This shows how Hawthorne masterfully employs the forest as a symbol in the short story.2.2. The Pink RibbonThe pink ribbon is a very important element in the story. When Goodman Brown is in the forest and the devil is trying to convince him to continue on his journey, Goodman Brown tells the devil that his father never went on such an errand and that his family have been Christians and good people for too long for him to do something like this. The devil's response is very revealing because he tells Goodman Brown, "I helped your grandfather, the constable, when he lashed the Quaker woman so smartly through the streets of Salem." This phrase can be interpreted as: don't be so high and mighty, your family has done bad things in the past, like this much more serious event. This is what the pink ribbon is representing in the story. It is not just a ribbon, it is a symbol of something much more significant. The pink ribbon is mentioned five times in the story which suggests it has strong importance. The pink ribbon is what the elderly traveller used to tie Faith to the altar. When Goodman Brown sees this, he has a different look of horror from when he saw the other people he knew in the community because he sees this item of affection having been used to bind his wife to such a dark and unholy event. Also, because Faith is associated with the colour pink throughout the story, the pink ribbon is a direct link to her. This symbolism is reinforced because when Faith is describing the dream she had to Goodman Brown, she says "methought as she spoke, there was trouble in her face, as if a dream had warned her what work is to be" and as she explains, she removes the ribbon from her hair and then "blew out the light." This act of removing the ribbon from her hair is almost like a sign of her ultimately beginning to give in to the evil she mentioned in her dream and the blowing out of the light could be likened to the extinguishing of her faith and the goodness and purity that it represents. When Goodman Brown sees the pink ribbon and thinks that Faith will be lost to him, he can no longer trust her and ends up living his life in complete and utter misery. The symbolism of the pink ribbon is one of the most important sources of irony in the story. At the beginning of the story, it is an innocent thing and something that Goodman Brown remembers with fondness and passion, however, it then becomes the tool which leads to his realization of the falseness of his religious upbringing and the danger of the hypocrisy of others. The final stages of the development of this piece of symbolism culminate in the loss of Goodman Brown's wife and his own sanity and faith in the world. At the end of the story, Goodman Brown doesn't know whether what he experienced that night in the woods was a dream or reality. But for the rest of his life, he chooses isolation and loneliness because he can't look at people in his eyes ever again and he lives in despair because he can't find goodness in the world anymore. We all know that ribbons are meaningless but in Young Goodman Brown, meaning is impressed upon with particular objects from the very beginning of the story and it is impressive how these representations manage to cast their qualities and significance over the entire settee as a whole!2.3. The StaffThe staff that the man carries is described as "a great black snake, so curiously wrought, that it might almost be seen to twist and wriggle itself like a living serpent." The fact that the staff looks like a "living serpent" is full of religious symbolism, hinting that the man might be in allegiance with the Devil. As the story develops, the readers learn that the man is, in fact, the Devil. This makes the association between the staff and the serpent an incredibly important symbol. It is easy to overlook the significance of the staff, especially as the focus of this paragraph is usually on the journey of Young Goodman Brown's loss of faith. However, the staff's association to the serpent is a direct reference to the Fall of Man and the snake that tempts Eve in the Garden of Eden. The serpent is notorious for his deception and cunning, both traits are usually associated with the Devil. Therefore, the staff and its serpent-like properties come to represent the deceptive and evil nature of the Devil and man's susceptibility to temptation and sin. This makes the staff an incredibly important element in the story, because it serves as a constant reminder and symbol of the act of the Fall of Man. Additionally, the reference of a staff, a walking aid, as a potential deceptive object, also raises questions about whether Hawthorne hints that reliance and trust in physical aids can make people fall into the trap of sin. This expands the essay to raise discussion not only about the symbols in the story, but also about the implications on human natures and how religion and one's faith can be tested easily.2.4. The SerpentNext, the analysis moves on to discuss the symbolism of the serpent in the story. The serpent, also known as the snake, is often associated with evil and temptation in literature. As a result, the serpent is a common symbol for the Devil. In "Young Goodman Brown," the serpent is depicted as a scary, wicked animal. When Goodman Brown first sees the serpent, the author describes it as "winding his loathsome way" around the "crooked" staff. The description of the serpent and the staff together implies wickedness and trickery. This has symbolism in the story. The staff is in the hands of Goody Cloyse, a woman whom Goodman Brown looked up to as a spiritual guide. When Goodman Brown sees Goody Cloyse and the Devil conversing in the forest, the author notes that the Devil "threw it [the staff] down at her feet." This action suggests, as the Satanists believe, the rejection of the moral law of the Christian God. As a result, Goodman Brown is horrified to find that even the most pious and holy Christians in his society also are capable of succumbing to evil. In a broader context, the description of the serpent and the staff together and the revelation of the sinfulness of Goody Cloyse and other townspeople to the Devil are used to criticize the hypocrisies and corruptions within the Puritan society in America at that time. By using religious symbols that his audience would have easily recognized, Hawthorne suggests that there are darkness and sin not only dwelling in the hearts of individual people, but also lying deep within the society as a whole. The revelation to Goodman Brown of the true nature of his townsfolk and his subsequent loss of all faith in the goodness of society reflects a general sentiment that was held by many transcendentalists in the 19th century America, including Nathaniel Hawthorne himself; that societal institutions and popular religions were all just facades of true morality and spirituality.3. CharactersYoung Goodman Brown is the main character in the story. When first introduced, he is preparing to go on an errand from which his wife, Faith, has attempted to dissuade him. Throughout the story, Goodman Brown sees the people he respects most and who are the most religious - including his wife, Faith - engaging in immoral activities. These experiences cause him to lose faith in his fellow man. Young Goodman's wife, Faith, whose name obviously symbolizes her connection to her Puritan faith, takes on a central significance in the story. The first reference to her is as "aptly named" and her pink hair ribbons also serve as a symbol during the story. We learn that the devil, who has taken on the likeness of Goodman Brown's grandfather, has made a deep impression in Faith's mind. The character of the Devil, known as Old Man or Wild Deacon, is seen as the epitome of all evil in the story. His ability to look like either Goodman Brown's father and grandfather adds a psychological and menacing element to his corruption of Faith and Young Goodman Brown. Goody Cloyse, like most of the other characters in the story, appears to be morally guided by her Puritan religious zeal. As both a spiritual guide for Goodman Brown and a mentor of sorts for Faith, Goody Cloyse is a somewhat surprising participant in the demonic revelry that Goodman Brown witnesses in the forest. Deacon Gookin, we see that another member of the town's religious leadership is somehow in league with the Devil. This time, Deacon Gookin is found consorting with a local widow. He is far more helpful in illustrating the corrupt aspects of blindly following of the church. As with Goody Cloyse, the fact that Hawthorne included such a religiously exalted figure as the Deacon demonstrates that not even the most unassailable spiritual trust of Puritan society is safe from the corrupting influence of the devil and his catechisms.3.1. Young Goodman Brown"Young Goodman Brown" is the story of a young man faced with the reality that evil is a part of human nature. The story, published in 1835 and set in Puritan New England in the 17th century, addresses the same subjects and themes that Nathaniel Hawthorne's work is typically tied to. The character of Young Goodman Brown is introduced in the opening sentence of the piece as he bids farewell to his young wife of three months, Faith. Although this is a relatively modern piece in terms of literature, it is important to take into account the historical setting of the story, particularly the religious aspects of the time. Brown wanders away from his house and the village of Salem for one night in order to take a walk through the forest, which over time becomes the setting for the story's dark events. This is in fact the only physical setting that is described in the story. The time setting refers to the time in which the events happen and the time in which the story was written. This time setting is also carefully constructed to serve the purpose of the narrative. The story, published in 1835, is set in the 17th century, a key point being that it is set during a time when there is a dark, black cloud of suspicion and misunderstanding and judgment placed upon people - this being the Salem Witch Trials. The time setting is clearly one of the first elements of the story that an analyst should look at; it reveals not only logical and sequencing aspects of the story, but also it provides the bigger picture as well. Analysis of the forest as a physical setting in the story proves that the forest is not what it appears to be in reality. Given that Goodman Brown's journey and dark events occur in the forest, one can conclude that the forest symbolizes the Devil's dominion, or a place where evil is manifest. By the time Brown returns to the village it becomes obvious that he is not the same man that he was when he left. In this way, the forest takes on an allegorical role as a symbol of secrecy and evil power. Comparatively speaking, the historical context is constructed to provide logical reasoning and rationale for the time setting. The historical context serves to help the reader further understand the religious aspects that appear in the time setting and throughout the story. The time setting is actually on the pretext that the forest is the Devil's last stand and is only valid in the 17th century, when Pagan and Ancestral Fire Worship were prevalent.3.2. FaithFaith is Goodman Brown’s wife. She is the companion of Goodman Brown in his dream. In the beginning of the story, as Goodman Brown parts with Faith and leaves her alone, both Goodman Brown and Faith are young and immature. However, unlike Goodman Brown, who sees through the moral flaws of his society and then dies from the despair, Faith is still hopeful and she lives to be a happy woman. This fact suggests that Hawthorne is not overly cynical towards this society. As mentioned above, instead of joining the darkness immediately, Goodman Brown hesitates repeatedly on his way to the ritual. This casts doubts upon whether the demon worship in the forest is real. The fact that Goodman Brown is overdetermined to find out the evil secrets of the others in his dream also suggests his own insecurity and insincerity – he wants to prove that he is the only good man, by shaming all the others as devils’ followers. He justifies his intention by claiming that his relatives and friends cannot be devil worshippers, but he himself has serious doubts. This explains why he is so eager to make his own judgement, and why he is so disappointed. However, no matter what the results are in the dream, Goodman Brown becomes the only sinner and loses his faith in the end. We know that his faith is gone because his dying hours become a sceptical joke, and his view of this “dreary road” is full of “fearful” and “doubtful” shadows: the goodness of this world has been permanently tainted by his sinister experiences if they are real, and if Goodman Brown’s experience in the forest is just a dream, which seems very likely due to the evidence that we will explain later, the anxiety becomes self-generating.3.3. The DevilHaving lost his family and health from the corrupt practices of Judge Hathorne during both of the most famous witch trials in America's history (Salem Witch Trials and the Witch Hunt in Connecticut), "The Devil" in his story "Young Goodman Brown" by Nathaniel Hawthorne is more than just another witch. In fact, the Devil is not the well respected leader in the Puritan community he is accepted to be, but he is rather an accepted alternative. By showing a close relationship between the Devil and the Town's people, Hawthorne makes the "witch", not only more evil, but more animate. And Hawthorne makes sure to link this Devil with the two major witch trials in America's history: for this "new" witch or Devil in town is the son, or according to the Salem Records, the grandson of a past "witch". And establishing such a link shows how history is corrupted by the present. However, this link has a deeper meaning than the victims were not truly at fault, at least in the mind of the main character. The main character becomes a sort of modern day Job, losing everything with no compensation but with knowledge of his innocence and God's benevolence. For "The Devil" in "Young Goodman Brown" is not the simpering subservient usually referred to in the Salem records, Nathaniel Hawthorne has completely revised what is "acceptable" and what is "sinful". For the first time, there's not an isolated figure or figures that were responsible for the hysteria and persecutions that occurred, but it was the people themselves who put the faith into the Devil which caused such corruption and death. In present time of Nathaniel Hawthorne, he felt that the idea of a selective or popularly accepted evil was in practice again, as echoed by the McCarthy Era. By portraying the Devil in such a way, Hawthorne presents a society that could and did perpetuate such wrong doings. The convincing portrayal of the acceptance and faith in the Devil society shows how evil is just another option: even Goodman Brown was almost the Devil's disciple. And such was the nature of judgement of his generation that even now, with the Malum in se nature of sin being shown, does the faith in corrupt values die merely with knowing them? This feeling and question, however, has survived longer than the history of just the McCarthy Era and still plagues more than one person.3.4. Goody CloyseThe next character the reader encounters in "Young Goodman Brown" is Goody Cloyse. When Goodman Brown meets her in the forest, he is shocked and he tries to ignore her. He says to himself, "What if the devil himself should be at my very elbow?" This is significant because Goodman Brown thought that Goody Cloyse was a pious, kind woman, and her presence in the forest led him to question everything that he believed in. This ultimately foreshadows Brown's own turn to evil. Goodman Brown eventually cannot ignore her, and he hides behind a tree. He watches her take a pink ribbon from the woman who is with her. He notes that the woman seems to be effortlessly flying and that the man leading them carries a serpent staff. It is revealed later in the story that the woman is actually Faith, Goodman Brown's wife, and that it is implied that Goody Cloyse is actually a witch. This encounter and the knowledge that she is involved with the devil is what leads Goodman Brown to lose his faith and narrow-mindedly assume that everyone is evil. The encounter with Goody Cloyse is when Goodman Brown first starts to question his surroundings, as it seems that everything he thought was pious is now wicked and evil. Goodman Brown believes that his virtue has protected him from evil, but he comes to understand that he didn't ever actually resist it, showing that his faith wasn't as powerful as he thought and causing him to lose his innocence. This then destroys Goodman Brown's relationships with everyone else in the town; his knowledge of their dealings with the devil causes him to live a miserable life without any faith or trust in anything. He made his last stand against Faith, his wife, trying to resist the temptations of evil and corruption, but as he delved deeper into sin, even that relationship became poisoned. Despite his efforts to rekindle his relationship with God and resist the devil, Goodman Brown's misguided trust in himself and his fear lead to his eventual damnation. So, the revelation of Goody Cloyse's evil deeds and the loss of his love and trust in all those around him ultimately consume him and strip him of all happiness. In a larger sense, Goody Cloyse is symbolic of a loss of innocence. Her character allows Nathaniel Hawthorne to explore the brand of wickedness and evil that is founded from a questioning of innocence, in a society that is meant to be based on God and virtue. Hawthorne also explores the revelation of the true nature of the world - just because things appear a certain way does not make them honest or true - and the personal journey from a state of youth and immaturity to one of experience and knowledge. The encounter with her reveals the disillusionment that comes with growing up and realizing that the world is not as pure and good as one once believed.3.5. Deacon GookinHawthorne's story also introduces us to a character named Deacon Gookin, a well-respected member of the Puritan community in Salem. Deacon Gookin was a real historical figure associated with the notorious witch trials that took place in Salem. In writing these tragic events, Hawthorne's inclusion of a character like Deacon Gookin serves as a subtle reminder of the extreme religious beliefs and limitations of personal freedoms that marked this period in colonial America. Gookin's inclusion in the story and his enthusiasm for the dark ritual that would admit Brown to the devil's fold is another instance of the dichotomy between public persona and true character in the story, particularly evident among the male characters. On the one hand, the Deacon is painted as an upstanding citizen, devout Christian, and fine, unassuming man. His escort in the procession as the pair approach the full assembly in the forest decries his possession of extravagance and fashionable luxury. However, the Deacon is also given to excess and indulgence, especially when allowed out of the sight of his congregation. This can be inferred from the manner in which he kindles and instils the torch that serves to light the group in their discovery of the new convert Brown. Consequently, the character of Deacon Gookin as Hawthorne presents him is characterized not simply by the public interest and private faults evident in almost all the townsfolk; in fact, the religious hypocrisy is particularly evident with him. Gookin is especially significant as a figure in the story, however, particularly as a purveyor and practitioner of this double life. His position in the community and respectability must have been important in facilitating his encounter and subsequent eagerness to join the 'faithful' in the blasphemous ceremony of the forest. Such activity would doubtless strike a contemporary reader even more powerfully indicative of the deceptive nature of contemporary institutions such as the church, interconnected entirely with the failing moral compass of humanity. Gookin is, overall, a study of the dichotomy between appearance and truth throughout the story and a surface dedication to religious life obscures and enables a hidden surrender to baser desire and satisfaction. He becomes a microcosm of the revelations that Goodman Brown experiences and a recurring mirror of the stereotypes that are unraveled as superficial and unfounded by the limits placed and pushed on those town leaders and protectors. Through Deacon Gookin and the other members of the forest march, Hawthorne is able not only to develop the momentum and pacing of the story and the steady revelation of Brown's descent into disillusionment but also to expand his own interpretative critique and representation of this class of pious, virtuous individuals.