



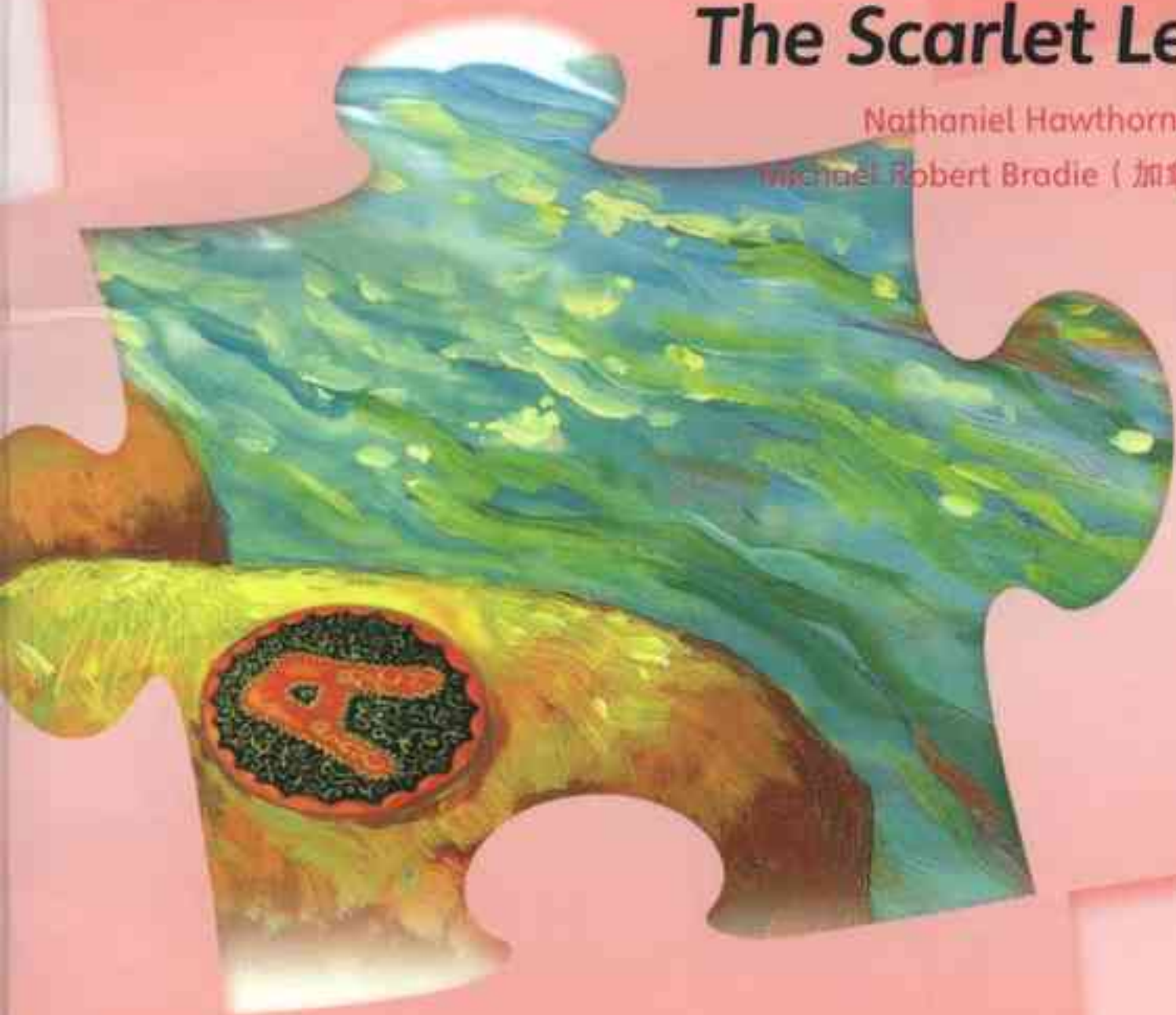
轻松英语名作欣赏

红字

The Scarlet Letter

Nathaniel Hawthorne (美) 著

Michael Robert Bradie (加拿大) 改写



第五级
适合高二、
高三年级



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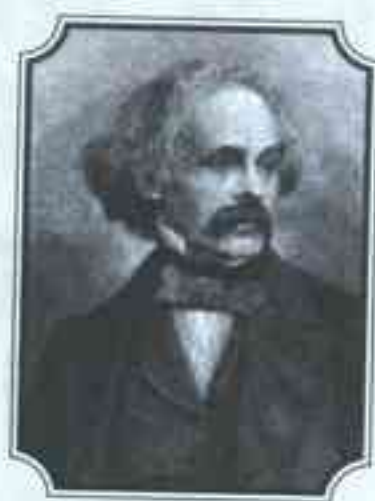
外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

关于故事和说故事的人

纳撒尼尔·霍桑 (1804~1864)

Nathaniel Hawthorne



纳撒尼尔·霍桑，美国文学界最伟大的小说家之一。他出身于一个严格的清教徒家庭，孩提时代就对阅读产生了强烈的兴趣。大学毕业后，霍桑开始了写作生涯，为家乡的一些期刊撰写文章和短篇小说。1837年，他发表了第一部署名小说《故事新编》，由此确立了主流作家的地位。霍桑以其《红字》(1850) 和《带有七个尖角阁的房子》(1851) 著称。艺术上，霍

桑擅长揭示人物的内心冲突和心理描写，想象丰富，常用象征手法，善于挖掘潜藏于事物背后的深刻意义，着重探讨人性和人的命运。



《红字》以17世纪中叶的波士顿殖民地为背景，讲述了赫斯特·普林、阿瑟·丁梅斯代尔以及罗杰·奇林沃思三人之间的感情纠葛，细致地表现了清教徒社会的清规戒律以及传统习俗带给三位主角的悲伤、孤独和悔恨。

赫斯特·普林独自生活在美国，传闻她的丈夫已经葬身海底。然而，独居的赫斯特却生下了一个女儿，并给女儿取名为珠儿。赫斯特由此遭到了示众的处罚，被迫终生佩戴象征耻辱的红色“A”字。她拒绝吐露情人的身份，而她失踪已久的丈夫罗杰·奇林沃思也在她遭受公开羞辱的那一天重新出现了。从那以后，奇林沃思隐瞒了自己的真实身份，以行医为名对妻子的出轨进行报复。与此同时，赫斯特的情人、年轻的丁梅斯代尔却因内心的愧疚而身染疾病……



Contents

目录

	Before You Read	2
	阅读准备	
CHAPTER 1	A TERRIBLE SIN	4
第1章	可耻的罪行	
	Comprehension Quiz	24
	你读懂了多少	
CHAPTER 2	HESTER'S PEARL	26
第2章	赫斯特的掌上明珠	
	Understanding the Story	42
	背景知识	
CHAPTER 3	REVENGE	44
第3章	复仇	
	Comprehension Quiz	64
	你读懂了多少	
CHAPTER 4	THE FOREST	66
第4章	树林	
	Understanding the Story	82
	背景知识	
CHAPTER 5	THE REVELATION	84
第5章	真相大白	
	Comprehension Quiz	106
	你读懂了多少	
	译文	109

The Scarlet Letter



红 字

Before You Read

阅读准备



Hester Prynne 赫斯特·普林

I am a beautiful and independent woman, but my life is miserable and unlucky. I am married woman, but I had an affair with another man and had a baby. Now the townspeople want me to tell them who the father of my child is! However, I will never tell. I will never betray another person.

我是位美丽而独立的女性，但我的生活充满了痛苦和不幸。我结了婚，可跟另一个男人有染，并生了孩子。现在镇里的人都要我告诉他们谁是这孩子的父亲！但我不会说。我永远不会背叛那个人。



Reverend Dimmesdale 丁梅斯代尔牧师

Oh, my life is wretched! I tell people to behave properly, and to live according to God's will. They respect me despite my youth. Yet, I am not worthy of their respect. I have a terrible secret that is burned upon the skin above my heart. Oh, how can I wash away my guilt and be free once more?

唉，我悲惨的生活！我告诫人们要正当行事，要遵从上帝的意愿生活。尽管我年轻，人们都敬重我。然而，我不值得他们尊敬。我的心口上，灼烧着一个可怖的秘密。唉，我怎样才能洗清我的罪恶，重获自由呢？



Pearl 珠儿

While other children have a father, I don't! However, this does not bother me too much. I am free to play and do what I want most of the time. The adults think that I have no manners, but they are all too serious and boring for me!

其他的孩子都有父亲，我没有！我可不为这烦心。大多时候，我可以随意玩，做我爱做的事。大人们觉得我没教养，可在我看，他们太正经、太无聊啦。



Roger Chillingworth

罗杰·奇林沃思

When I was away, my wife had a baby with another man. But I did not blame her. She always told me that she did not love me. However, I do blame the father of the baby. I will find out who he is and punish him for his cowardly silence.

我不在的时候，我的妻子和另外一个男人有了孩子。我并不责怪她。她一向对我讲，她并不爱我。但是，我要责罚那个孩子的父亲。我要找出他是谁，惩治这个一声不吭的懦夫。



Pastor John Wilson & Governor Bellingham

约翰·威尔逊牧师与贝林厄姆总督

It is our duty to make sure our Puritan society lives according to the will of God. Hester Prynne must reveal to us who the father of her child is. Only then will she be forgiven by God.

我们的职责是保证我们的清教徒子民按照上帝的意愿行事。赫斯特·普林必须告诉我们她孩子的父亲是谁。只有这样她才能被上帝宽恕。

A Terrible Sin

可耻的罪行



Although the forefathers of the Boston Colony strove to create a utopian society, two of the first things they built when they made their town were a cemetery and a prison. On this day, twenty years after the first Puritan settlers arrived in the New World colony, the townspeople gathered outside the prison.

“Good women,” proclaimed one woman, “if we judged wicked women like Hester Prynne, she would not have the easy sentence that the town magistrates have handed her!”

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> forefather <i>n.</i> 祖先 | <input type="checkbox"/> settler <i>n.</i> 移居者 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> colony <i>n.</i> 聚居地 | <input type="checkbox"/> proclaim <i>v.</i> 宣告 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> strive <i>v.</i> 努力, 奋斗
(strive-strove-striven) | <input type="checkbox"/> judge <i>v.</i> 审判 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> utopian <i>adj.</i> 乌托邦(式)的 | <input type="checkbox"/> wicked <i>adj.</i> 邪恶的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cemetery <i>n.</i> 墓地 | <input type="checkbox"/> sentence <i>n.</i> 判决 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Puritan <i>adj.</i> 清教徒的 | <input type="checkbox"/> magistrate <i>n.</i> 地方行政官 |

"Yes!" agreed another woman. "They should at least brand the mark upon her forehead with a hot iron! By placing the mark on the front of her gown, she can cover it up anytime!"

"Yes!" cried another. "She may cover it as she likes, but the mark will always be on her heart!"

Then the prison door, covered in iron spikes, flew open. A large, frightening figure in black came out from the inner darkness. With his hand, he tried to usher out a young woman. But she pushed the hand away and stepped out into the open by her own free will, with an air of dignity.



KEY WORDS

- brand v. 在……上打上标记
- spike n. 大钉
- figure n. 隐约可见的人影

- usher v. 引, 领
- step out 加快脚步
- dignity n. 尊严

In the woman's arms was a three-month-old baby. The baby winked because it was the first time it had ever felt sunlight on its face. The mother, standing fully revealed amid the townspeople, lowered the baby in her arm to show her gown. She was blushing, but she wore a proud smile. On the breast of her gown was a large letter A. The letter was made of fine, red cloth and embroidered with rich, gold thread. The design was artistic and fanciful.

Hester Prynne was a tall young woman, with an elegant figure and dark gleaming hair. Those who knew her were amazed at her beauty and ladylike comportment under these circumstances.

"She certainly has great skill with the sewing needle," remarked one of the women, "but what a shameful way to show it!"

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> wink <i>v.</i> 眨眼 | <input type="checkbox"/> fanciful <i>adj.</i> 奇异的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> reveal <i>v.</i> 展现 | <input type="checkbox"/> elegant <i>adj.</i> 优美的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lower <i>v.</i> 放低 | <input type="checkbox"/> gleam <i>v.</i> 发微光 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blush <i>v.</i> 脸红 | <input type="checkbox"/> comportment <i>n.</i> 举动 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> breast <i>n.</i> (衣服的) 胸部 | <input type="checkbox"/> circumstances <i>n.</i> 环境 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> embroider <i>v.</i> 在……上刺绣 | <input type="checkbox"/> sewing needle 缝衣针 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> thread <i>n.</i> 线 | <input type="checkbox"/> remark <i>v.</i> 评说 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> artistic <i>adj.</i> 艺术性强的 | <input type="checkbox"/> shameful <i>adj.</i> 可耻的 |



“Make way in the King’s name!” shouted the prison officer. “Everyone will have a chance to get a good view of this wicked woman from now until noon. Come along, Hester. Show your scarlet letter in the marketplace!”

KEY WORDS

□ make way 让路

□ marketplace *n.* 市场

A lane opened up between the spectators, and Hester Prynne walked toward the area appointed for public punishment. Calmly, she came to the scaffold at the western end of the marketplace, next to Boston's oldest church. The scaffold was a platform where punishments were carried out publicly so as to impress the citizenry into obeying the laws. There

was a pillory there, designed to hold a human head tightly and keep it in the public gaze.

But Hester Prynne was not sentenced to its confinement. Her sentence was just to stand on the platform for three hours.



KEY WORDS

- ☐ lane *n.* (人群里的) 通路
- ☐ spectator *n.* 旁观者
- ☐ appointed *adj.* 布置好的
- ☐ punishment *n.* 惩罚
- ☐ scaffold *n.* 绞刑架
- ☐ platform *n.* 平台
- ☐ carry out 执行

- ☐ impress *v.* 使铭记
- ☐ citizenry *n.* 公民
- ☐ obey *v.* 遵守
- ☐ pillory *n.* 颈手枷
- ☐ gaze *n.* 注视
- ☐ confinement *n.* 禁锢

She climbed the steps and began her sentence. The onlookers stared at her and the scarlet letter in solemn silence. Hester had prepared herself to face the assault of the public's scorn and insults, but she found their heavy silence almost more difficult to bear. When she stood there, her mind began to travel back into itself as memories began to surface. She could see and feel the days of her happy childhood. Then she saw her face, gazing in the mirror, and its glow of young beauty. Then she saw the face of a man who was much older. His eyes were dim, and his skin was pale from many years of cloistered study. His figure was slightly misshapen, his left shoulder a bit higher than his right.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> onlooker <i>n.</i> 旁观者 | <input type="checkbox"/> surface <i>v.</i> 呈现 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> solemn <i>adj.</i> 严肃的 | <input type="checkbox"/> glow <i>n.</i> 兴高采烈 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> assault <i>n.</i> (武力或口头上的) 攻击 | <input type="checkbox"/> dim <i>adj.</i> 暗淡的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> scorn <i>n.</i> 嘲弄 | <input type="checkbox"/> pale <i>adj.</i> 苍白的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> insult <i>n.</i> 侮辱 | <input type="checkbox"/> cloistered <i>adj.</i> 与外界隔绝的 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> misshapen <i>adj.</i> 畸形的 |

Then Hester Prynne's memories ended, and she found herself back on the scaffolding, surrounded by the townspeople. They were still staring at her and the scarlet letter on her breast. She looked down at the letter on her chest and touched it to assure herself it was real. And it was, as were the infant and her burning shame.

After standing there for a little while, Hester saw a person on the edge of the crowd that she couldn't ignore. He was a white man standing next to a native. The white man, small, with a wrinkled face, was wearing a mix of a civilized and savage costume. Although he had tried to disguise his physical features, it was clear that his left shoulder was higher than his right. As she stared at him, her child cried in pain from the tightness of her grasp on it, but she did not seem to hear.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> surround <i>v.</i> 围住 | <input type="checkbox"/> civilized <i>adj.</i> 文明的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> assure <i>v.</i> 使确信 | <input type="checkbox"/> savage <i>adj.</i> 野蛮的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> infant <i>n.</i> 婴儿 | <input type="checkbox"/> costume <i>n.</i> 服装 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> on the edge of 在……边上 | <input type="checkbox"/> disguise <i>v.</i> 掩饰 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ignore <i>v.</i> 忽视 | <input type="checkbox"/> physical <i>adj.</i> 身体的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> native <i>n.</i> 当地人 | <input type="checkbox"/> feature <i>n.</i> 特征 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> wrinkled <i>adj.</i> 皱纹多的 | <input type="checkbox"/> grasp <i>n.</i> 抱 |

The man, who was a stranger in this town, stared back at Hester Prynne. At first his glance was careless, but as he began to understand the situation she was in, a look of horror came across his face.



KEY WORDS

□ glance *n.* 一瞥

□ horror *n.* 恐惧



“I ask you, kind sir,” the man said to a townsman. “Who is this woman, and why must she suffer such public shame?”

“You must be a stranger to this town,” answered the townsman. “Everyone who lives here knows about Hester Prynne and her wicked ways. She has created a huge scandal among the members of Reverend Dimmesdale’s church.”

KEY WORDS

□ suffer *v.* 遭受

□ scandal *n.* 反感, 愤慨

□ reverend *n.* 教士

"That's right," replied the man. "I am a stranger. I have been a captive of the savage heathens in the south for a long time. Please tell me of this woman Hester Prynne's crime."

"This woman is the wife of an English scholar. He decided to join our colony and sent his wife over ahead of him. But this man hasn't been heard from in two years, and his young wife was left to her own poor judgment."

"Ah, I see what you mean," said the stranger with a bitter smile. "So who is the father of the baby she's holding?"

"That fact is the puzzling question that remains for everyone," said the townsman. "Mrs. Prynne refuses to name the other sinner."

"Her husband should come and solve the mystery," said the stranger.

KEY WORDS

- captive *n.* 俘虏
- heathen *n.* 野蛮的人
- crime *n.* 罪行
- scholar *n.* 有文化者
- puzzling *adj.* 令人困惑的

- remain *v.* 仍是
- refuse *v.* 拒绝
- name *v.* 提到
- sinner *n.* (道德上的) 罪人

“Yes, he should if he’s still alive,” agreed the townsman. “The penalty for this crime is normally death, but the magistrates were merciful because her husband is probably at the bottom of the sea. But afterward she will bear the scarlet mark of an adulterer for the rest of her life.”

“It is a wise punishment,” said the stranger. “Her mark will serve as a living sermon against sin. But it angers me that her fellow sinner is not standing there next to her. But he will be discovered and known. He will!”

As the stranger walked away, Hester Prynne kept her eyes on him. She was relieved to be in the presence of the crowd so as not to meet the man alone.



KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------|
| □ penalty <i>n.</i> 刑罚 | □ sermon <i>n.</i> 训诫 |
| □ merciful <i>adj.</i> 仁慈的 | □ fellow <i>adj.</i> 同伴的 |
| □ at the bottom of 在……底 | □ discover <i>v.</i> 找到 |
| □ bear <i>v.</i> 佩带
(bear-bore-borne) | □ relieved <i>adj.</i> 宽慰的 |
| □ adulterer <i>n.</i> 通奸者 | □ in the presence of 当着……
的面 |



Suddenly, she was awoken from her thoughts by a voice, "Hester Prynne, you must now listen to me!" Standing on the balcony of the nearby church, used by magistrates to pronounce sentences, was Governor Bellingham. There were other noblemen on the balcony with the governor and his men.

Hester Prynne faced the balcony. The voice she had heard belonged to Boston's oldest minister, Pastor John Wilson.

KEY WORDS

- awake v. 唤醒
(awake-awoke-awaken)
- pronounce v. 宣判

- governor n. 总督
- minister n. 牧师
- pastor n. 本堂牧师

"Hester Prynne," continued the old pastor, "I have told your minister here, the Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale, that he should force you to tell us the name of the wicked man who had tempted you to this sad fall here and now."

Then Governor Bellingham spoke, "Good Reverend Dimmesdale, as her minister, you are responsible for this woman's soul. You must urge her to speak and therefore prove her repentance."

To respond, Reverend Dimmesdale rose to address the crowd. The reverend was a young clergyman who had graduated from one of the great English universities. His powerful voice and impressive intellect had already brought him great respect and admiration from the colonists he served.

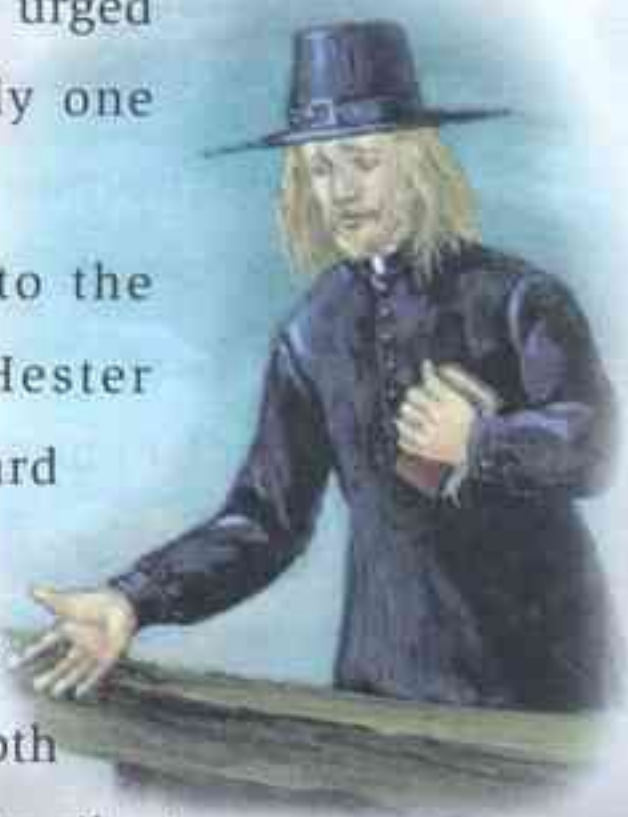
KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> force v. 迫使 | <input type="checkbox"/> repentance n. 悔悟 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tempt v. 引诱 | <input type="checkbox"/> clergyman n. 牧师 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> here and now 此时此地, 立刻 | <input type="checkbox"/> graduate v. 毕业 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> be responsible for 对……负责任 | <input type="checkbox"/> intellect n. 非凡的才智 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> soul n. 灵魂 | <input type="checkbox"/> admiration n. 钦佩 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> urge v. 力劝 | <input type="checkbox"/> colonist n. 殖民地开拓者 |

"Speak to the woman, brother," urged Pastor Wilson. "You are the only one who can save her soul!"

Reverend Dimmesdale looked to the woman on the scaffolding. "Hester Prynne," he began. "You've heard what the good Pastor Wilson has said. I urge you to speak the name of your fellow sinner. It will give both of your hearts peace. Do not remain silent out of misplaced pity or tenderness for him!"

Even the baby in Hester Prynne's arms was affected by the reverend's powerful voice. It looked up at him with a half-happy, half-sad expression on its face. But to this entreaty, Hester just shook her head.



KEY WORDS

- misplaced *adj.* 错置的
- tenderness *n.* 温情
- affect *v.* 影响

- expression *n.* 表情
- entreaty *n.* 恳求
- shake one's head 摇头

“Woman, do not test the limits of Heaven’s mercy!” said Pastor Wilson with an angry voice. “Speak the name, and your repentance will be enough to take the scarlet letter off your breast!”



KEY WORDS

□ limit *n.* 界限

□ Heaven *n.* 天国；上帝

"Never!" shouted Hester Prynne. She looked deeply into Reverend Dimmesdale's eyes. "This letter is branded too deeply on my heart to remove it so easily. I hope to endure his agony as well as my own!"

"Speak!" cried the townspeople around the scaffolding. "Speak the name of your baby's father!"

She went pale as she seemed to recognize one of the stern, cold voices coming from the crowd. But she insisted, "I will not speak. My baby will never have an earthly father. She will have to know the heavenly one!"

"She won't confess his name," whispered Dimmesdale, as he leaned over the balcony with his hand over his heart. "She will not speak!" he announced to the crowd.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> remove v. 去掉 | <input type="checkbox"/> insist v. 坚持 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> endure v. 忍受 | <input type="checkbox"/> earthly adj. 尘世的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> agony n. (极度的) 痛苦 | <input type="checkbox"/> confess v. 供认, 坦白 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> recognize v. 认出 | <input type="checkbox"/> whisper v. 低语 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> stern adj. 严峻的 | <input type="checkbox"/> lean v. 斜靠 |

One Point Lesson

I hope to endure his agony **as well as** my own!
我愿意承受自己的痛苦, 也愿意替他承受痛苦!

as well as: 除……之外(也); 和

e.g. I love you **as well as** your father. 我喜欢你, 也喜欢你父亲。

Once Hester had returned to the prison, she was in a state of nervous hysteria. And the baby kept crying wildly. Master Brackett, the jailer, kept a constant watch on her to make sure she did not hurt herself or her baby. Finally, he brought in a doctor to see her. The doctor was the same stranger who had taken an interest in her while she had been on the scaffolding. His name was Roger Chillingworth.

As the jailer led him into the room and Hester Prynne saw him, she became as still as death.

“Don’t worry,” the doctor told the jailer. “I’ll take great care of Mrs. Prynne and her child. You will soon have peace and quiet in your prison.”

The doctor mixed up an herbal remedy from local plants that he had learned from the natives.

“Here Mrs. Prynne, give this to your baby. She’ll only accept it from your hands, and it will calm her.”

KEY WORDS

- state *n.* 状态
- nervous *adj.* 神经质的
- hysteria *n.* 歇斯底里
- jailer *n.* 监狱看守
- constant *adj.* 不断的

- make sure 确保
- mix up 拌和
- herbal *adj.* 草本植物制的
- remedy *n.* 药物

Hester pushed his hand away. "Would you avenge yourself by poisoning this innocent baby?" she whispered.

"Woman, don't be foolish!" the doctor responded in a cold yet soothing manner. "I would not harm this poor, misbegotten baby."

Hesitantly, she gave the drink to her infant, and it dropped peacefully off to sleep.



KEY WORDS

- **avenge** *v.* 替……报仇
- **innocent** *adj.* 无辜的
- **soothing** *adj.* 安慰的

- **manner** *n.* 方式
- **misbegotten** *adj.* 私生的
- **hesitantly** *adv.* 犹豫地



Then the doctor offered Hester some medicine for herself. Looking warily into the cup, she said, "And how do I know you wouldn't kill me with poison for revenge?"

"Hester," responded the doctor, "do you know me so little that you think my purposes could be so shallow? Would not letting you live with this burning shame on your breast be the best revenge of all?"

At this, she smiled a little and took her medicine. The doctor continued speaking while her medicine took effect. "You know, I should have guessed this would have happened. I could have seen that scarlet letter blazing at the end of the church aisle we walked down on the day we got married."

KEY WORDS

- offer *v.* 提供
- warily *adv.* 谨慎地
- shallow *adj.* 浅薄的

- take effect 产生效用
- blaze *v.* 发(强)光
- aisle *n.* 过道

"You know," she said to him, "I was always honest with you. I always told you I felt no love for you, nor would I ever pretend to. But I am sorry. I have greatly wronged you."

"No," he answered. "We have wronged each other. I should not have trapped your blossoming youth into this unnatural bond with my decay. The scales between us are balanced. But I will seek revenge against the cowardly man who has left you to suffer this shame alone. You might not tell me his name, but I will discover it. I will! Now all I ask you is that you keep my identity as your husband a secret in this town. And do not tell the man upon whom I'll seek revenge about me."

"I will keep your secret as I have his," said Hester.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| □ pretend <i>v.</i> 装作 | □ bond <i>n.</i> 契约 |
| □ wrong <i>v.</i> 不公正地对待 | □ decay <i>n.</i> 腐朽 |
| □ trap <i>v.</i> 使陷于困境 | □ scales <i>n.</i> 天平 |
| □ blossoming <i>adj.</i> 成长的 | □ cowardly <i>adj.</i> 胆小的 |
| □ unnatural <i>adj.</i> 不合常情的 | □ identity <i>n.</i> 身份 |

One Point Lesson

You know, I **should have guessed** this would have happened.
你知道，我应该猜到会有这样事情的。

should have + 过去分词：虚拟语气，表示本该发生却没有发生的事。

e.g. You **should have gone** to the party. 你应该去聚会的。

Comprehension Quiz

你读懂了多少

A

将下列两栏相关的内容连线。

- | | | |
|-----------------------|---|---|
| ① Hester Prynne | • | • ⑤ the man Hester Prynne married |
| ② Pastor Wilson | • | • ⑥ a magistrate in Boston colony |
| ③ Roger Chillingworth | • | • ⑦ the oldest minister in Boston colony |
| ④ Governor Bellingham | • | • ⑧ a handsome young minister with a powerful voice |
| ⑤ Reverend Dimmesdale | • | • ⑨ a tall woman with an elegant figure |

B

选择划线单词的正确用法。

- ① (a) She gathered a scarlet letter on her breast.
(b) The townspeople gathered outside the prison.
- ② (a) The baby ushered when it saw the sunlight.
(b) With his hand, he tried to usher out a young woman.
- ③ (a) That fact is the puzzling question that remains for everyone.
(b) The old man was puzzling a look in her eye.

答案

A ① - ⑤ ② - ⑥ ③ - ⑦ ④ - ⑧ ⑤ - ⑨

B ① (b) ② (b) ③ (a)

C 根据故事内容回答下列问题。

- ① What did the scarlet A on Hester Prynne's bosom stand for?
(a) Alphabet. (b) Adulterer. (c) Admirable.
- ② What fact did Roger Chillingworth make Hester Prynne swear to conceal?
(a) That he was not a real doctor.
(b) That he was the father of her baby.
(c) That he was her husband.



D 用所给词语完成句子。

fanciful merciful sermon spikes misbegotten

- ① Her mark will serve as a living _____ against sin.
- ② Then the prison door, covered in iron _____, flew open.
- ③ The design was artistic and _____.
- ④ The penalty for this crime is normally death, but the magistrates were _____.
- ⑤ I would not harm this poor, _____ baby.

答案

C ① (b) ② (c)

D ① sermon ② spikes ③ fanciful ④ merciful ⑤ misbegotten

Hester's Pearl

赫斯特的掌上明珠



The imprisonment of Hester Prynne ended shortly after her discussion with the doctor, but the torment of her life among the townspeople was just beginning.

She was free to leave the town. But Hester had decided to stay and face her lifelong sentence. She and her baby moved into a small cottage on the outskirts of town. She was able to make a decent living with her expert sewing skills. But she spent very little of her income on herself. She dressed her young daughter very well and gave her extra money to charity.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> imprisonment <i>n.</i> 关押 | <input type="checkbox"/> make a living 谋生 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> discussion <i>n.</i> 商议 | <input type="checkbox"/> decent <i>adj.</i> 还不错的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> torment <i>n.</i> 折磨 | <input type="checkbox"/> expert <i>adj.</i> 熟练的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> cottage <i>n.</i> 小屋 | <input type="checkbox"/> income <i>n.</i> 收入 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> on the outskirts of 在……的郊区 | <input type="checkbox"/> charity <i>n.</i> 慈善事业 |

Because of her exceptional skill, the townspeople always hired Hester to do work. But they never allowed her to forget her shame with their looks and words.

Hester's daughter, Pearl, had been named not for a pearl's great beauty or value, but rather for its great price. Nevertheless, the baby soon blossomed into a beautiful but strange child. When Hester watched her daughter and perceived the young girl's strange behavior, she worried that the child was somehow also connected and influenced by the scarlet letter.



KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> exceptional <i>adj.</i> 卓越的 | <input type="checkbox"/> behavior <i>n.</i> 行为 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> nevertheless <i>adv.</i> 然而, 不过 | <input type="checkbox"/> influence <i>v.</i> 影响 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> perceive <i>v.</i> 察觉 | |

As Pearl got older, it became clear that the child could not be forced to adapt to rules. She would not heed the simplest of her mother's commands. And her temper was uneven. It was as if the warfare of Hester's spirit were carrying on in Pearl.

Hester would have liked to see her playing with other children. But Pearl was as much an outcast as her mother, and she accepted her position from the time when she was very young. Fate had built an unbreakable wall around Pearl. When she did meet some of the town's vicious Puritan children, who gathered around her, she would become terrible, flinging stones at them and screaming like a small savage.

The sight of her combative daughter brought Hester to her knees, asking, "Dear Heavenly Father, what kind of being is this that I've brought into the

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> adapt <i>v.</i> 适应 | <input type="checkbox"/> position <i>n.</i> 地位 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> heed <i>v.</i> 听从 | <input type="checkbox"/> unbreakable <i>adj.</i> 不易打破的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> command <i>n.</i> 命令 | <input type="checkbox"/> vicious <i>adj.</i> 邪恶的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> temper <i>n.</i> 脾气 | <input type="checkbox"/> fling <i>v.</i> (用力地) 扔
(fling-flung-flung) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> uneven <i>adj.</i> 不稳定的 | <input type="checkbox"/> combative <i>adj.</i> 好斗的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> warfare <i>n.</i> 斗争 | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> outcast <i>n.</i> 被遗弃者 | |



world?" And when little Pearl heard her mother cry like this, she would merely look at her and smile with her elf-like intelligence.

One of the strangest things about Pearl was that as a baby, her first interest had not been her mother's smile, as it is with most infants. Rather her first attraction was to the scarlet A on her mother's bosom.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> merely <i>adv.</i> 仅仅 | <input type="checkbox"/> attraction <i>n.</i> 吸引(力) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> elf-like <i>adj.</i> 精灵般的 | <input type="checkbox"/> bosom <i>v.</i> 胸部 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> intelligence <i>n.</i> 理解力, 智力 | |

One Point Lesson

It was **as if** the warfare of Hester's spirit were carrying on in Pearl.
情形似乎是, 赫斯特内心的争斗正在珠儿的身上上演。

as if + 从句: 好像, 似乎……

e.g. It seemed **as if** I were dreaming. 好像我在做梦似的。



Some years later, Pearl was running around. One day, she gathered a bundle of wildflowers. She then began pitching them at the letter on her mother's breast and dancing up and down with joy when one of them hit the scarlet letter.

KEY WORDS

□ a bundle of 一束

□ pitch v. 投, 掷

Hester's first instinct was to cover the letter with her arms. But she resisted, considering each flower's painful strike against her heart to be part of her penance. To her mother's obvious pain, Pearl only laughed, her eyes flashing with a demonic glow.

"Are you really my child?" Hester asked her playfully. "Who made you, and who sent you here?"

"You tell me," replied Pearl, who became very serious. "Do tell me."

"The Heavenly Father sent you," Hester answered after a pause.

But her hesitation was not lost on the child's keen intelligence. "He did not send me," cried Pearl. "I have no Heavenly Father!"

"Oh please," cried Hester. "You mustn't say that. He created all of us!"

"No, you must tell me," laughed Pearl, who danced about. "Do tell me!"

Hester shuddered, unable to answer her question.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> instinct <i>n.</i> 反应 | <input type="checkbox"/> demonic <i>adj.</i> 恶魔似的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> consider <i>v.</i> 考虑到 | <input type="checkbox"/> playfully <i>adv.</i> 开玩笑地 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> strike <i>n.</i> 打, 击 | <input type="checkbox"/> pause <i>n.</i> 停顿 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> penance <i>n.</i> (赎罪的) 苦行 | <input type="checkbox"/> keen <i>adj.</i> 敏锐的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> flash <i>v.</i> (眼光等) 闪耀 | <input type="checkbox"/> shudder <i>v.</i> 战栗 |

One day, Hester brought Pearl with her to Governor Bellingham's mansion. She told Pearl they were going to return a pair of gloves he had asked her to embroider, but the real reason was that Hester had heard rumors that the townspeople were planning to take her daughter away from her.

They suspected Pearl might be a demon child, so by taking her away, they planned to save Hester's soul. Hester had also heard that Governor Bellingham was at the head of this plan. So she made up her mind to speak with him.

That day, she had dressed Pearl in a bright red dress that was embroidered with gold thread, just like her scarlet A, so that the child seemed to be a living extension of it.



KEY WORDS

- ☐ mansion *n.* 官邸
- ☐ rumor *n.* 谣言
- ☐ suspect *v.* 怀疑

- ☐ demon *n.* 恶魔
- ☐ extension *n.* 延伸部分

When they reached the luxurious mansion, Pearl saw a blossoming rosebush and demanded that her mother pick one of the red flowers for her.



KEY WORDS

□ luxurious *adj.* 奢侈的

□ rosebush *n.* 玫瑰丛

When Hester refused, Pearl burst into a fit of tears and let out an ear-piercing scream. But she then suddenly became silent when she saw some people approaching them.

In the group were Governor Bellingham, Pastor Wilson, the young Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale, and Doctor Roger Chillingworth. Reverend Dimmesdale's health had been suffering as of late, and the doctor, who was treating him, had become his close and constant companion.

Looking with surprise at the little girl dressed in stunning scarlet, the governor asked, "Who is this little one here?"

"Ah, this is the daughter of the unfortunate Hester Prynne," Pastor Wilson said. "She is the one we've spoken about recently."

KEY WORDS

- ☐ burst into 突然……起来
- ☐ fit *n.* (感情等的一阵) 发作
- ☐ ear-piercing *adj.* 刺耳的

- ☐ approach *v.* 向……靠近
- ☐ companion *n.* 同伴
- ☐ stunning *adj.* 令人印象深的

“Yes,” said Governor Bellingham.

“We shall look into this matter right here and now. Hester Prynne,” he said, looking directly at the letter on her breast, “we have greatly discussed as to whether it is our duty to protect the eternal souls of you and your child. Don’t you think it would be best for this child to be taken and clothed plainly and disciplined in the truths of Heaven and Earth?”



“I can teach my daughter better than anyone else,” said Hester Prynne, putting her finger on her letter. “I have learned from this.”

“Woman,” said the governor, “that is your badge of shame, and the reason we think it best to put the child in more righteous hands.”

KEY WORDS

- ☐ protect *v.* 保护
- ☐ eternal *adj.* 永恒的
- ☐ clothe *v.* 穿衣
- ☐ plainly *adv.* 朴素地

- ☐ discipline *v.* 训导
- ☐ badge *n.* 标记; 徽章
- ☐ righteous *adj.* 正直的



“Nevertheless,” Hester Prynne said calmly, “it has taught me lessons which will make my daughter wiser and better.”

“We will be the judges of that,” said Bellingham. Then he sat down in a chair and tried to put Pearl between his knees, but the child, unaccustomed to the touch of anyone but her mother, escaped.

Pastor Wilson, who was known to be good with children, continued the examination, “Pearl, can you tell me who made you?”

KEY WORDS

□ unaccustomed *adj.* 不习惯的 □ escape *v.* 逃走

Hester Prynne had educated her child at home in the matters of Puritan beliefs about the creation of the human spirit. But Pearl decided to answer the serious question mischievously. She then announced that she had not been made in Heaven, but rather she had been plucked from the wild rosebush that grew by the prison door.

"This is terrible," the governor cried. "Here is a three-year-old child who can't tell who made her!"

Hester Prynne grabbed Pearl into her arms, "God gave me this child in return for all the things he has taken from me. She is my happiness and my torture! I will die before you take her from me!"

"Child," said old Pastor Wilson, "Pearl will be cared for better than you can do!"

KEY WORDS

☐ belief *n.* 信仰

☐ mischievously *adv.* 淘气地

☐ pluck *v.* 采, 摘

☐ torture *n.* 痛苦

“God gave her to me for safekeeping!” screamed Hester Prynne. Then she turned to the young Reverend Dimmesdale and cried, “You speak for me! You were my pastor and in charge of my soul! You know me better than these men can! Don’t let them take her away from me!”

“There is truth in her words,” Reverend Dimmesdale said in his powerful, trembling voice. “God gave this child to this mother to teach her to change her wicked ways. That bond is sacred. Who are we to say that God made a mistake in giving the child to her? Who are we to take away the good Lord’s one blessing in her life?”

“Well spoken,” said Pastor Wilson. “What do you say, Governor Bellingham? The good reverend has pleaded convincingly on Hester Prynne’s behalf.”

“Indeed he has,” answered the governor. “Pearl shall stay with her mother, and we will make no

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> safekeeping <i>n.</i> 安全保护 | <input type="checkbox"/> convincingly <i>adv.</i> 令人信服地 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> blessing <i>n.</i> (上帝的) 赐福 | <input type="checkbox"/> on one’s behalf 为了……的利益 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plead <i>v.</i> 辩护 | |

further scandal of the matter. At the proper time, the church's officers will make sure that she goes to school and church. That's all."

Then young Pearl grabbed Reverend Dimmesdale's hand and put it on her cheek. The minister looked around and then kissed her forehead.



KEY WORDS

□ proper *adj.* 适当的

□ cheek *n.* 面颊

“A strange child,” said Doctor Chillingworth.
“Perhaps if we study her nature, we’ll be able to
guess the identity of her sinful father.”

“It would be sinful to do that,” answered Pastor
Wilson. “It would be better to pray on the matter
and leave it to God’s will.”



KEY WORDS

□ pray v. 祈祷

After the matter was settled, Hester Prynne and Pearl left the governor's mansion. Outside the house they met Mistress Hibbins, Governor Bellingham's bitter sister, who was executed a few years later for practicing witchcraft.

"Hst hst," she hissed. "Will you two come with us to the forest tonight to hold congregation with the Black Man?"

"We will not!" answered Hester Prynne. "I will stay at home with my daughter. But if they had taken her from me, I would have come with you and signed my name in the evil Black Man's book in my own blood!"

After this, it could be said that even this early, the child had saved Hester Prynne's soul from Satan's trap.

KEY WORDS

- ☐ execute *v.* 将……处死
- ☐ witchcraft *n.* 巫术
- ☐ hiss *v.* 嘶嘶地说出
- ☐ congregation *n.* 集会

- ☐ the Black Man 指魔鬼撒旦
- ☐ evil *adj.* 邪恶的
- ☐ Satan 撒旦

About Puritans and Pilgrim 清教徒及其早期移民

It is generally known that the first Pilgrims came from England, and this is true to a certain degree. Most of these Pilgrims actually came from Holland, where they lived for a while after leaving England. The Pilgrims were Puritans who believed that everyone should be highly educated, and that any



one of their members could be elected to high positions in the church. The English monarchy did not like these ideas, as they were actually similar to a democratic form of government.

一般认为，最初的清教徒移民来自英国。这种说法只在一定程度上是对的。最早的这些移民实际上大多数来自荷兰，因为他们离开英国之后又在荷兰生活了一段时间。移民者是这样一些清教徒，他们认为所有人都应当得到良好的教育，而他们中的任何人也都应该有机会经过选举来获得教会中的高阶职位。英国的君主政权不喜欢这些想法，因为它们事实上跟民主政体的概念很接近。

However, the Puritans were not political. They were more interested in living according to their strict and pure religion. The Puritans left England for Holland, but they did not like living there, either. They were afraid that the Dutch influence would corrupt weaker members of their Puritan community. They wanted to live in a remote area, where they would be free not only to live their lives as they saw fit, but also to control others and to force them to live a strict Puritan lifestyle



also. They were successful in creating this type of society after coming to the New World, and this is the setting for the "Scarlet Letter."

Actually, their ideas served as some of the basic, founding ideas of the American nation many, many years after the Pilgrims arrived in the New World.

不过，清教徒并不怎么关心政治。他们更感兴趣的是按照自己那严苛纯粹的信仰来生活。清教徒们离开英国去了荷兰，但荷兰的生活也不能叫他们满意。他们担心，荷兰人会对清教徒当中的软弱者造成影响，使之走向堕落。他们希望生活在一个偏远的地方，可以自由自在地按自己认为合适的方式生活，还可以强制他人遵从严苛的清教徒生活方式。到达“新世界”之后，他们成功地建立起了这样的社会，而这正是《红字》的故事背景。

实际上，在清教徒移民到达“新世界”多年之后，他们的想法就已成为美利坚民族基本观念的一个组成部分。

Revenge

复仇

It was around the time that Roger Chillingworth settled in the town as a doctor that the young Reverend Dimmesdale's health began to decline. The townspeople saw the coincidence of the ailing reverend and the doctor's arrival as a miracle enacted by the providence of God. Therefore the town elders thought it was God's will that Reverend Dimmesdale's health be placed in Dr. Chillingworth's hands.

The two men soon became constant companions. Reverend Dimmesdale was fascinated by Chillingworth's



KEY WORDS

- ☐ decline *v.* 逐渐恶化
- ☐ coincidence *n.* 巧合
- ☐ ailing *adj.* 有病痛的
- ☐ miracle *n.* 奇迹

- ☐ enact *v.* 展现
- ☐ providence *n.* 天意
- ☐ fascinate *v.* 强烈地吸引住

wealth of experience as a doctor and an older man, while the doctor spent his time looking for clues to the reverend's illness. Chillingworth was convinced that his bodily sickness was the result of a troubled heart and mind. Yet the doctor was unable to figure out just what was troubling the reverend's mind.

The two men soon moved into a house together. But as time passed, the townspeople began to see Doctor Chillingworth differently. His appearance and demeanor had changed remarkably since moving to the town. Where he was once calm and kind, they now saw evil on his face.

Rumors around town said that the reverend's poor health was caused by Satan, who haunted him in the form of Roger Chillingworth.



KEY WORDS

- demeanor *n.* 外表; 举止
- remarkably *adv.* 显著地

- haunt *v.* (鬼魂等) 常出没于

It happened one day that the reverend visited Chillingworth in his laboratory, where he often made drugs from plants he had collected. The doctor was examining a bundle of ugly-looking plants from the graveyard that stood next to their house.

"I found these leaves in that graveyard right there," said the doctor, pointing out the window. "This variety is new to me. I found them growing out of an unmarked grave. I suspect they grew out of the man's heart. Perhaps they represent a dreadful secret that he was buried with. It would have been better that he confessed it during his lifetime."

"Maybe he wanted to but was unable," said the reverend, gripping his breast as if it were throbbing with pain. "When the members of my church confess their sins, they are always greatly relieved."

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> graveyard <i>n.</i> 墓地 | <input type="checkbox"/> dreadful <i>adj.</i> 可怕的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> variety <i>n.</i> 品种 | <input type="checkbox"/> grip <i>v.</i> 抓住 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> unmarked <i>adj.</i> 没有标志的 | <input type="checkbox"/> throb <i>v.</i> (心脏、脉搏等) 跳动 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> represent <i>v.</i> 代表, 象征 | |



Just then the doctor and the reverend saw Hester Prynne and Pearl walking over a footpath that ran through the graveyard. Pearl was disrespectfully skipping along from the top of one tomb to the next. Then she gathered a handful of prickly burrs from a burdock plant and stuck them along the lines of her mother's scarlet A.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> disrespectfully <i>adv.</i> 不尊重地 | <input type="checkbox"/> burr <i>n.</i> 刺果 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> skip <i>v.</i> 跳, 蹦 | <input type="checkbox"/> burdock <i>n.</i> 牛蒡 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> a handful of 一把 | <input type="checkbox"/> stick <i>v.</i> 扎入 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prickly <i>adj.</i> 多刺的 | (stick-stuck-stuck) |

"Ah, that child has no respect for law or authority," said Roger Chillingworth. "Just the other day I saw her splash water from a horse trough on the governor. What in Heaven's name is wrong with her?"

Suddenly, Pearl ran up to the window and threw one of the prickly burrs at Reverend Dimmesdale. Then she laughed and called to her mother, "Let's go, Mother. Or the Black Man is going to get you



KEY WORDS

- ☐ authority *n.* 权威
- ☐ splash *v.* 溅, 泼

- ☐ trough *n.* 水槽

like he has already gotten the reverend. Come quickly, or he'll catch you! But he can't catch me!"

"Do you think Hester Prynne is less miserable for bearing her shame in that letter on her breast, rather than hiding it away in her heart?" the doctor asked the reverend as the mother and her child walked away from the window.

"Yes, I believe so," answered the reverend. "But what I really want to talk about right now is my health. What is your judgment as to the cause of my chronic ailment?"

"Frankly speaking," said the doctor, "I want to know if you have any secrets you're failing to tell me. Have you told me everything about your problems?"

KEY WORDS

- ☐ miserable *adj.* 痛苦的
- ☐ chronic *adj.* 长期性的
- ☐ ailment *n.* 病痛

- ☐ frankly speaking 坦率地说
- ☐ fail to 不能

This probing line of questioning visibly flustered the reverend. "But. . . of course I have," he stammered. "Of course there are parts of my soul I could never expose to an Earthly doctor."

"But how can I cure your body if you have not laid open your mind and soul?"

At this, the reverend suddenly became fiercely angry and shoved the doctor's hands away from him. With a frantic gesture, he stormed out of the room.

Within a couple of hours, the reverend returned to the doctor's laboratory and apologized for his outburst. The two resumed their friendship effortlessly. But later that day, while the reverend slept in his chair, the doctor crept silently into his room. Putting his hand on the sleeping man's chest, the doctor pushed back the reverend's shirt and looked at his bare chest. The doctor shuddered for a

KEY WORDS

- ☐ probing *adj.* 探查的
- ☐ visibly *adv.* 明显地
- ☐ fluster *v.* 使紧张
- ☐ stammer *v.* 结结巴巴地说
- ☐ expose *v.* 使暴露
- ☐ lay open 揭露
- ☐ fiercely *adv.* 强烈地
- ☐ shove *v.* 猛推

- ☐ frantic *adj.* 发狂似的
- ☐ apologize *v.* 道歉
- ☐ outburst *n.* (感情等的) 爆发
- ☐ resume *v.* 恢复
- ☐ effortlessly *adv.* 不(大)费力地
- ☐ creep *v.* 蹑手蹑脚地走动
(creep-crept-crept)
- ☐ bare *adj.* 赤裸的



moment at what he saw. Then a devilish look of happiness and satisfaction crept across his face.

After this day, the relationship between Roger Chillingworth and Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale changed subtly. The doctor maintained his calm appearance. But secretly, he was controlling the reverend and planning to take revenge on him.

KEY WORDS

□ devilish *adj.* 魔鬼似的
□ subtly *adv.* 微妙地

□ maintain *v.* 保持



Dimmesdale often punished himself secretly for the crime he had committed. He would force himself to go without food and sleep, and would even whip himself until he was bloody. Then one night he thought of a new method for self-punishment. In the middle of the night, he got dressed and quietly left the house.

As if he were walking through a dream, the reverend went to the western end of the marketplace.

KEY WORDS

- commit *v.* 犯 (错误、罪行)
- whip *v.* 鞭答

- ▣ bloody *adj.* 血淋淋的
- ▣ method *n.* 方法

to the scaffolding where Hester Prynne had stood seven years earlier.

On that dark May night, the reverend climbed the steps of the scaffolding and stood on the platform atop it. He felt that the town was asleep and that there was no danger of anyone discovering him.

But while he stood there, his mind was overcome with horror, and he felt the scarlet letter burning from within his breast. It was the source of his pain and illness. Then suddenly, he released a shriek so long and loud that he expected the whole town to awake and come running to see him in his place of shame.

But the drowsy townspeople must have thought his voice was merely the cries of wild animals or the cackles of witches, because nobody came running.

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> atop <i>prep.</i> 在……顶上 | <input type="checkbox"/> shriek <i>n.</i> 尖叫 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> be overcome with (感情等) 压倒 | <input type="checkbox"/> drowsy <i>adj.</i> 昏昏欲睡的 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> release <i>v.</i> 释放 | <input type="checkbox"/> cackle <i>n.</i> 咯咯的笑 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> witch <i>n.</i> 女巫 |

Then the reverend perceived a light approaching from the distance. When it got close enough for him to recognize the bearer, the reverend saw that it was Pastor Wilson. The pastor did not notice the reverend and kept walking past. The reverend knew that the pastor was coming from a late night vigil in the death chamber of Governor Winthrop, who had probably just passed away.

After the pastor passed, another light approached. This time the reverend could see that it was Hester Prynne and Pearl.

"Hester Prynne," said the reverend, "is that you?"

"Reverend Dimmesdale," exclaimed Hester, who was taken by surprise to find him standing atop the scaffolding in the dark. "Yes, it is Pearl and I. We are coming from Governor Winthrop's death chamber, where I measured him for a robe. We're on the way back to our cottage."

KEY WORDS

- ☐ bearer *n.* 携带者
- ☐ vigil *n.* 守夜
- ☐ death chamber 停尸房

- ☐ pass away 去世
- ☐ exclaim *v.* 惊叫
- ☐ measure *v.* 量



“Hester, Pearl, come up here,” said the reverend. “You have both been up here before, but I was not with you.”

Silently, Hester held Pearl's hand, and they climbed up the steps of the platform. In the darkness, the reverend found Pearl's hand and held it. A fresh force of life poured into his heart, and the blood rushed through his veins. The weight was lifted from his soul!

KEY WORDS

□ fresh *adj.* 新的

□ vein *n.* 血管

“Reverend,” said little Pearl, “will you stand here tomorrow at noon with me and my mother?”

“No, not tomorrow,” said the reverend. “But I shall one day.”

“But when?” asked Pearl.

“I shall stand with you and your mother before the Lord on Judgment Day,” he answered.



KEY WORDS

□ Judgment Day 上帝的最后审判日

Pearl laughed at this, and suddenly a meteor flashed and lit up the night sky. There in its luminescence stood Hester with her scarlet A, the reverend, holding his hand over his heart, and Pearl, holding both their hands.

When he returned his eyes to earth, the reverend saw Pearl pointing toward a person coming closer from the distance. As the person came closer, they saw that it was Roger Chillingworth.

"Hester, who is that man?" asked the reverend. "I've become frightened of him. I've started to hate him!"

"I can tell you who he is," said Pearl. Then she put her lips to the reverend's ear and whispered nonsense, and then she laughed out loud.

"Child, are you mocking me?" asked the reverend.

"You are not true," said the little girl. "You won't stand here with me and mother tomorrow at noon!"

KEY WORDS

☐ meteor *n.* 流星

☐ luminescence *n.* 冷光

☐ nonsense *n.* 胡说

☐ mock *v.* 嘲弄

“Good sir,” said Roger Chillingworth, who had come up to the scaffolding. “What ever are you doing out here at this time of night? Have you been sleepwalking?”

“How did you know I was here?” asked the reverend fearfully.

“I had no idea you were here. I was just walking home from the governor’s death chamber. You’d better come home with me now, or you’ll not have enough energy to give your sermon tomorrow.”

“Yes,” said the reverend, “I’ll go home with you.” The man suddenly felt cold and depressed, as if rudely awoken from a dream.

After the night on the scaffolding, Hester Prynne became worried that the reverend was losing his mind. She remembered her agreement with Roger Chillingworth some years earlier, that she would hide

KEY WORDS

□ sermon *n.* 布道

□ depressed *adj.* 沮丧的

□ agreement *n.* 协定

his true identity as her husband.

But now she felt it was her fault for not warning the reverend of Chillingworth's terrible intentions. She resolved that she would speak with Chillingworth and tell him that she could no longer keep that promise. She had to tell the reverend who his tormentor really was.



Hester did not have to wait long to speak with the doctor. She saw him in the forest, gathering plants one afternoon a few days later.

"Run along, and play," she said to Pearl, "I want to speak with the doctor." Then she turned to Chillingworth and said, "Doctor, I need to speak with you about an important matter."

KEY WORDS

- ☐ fault *n.* 错误
- ☐ intention *n.* 意图
- ☐ resolve *v.* 决定

- ☐ keep one's promise 遵守诺言
- ☐ tormentor *n.* 折磨者



“Ah, Mistress Hester,” he said with a smile, “I hear the town council may soon allow you to take that scarlet letter off your bosom.”

KEY WORDS

- mistress *n.* ……小姐 (用于女子姓名前作称呼) □ council *n.* (市、镇等的) 地方议会

"If I were worthy to be done with it, it would fall off by itself," she replied, noticing that the past seven years had transformed Chillingworth into a creature that resembled a devil. She knew that his life of seeking revenge must have been transforming his mind, body, and soul into such a dark form.

"What do you see in my face that makes you look at it so seriously?" asked the doctor.

"Something that makes me want to weep," she answered. "But let us speak of another miserable man. Seven years ago, I promised to keep your identity a secret. But I have a duty to help this man who you are slowly killing. I must tell him who you are so that he may understand why you are tormenting him."

KEY WORDS

□ be worthy to 值得做……

□ transform v. 使变样

□ creature n. 人, 家伙

□ resemble v. 像

□ seek v. 寻找

(seek-sought-sought)

□ weep v. 哭泣

(weep-wept-wept)

“That cowardly priest is conscious of my influence and my curse,” said Chillingworth. “He’s just too afraid to admit it to himself. You are foolish to want to help such a low wretch as him, who abandoned you with child to the mercy of this town for all these years.”

“I must help him,” cried Hester. “This scarlet letter instructs me to do so. I will keep your secret no longer.”

“Go ahead, and tell him,” said Chillingworth. “I pity you for wasting your goodness on that weak shamble of a man.”

“I pity you, too,” Hester answered. “I pity you for suffering such hatred that it has changed a wise man into a demon!”

KEY WORDS

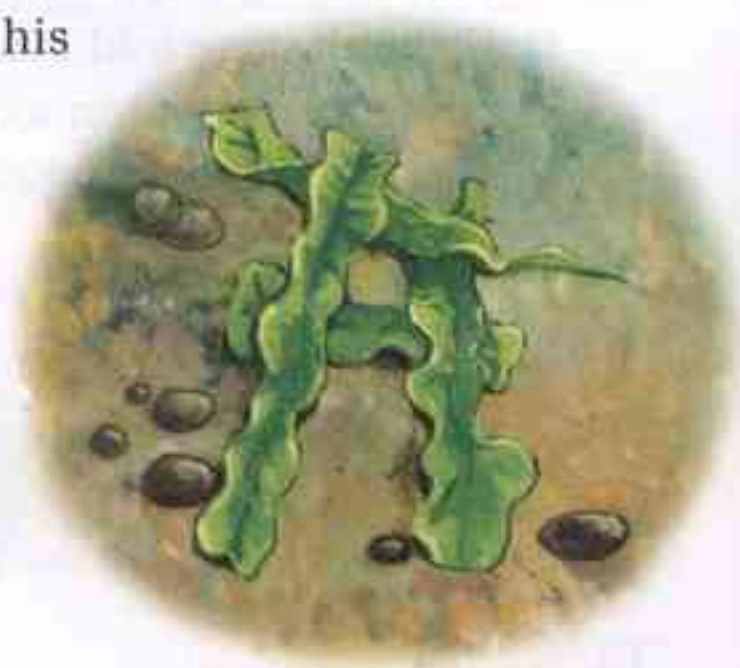
- ☐ priest *n.* 神父, 牧师
- ☐ be conscious of 意识到
- ☐ curse *n.* 诅咒
- ☐ wretch *n.* 卑鄙的人

- ☐ abandon *v.* 抛弃
- ☐ instruct *v.* 教, 指导
- ☐ goodness *n.* 善行, 仁慈
- ☐ hatred *n.* 憎恨

Hester found Pearl down by the stream where she had been playing. The little girl had arranged a green A, just like her mother's, on the bosom of her dress.

"Ah, my Pearl, but your green A does not have the same meaning as the one I'm doomed to wear. Do you know why I wear this letter?"

"I do," answered Pearl. "For the same reason that the reverend holds his hand over his heart."



KEY WORDS

□ arrange v. 排列, 布置

□ be doomed to 注定……

Comprehension Quiz

你读懂了多少

A

根据故事内容判断正误，正确的选T，错误的选F。

- ① Pearl was a very normal little girl. ☐ T ☐ F
- ② Hester Prynne wanted the town to take Pearl away from her. ☐ T ☐ F
- ③ Pearl could not be forced to adapt to rules. ☐ T ☐ F
- ④ Hester Prynne told Pearl they were going to the governor's mansion to return a pair of gloves the governor had asked her to embroider. ☐ T ☐ F
- ⑤ Pearl could not accept her position as an outcast in the town. ☐ T ☐ F



B

选择划线单词的正确用法。

- ① (a) The two men soon became constant companions.
(b) He used plants from the forest to make companions.
- ② (a) He pushed aside the man's hands effortlessly.
(b) The two resumed their friendship effortlessly.
- ③ (a) The doctor shuddered for a moment at what he saw.
(b) The shuddered leaves were ugly.

答案

A ① F ② F ③ T ④ T ⑤ F

B ① (a) ② (b) ③ (a)

C 根据故事内容回答下列问题。

- ❶ Where did Pearl tell the governor and Pastor Wilson she came from?
 - (a) She told them she came from Heaven.
 - (b) She told them she came from her mother.
 - (c) She told them she came from the rosebush on the side of the prison.
- ❷ Why did Chillingworth suggest they study Pearl's nature?
 - (a) To guess the identity of her father.
 - (b) Because she was so strange.
 - (c) To determine if she was a demon child from Hell.
- ❸ Where did Roger Chillingworth say the ugly leaves had grown from?
 - (a) From the nose of the Black Man.
 - (b) From the heart of a man buried with a secret sin.
 - (c) From the rosebush growing on the side of the prison.
- ❹ Why did Reverend Dimmesdale climb to the top of the scaffolding at night?
 - (a) Because he wanted to punish himself for a sin.
 - (b) Because he wanted to see the far side of the town.
 - (c) Because he wanted to enjoy a beautiful summer night.

答案

C ❶ (c) ❷ (a) ❸ (b) ❹ (a)

The Forest

树林

Hester remained strong in her resolve to tell the reverend just who Roger Chillingworth really was. On a day Hester knew that the reverend would be passing through the forest, she set out to cross his path, taking along little Pearl. As they entered the forest, Pearl cried out, "Mother, the sunshine doesn't love you! It runs away and hides because of the A on your bosom!"

"Then you had better run away and try to catch it!" answered her mother. The little girl actually did catch the sun, standing amid its brilliant splendor.

KEY WORDS

☐ set out 出发☐ brilliant *adj.* 灿烂的☐ splendor *n.* 光辉

As they passed deeper into the forest, Pearl asked her mother to sit and rest for a while.

"Tell me a story," she demanded.

"A story about what?" asked Hester.

"A story about the Black Man who haunts the forest with his big, heavy, black book with iron clasps. And tell me about how he makes people write their names in his book using their own blood! Did you ever meet the Black Man, Mother?"



KEY WORDS

□ clasp *n.* 扣紧物 (如书夹等)

One Point Lesson

Then you **had better** run away and try to catch it!
那你最好跑过去, 试试把它抓住吧!

had better + 动词原形: 最好做……

e.g. You **had better finish** your work before going to bed.
上床睡觉之前你最好把作业写完。

“Who told you about this?” Hester asked.

“Last night, when we were at the house you were watching, the old woman thought I was asleep while she spoke of it. She said that the scarlet letter was the Black Man’s mark on you.”

“I’ll tell you a story about the Black Man if you won’t ask me any more afterward,” said Hester. “I met the Black Man once, and this scarlet letter is his mark.”

Suddenly, Hester heard footsteps coming through the forest.

“Pearl, run along now, and play. I want to speak with the man who’s coming toward us.”

“Is it the Black Man?” inquired Pearl.

“Of course not, silly child. It is the reverend.”

“It is,” said Pearl, who could now see the reverend coming through the darkened forest. “And he has his hand over his heart. That’s because he wrote his name in the book and the Black Man put his mark

KEY WORDS

- ☐ afterward *adv.* 以后
- ☐ inquire *v.* 询问

- ☐ silly *adj.* 傻的
- ☐ darkened *adj.* 暗的



over the reverend's heart. But why doesn't he wear it on the outside like you?"

"Now, go, child!" cried Hester. "Stay near the stream, and don't go too far!"

Pearl walked away, singing to herself. Hester saw the reverend coming down the path. He looked weaker and more depressed than ever.



"Arthur Dimmesdale," she called out to him.
"Reverend Dimmesdale!"

"Who speaks?" answered the reverend nervously.
"Hester, is that you?"

"Yes, it is I," she answered. They had not been alone together in over seven years because of their situation. They were both nervous and happy to see one another.

KEY WORDS

□ situation *n.* 处境

Fixing his eyes on her, he asked, "Hester, have you found peace?"

She smiled drearily and looked down at the symbol on her bosom. "Have you?"

"No, I have found nothing but darkness and despair! I preach purity to my followers, but I know the emptiness and agony of what I truly am. I feel like Satan is always laughing at me."

"You are wrong to torture yourself like this," said Hester. "You have repented deeply for years now. You must learn to leave your sin in the past!"

"No, Hester," cried the reverend. "I'm not worthy to wear these holy garments that clothe me. You are lucky to wear the A on your chest. My mark burns within me! If only I had one friend to whom I could tell the truth of my sins!"

KEY WORDS

- ☐ drearily *adv.* 消沉地
- ☐ symbol *n.* 象征; 符号
- ☐ preach *v.* 宣讲, 布(道)
- ☐ purity *n.* 贞洁

- ☐ follower *n.* 追随者
- ☐ repent *v.* 忏悔
- ☐ garment *n.* 衣服

"I am that friend and your partner in sin," said Hester. Then she struggled to give the reverend the message that was the reason for their meeting on this day. "You also have a great enemy, who lives under the same roof as you."

"An enemy under my roof?" the reverend said with surprise. "What do you mean?"

"Oh Arthur," cried Hester. "Please forgive me. A long time ago, I agreed to deceive you. The old man, the doctor whom they call Roger Chillingworth, he was my husband!"

A look of terrible violence came over the reverend's face. He sank down to the ground and buried his face in his hands.

"I should have known it!" groaned the reverend. "My heart told me he was hiding a terrible secret from the day I first met him. Why did I not understand? Oh, Hester Prynne! You are responsible for

KEY WORDS

☐ struggle v. 挣扎

☐ forgive v. 原谅

(forgive-forgave-forgiven)

☐ deceive v. 欺骗

☐ violence n. 狂暴

☐ groan v. 呻吟着说

this! I can never forgive you!" he shouted.

Hester Prynne threw her arms around the reverend and held him close to her. His cheek rested on the scarlet letter. He tried to struggle free, but she would not let him go.

"You must forgive me," she said over and over. "You must forgive me."



"Yes," cried the reverend softly. "I forgive you now. We are not the worst sinners in the world. That old man's revenge is blacker than my sin. He is killing me in cold blood. What we did was not so bad as that."

"No, what we did had a sacredness of its own. We told that to each other when we made love," she whispered. "Have you forgotten?"



KEY WORDS

- ☐ in cold blood 蓄意地; 残忍地 ☐ make love 表示爱意
☐ sacredness *n.* 神圣

"No," he whispered. "I have not forgotten."

This was the gloomiest hour of their lives. But in the darkness of it, there was a charm that made them linger together. There they sat amid the dark forest, holding hands and kissing.

"Roger Chillingworth knows that you will reveal his identity," said the reverend. "Now he will point his finger at me in front of the whole town."

"No, I don't think he'll reveal your sin to the public," she said. "He will find other secret ways to satisfy his dark passion for revenge. You must get away from this terrible man!"

"Yes, he's killing me," cried the reverend hysterically. "But what can I do, Hester? Help me, please!"

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> gloomy <i>adj.</i> 悲观的, 无望的 | <input type="checkbox"/> reveal <i>v.</i> 揭露 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> charm <i>n.</i> 魔力 | <input type="checkbox"/> passion <i>n.</i> 激情, 热情 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> linger <i>v.</i> 继续逗留 | <input type="checkbox"/> get away from 摆脱…… |

One Point Lesson

What we did was **not so bad as** that.
我们做下的事情没有他的那么邪恶。

not so + 形容词 + as: 没有……, 不如……

e.g. She is **not so beautiful as** her sister. 她没有她姐姐那么漂亮。

"The sea brought you to this New World, and it can carry you back to the old one. You should go back to England, or you could live in Germany, France, or even in Italy."

"But how could I leave my post here? Even though my soul is ruined, I'm needed to help others."

"You can't help anybody if you're crushed under the weight of your misery. You must leave this place behind," she said. "The future could be filled with new chances for success. Do anything except lay down and die!"

"Oh, Hester," cried the reverend. "I must die here. I don't have the strength or courage to risk going back into the strange, cold world alone."

Then in a deep whisper, Hester replied, "You will not go alone."

At this, Arthur Dimmesdale looked into her eyes with joy and hope.

KEY WORDS

- ☐ even though 尽管
- ☐ ruined *adj.* 毁坏了的
- ☐ crush *v.* 压垮

- ☐ success *n.* 成就
- ☐ strength *n.* 力量
- ☐ courage *n.* 勇气

“We won’t look back,” said Hester. “The past is gone. See!”

Then with her fingers she unhooked the scarlet letter from her breast and flung it away from her onto a rock at the edge of the stream. The letter lay there, glittering like a lost jewel.



KEY WORDS

□ unhook v. 解开

□ glitter v. 闪烁



Hester heaved a huge sigh of relief as the burden of shame and anguish left her heart. The freedom she felt made her realize what a weight it had truly been. Hester undid her cap and let her dark, beautiful hair fall down around her shoulders. Then the sunlight came through the tops of the trees and flooded the forest.

Hester looked again at the reverend with eyes full of joy and said, "Now you must get to know our little Pearl! You have seen her, but you do not really know her yet! She's a strange child, but you will learn to love her dearly."

"Do you think she will want to know me?" asked the reverend hopefully, "I have always been afraid of little Pearl."

KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> heave v. (费劲地)发出(叹息、呻吟等) | <input type="checkbox"/> anguish n. 极度的痛苦 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> burden n. 重担 | <input type="checkbox"/> realize v. 认识到 |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> flood v. 充满 |

"Ah, that is so sad," answered Hester. "She will love you dearly. She is not far off now. I will call her. Pearl! Pearl!"

Pearl was away, gathering up flowers for her mother. She heard the call and came back toward them slowly.

"Come here," said Hester. "I want you to become a dear friend of the reverend."

But Pearl did not obey her mother's command. The child only pointed to her mother's breast, devoid of the scarlet letter, and stamped her foot.



KEY WORDS

- ☐ gather up 采集
- ☐ devoid of 没有

- ☐ stamp v. 踩 (脚)

"I see," said Hester. "Small children don't like to see the things they've always known change even slightly. She is missing the letter that she's seen on me since the day she was born." Hester pointed to the letter at the edge of the stream and said, "There's the letter, Pearl. Bring it to me now."

"You pick it up yourself," replied Pearl.

Frustrated with the child, Hester sighed and walked to the side of the stream and hooked the letter back on her breast.

"Do you know your mother now, child?" she said to her daughter.

"Yes, now you are my mother indeed!" said little Pearl, bounding across the stream to join them.

"Come and see him, Pearl. He wants to greet you. He loves you. Will you love him, too?" asked Hester.

"Does he really love us?" Pearl asked, looking at her mother in the eyes with sharp intelligence. "Will he walk hand in hand with us into town?"

KEY WORDS

- ☐ slightly *adv.* 轻微地
- ☐ frustrate *v.* 使灰心

- ☐ bound *v.* 跳, 跃
- ☐ greet *v.* 问候

“Not now, child,” answered Hester. “But soon he will be with us all the time.”

“And will he always keep his hand over his heart?” Pearl inquired.

Dimmesdale, embarrassed by the child's questions, stooped over and kissed her forehead, hoping to soften her view of him. But as soon as his lips left her forehead, she ran to the stream and washed the kiss off her brow, as if it were something dirty.

Then she stayed apart from her mother and the reverend while they discussed their plans to be together in the near future.



KEY WORDS

□ embarrass v. 使窘迫

□ stoop v. 俯身

The Symbols in the Scarlet Letter 《红字》里的象征符号



Hawthorne used symbols throughout the “Scarlet Letter” to reinforce his main ideas. The most important symbol in the “Scarlet Letter” is, of course, the red letter “A” itself. This letter stands for “adultery” and is an obvious symbol of Hester’s sin. However, Hester wears it proudly, and it changes meanings as time passes. Eventually, it can be seen as a symbol for “able”. Pearl, Hester’s daughter, serves as a symbol of a living version of the scarlet letter. She is troublesome, and this punishes Hester. On the other hand, she is also a blessing. Pearl gives her mother reason to live.

为了强调自己的主要观点，霍桑用象征符号贯穿了整部《红字》，最重要的象征符号当然就是红色的“A”字本身。这个字母是“通奸”(adultery)一词的字头，显然是标志着赫斯特所犯的罪行。然而，赫斯特骄傲地佩戴着这个字母，它的意义也随着时间的流逝而发生了改变。最终，我们可以视之为“能力”(able)的象征。赫斯特的女儿珠儿象征着在现实中活化的红字。她爱惹麻烦，赫斯特因此接受着惩罚。另一方面，她也是一个祝福，因为她的母亲因她而有了生存的理由。

Compared to Pearl, the scarlet letter is almost useless because Pearl is a symbol of the passion that created the sin. This reflects the uselessness of the Puritan "punishment" that is given to Hester. Hester would not give in to their demands, and instead becomes a proud and independent woman.

Another symbol appears in the form of the meteor that lights up the night sky as Dimmesdale stands on the scaffolding with Hester and Pearl. Just after he tells Pearl he will stand with her mother on Judgment Day, this light from this meteor "reveals" to the world that Dimmesdale belongs with Hester and Pearl. We find out later that he is actually Pearl's father. These types of symbols are literary techniques that authors use to help reinforce their main themes.



跟珠儿相比，红字几乎全无用处，因为珠儿就象征着引发罪行的那种激情。我们由此可知，清教徒加于赫斯特身上的所谓“惩罚”也是徒劳无益的。赫斯特不会屈从于他们的戒律，相反却成为了一个自尊自立的女人。

书中的另一个象征以流星的形式出现，当丁梅斯代尔与赫斯特和珠儿一起站在刑台上的时候，这颗流星照亮了夜空。恰在丁梅斯代尔告诉珠儿他将与她母亲一同面对最后审判日之后，流星出现了，用它的光芒“昭告”世界：丁梅斯代尔是属于赫斯特和珠儿的。到后来，我们就发现他实际上是珠儿的父亲。诸如此类的象征符号是作家用以突出作品中心主题的文学手段。

The Revelation

真相大白

After leaving the forest, the reverend could not believe their meeting had been real. They had decided that the cities of Europe would be the best place for them to begin their new lives. And it happened that there was a ship in Boston Harbor set to leave for the Old World in four days. Through Hester's charity work, she knew the ship's captain and was able to make arrangements that she, the reverend, and Pearl would depart with the ship.

When Hester told the reverend of her arrangement, he was overjoyed and remarked, "How fortunate, as I'm set to give the election sermon in only three day's time."

KEY WORDS

- harbor *n.* 港口
- leave for 离开去……
- depart *v.* 离开

- overjoyed *adj.* 极度高兴的
- fortunate *adj.* 幸运的

The election sermon, to commemorate the swearing-in of the new governor, was the high point in the career of any New England clergyman.

Dimmesdale returned from his talk with Hester possessing a sense of great physical energy that was very unusual for him. He found that no matter what he did, he could not become tired.



KEY WORDS

- ☐ commemorate v. 纪念
- ☐ swearing-in n. 宣誓就职

- ☐ possess v. 拥有

One Point Lesson

He found that **no matter what** he did, he could not become tired.
他发现，自己不管做什么事都不会觉得疲倦。

no matter what: 不管怎样……

e.g. **No matter what** I say, he will not believe me.
不管我说什么，他都不会相信我的。



Finally, the reverend entered the peace and solitude of his study, where he could write his most important election sermon. While he was occupied with this task, there came a knock on the door. When the reverend said, "Come in," he feared he would behold an evil spirit, and he did. It was Roger Chillingworth. The reverend remained speechless.

KEY WORDS

- ☐ solitude *n.* 独居; 孤寂
- ☐ be occupied with 全神贯注于
- ☐ behold *v.* 看见
(behold-beheld-beheld)

- ☐ speechless *adj.* 一时说不出话来的

"Hello, Reverend," said Chillingworth. "I suspect you will need my medical assistance to help you put your heart and strength into the task of making the election sermon."

"Not this time," answered the reverend solemnly. "My recent walk through the woods has provided me with a renewal of spirit and energy. I will not need any of your drugs."

They both knew that they were no longer trusted friends, but rather bitter enemies.

"Reverend, are you sure you shouldn't use my services to help you make this most important sermon? Heaven knows you may not be here next year to make another one."

"Yes, Heaven grant it, I'll be in a better world," replied the reverend. "But in my present frame of body, I don't need your medicine."

"Well, I'm glad to hear it," said the doctor.

KEY WORDS

□ assistance *n.* 帮助
□ solemnly *adv.* 郑重地
□ renewal *n.* 新生

□ trusted *adj.* 信任的
□ grant *v.* 准予
□ frame *n.* 状态

After the doctor left, the reverend called his servant to bring him a large meal. He devoured the food like an animal that had not eaten for a long time. Then he spent all night flinging written pages of his sermon from the desk, as if Heaven was transmitting the words through his hand.

When the reverend awoke in the morning, the pen was still between his fingers, and the sermon was marvelously completed.

On the day of the new governor's inauguration, the marketplace was crowded with the townspeople, who were waiting to see the procession of officials pass and to hear the reverend's sermon. Hester and Pearl joined the crowd.

Everywhere around them were festivities, wrestling matches, and contests. The strict Puritan society was filled with people who were as joyful as they were allowed to be.

KEY WORDS

- ☐ devour *v.* 狼吞虎咽地吃
- ☐ transmit *v.* 传达
- ☐ marvelously *adv.* 奇迹般地
- ☐ inauguration *n.* 就职典礼

- ☐ procession *n.* 队伍
- ☐ festivity *n.* 庆祝活动
- ☐ wrestling *n.* 摔跤
- ☐ contest *v.* 比赛



When Pearl asked if the reverend would be there, Hester said, “Yes, but he won’t be joining us. And we shouldn’t speak to him if we see him today.”

Roger Chillingworth also came to the festival. When Hester first spotted him, he was speaking with the captain of the ship that would be leaving for Europe on the following day.

KEY WORDS

□ festival *n.* 庆祝活动

□ spot *v.* 发现

When Hester later spoke to the captain, he told her that Chillingworth would be joining them on the voyage. Her heart sank at the fearful news, and when she saw Chillingworth, she felt his smile hid a terrible, secret meaning. But Hester had no time to think about the captain's shocking news.

The time was at hand for the reverend to give his sermon. When she saw the Reverend Dimmesdale, she felt as though he were another person whom she had never seen before. She felt sad, as if he were in another world.

Then Hester saw Mistress Hibbins, who asked her if she had met the reverend in the forest recently. Hester denied it. But Mistress Hibbins continued to tell her that the reverend had been there and signed his name in the Black Man's book. She said the

KEY WORDS

- ☐ voyage *n.* 航行
- ☐ shocking *adj.* 令人震惊的

- ☐ at hand 即将到来
- ☐ deny *v.* 否认

Black Man had his way of leaving a mark on those who would not admit they had signed his book.

To make matters worse for Hester Prynne, the festival had brought to town many people from outlying areas. These people encircled her, staring and pointing at her mark of shame.



KEY WORDS

□ outlying *adj.* 边远的

□ encircle *v.* 包围



On this day, Hester felt more pain than she had on the first day she had worn the letter. What nobody knew was that the same mark of disgrace burned on the saintly Reverend Dimmesdale.

KEY WORDS

□ disgrace *n.* 耻辱

□ saintly *adj.* 神圣的

It was at this time that the reverend's powerful and eloquent voice could be heard throughout the marketplace, coming from a high pedestal at the eastern end of the marketplace. People were brought to silence by his profound words. Many people said that never before had they heard so wise, so high, and so holy a spirit speak as they heard on that day.

Through his powerful waves of Heaven-inspired words, the reverend reached his proudest peak of glory, as he stood atop the pedestal.

Meanwhile, Hester and Pearl stood next to the old scaffolding with the symbol still burning on her breast.

KEY WORDS

- ☐ eloquent *adj.* 有说服力的
- ☐ pedestal *n.* 基座
- ☐ profound *adj.* 意味深长的
- ☐ Heaven-inspired *adj.* 神启的

- ☐ peak *n.* 最高点, 顶峰
- ☐ glory *n.* 光荣, 荣誉
- ☐ meanwhile *adv.* 同时

When the reverend's sermon was finished, music began, and a procession of honorable town fathers began walking on a pathway through the crowds of people.

When they reached the western end of the marketplace, the people cheered. As the shouts died down, Hester saw the reverend, and was shocked at how very pale and weak he looked. It was as if he had used the last of his energy to deliver his powerful and grand sermon. Now he appeared to be a feeble man who could barely stand by himself. Pastor Wilson hurried to the reverend's side and tried to hold his arm for fear that he would fall, but the reverend shook him off. He kept walking on his own, like a shaky infant. By this time, he was very near the old scaffold.

The crowd looked at him in shock, wondering if his earthly faintness was just another sign of his

KEY WORDS

- ☐ honorable *adj.* 可尊敬的
- ☐ cheer *v.* 欢呼, 喝彩
- ☐ deliver *v.* 讲

- ☐ feeble *adj.* 虚弱的
- ☐ barely *adv.* 勉强
- ☐ faintness *n.* 虚弱



heavenly strength. Suddenly, the reverend turned toward the scaffold and held out his arms.

"Hester," he cried, "my little Pearl, come here to me!" The look on his face was one of terrible pain. But Pearl ran to him and threw her arms around him. Hester, as if forced by invisible hands, slowly approached him.

KEY WORDS

□ hold out 伸出

□ invisible *adj.* 看不见的



Together, with Hester supporting the reverend's weight and Pearl holding his hand, they climbed up the steps of the scaffolding together.

"Are you mad?" whispered Roger Chillingworth, who stood near them. "Stand away from that woman and child! You will blacken your good name and be cast into the pit of dishonor! I can't help you after this!"

"Ha ha," the reverend laughed at Chillingworth. "Tempter, you are too late this time. With God's help, I will escape you now!"

The crowd watched in an uproar as the three stood on the scaffolding. The noblemen of rank and dignity could not understand the meaning of his actions.

Old Chillingworth followed them, as if he were just another actor in their guilty drama, on stage for the final act. Looking darkly at the reverend, he said, "You could have searched the Earth for a place to hide from me. There is no place high or low where you could have escaped to, except for this very scaffolding."

KEY WORDS

□ cast *v.* 扔, 抛
(cast-cast-cast)

□ pit *n.* 深渊

□ tempter *n.* 引诱者

□ uproar *n.* 骚动

□ guilty *adj.* 有罪的

□ drama *n.* 戏剧

The reverend looked to Hester, "Isn't this better than the plans we made in the forest?"

"I don't know. It may lead to the death of us all," she replied.

"God will protect you and Pearl. As for me, I am a dying man. This is my last chance to accept the truth of my shame."

Then, the reverend faced the other clergymen, the governor, the noblemen, and the crowd of townspeople.

"People of New England!" he cried in a solemn and majestic voice. "Behold me, a shameful sinner! I should have stood here seven years ago when the governor demanded to know the name of Hester Prynne's partner in sin! You have all seen the scarlet letter that this woman wears. But there has stood one among you whose brand of shame and infamy

KEY WORDS

□ majestic *adj.* 威严的

□ infamy *n.* 恶行, 丑事

you have not seen!”

At this point, the reverend's weakness was so great that he nearly collapsed. But he managed to stand by himself and stepped forward, away from Hester and Pearl. “But now you must witness the great power of the Lord and the true mark of shame. Behold!”



KEY WORDS

□ collapse v. 倒下

□ witness v. 目睹

One Point Lesson

At this point, the reverend's weakness was **so great that** he nearly collapsed. 这时候，牧师已经虚弱到了快要摔倒的地步。

so + 形容词 + that: 如此……以至于……

e.g. She was **so happy that** she couldn't say a word.
她太高兴了，一个字也说不出。

With a quick motion, the reverend tore away his holy robe to expose his bare chest. The crowd was horror-stricken as they gazed upon the terrible miracle emblazoned upon the flesh of his breast. The reverend had a look of victory on his face shortly before he collapsed to the floor of the scaffold.

Hester raised his head in her hands, and old Chillingworth knelt down by him and said, "You have escaped me! You have escaped me!"

"My little Pearl," the reverend said to the child beside him. "Will you kiss me now?"

The girl leaned forward and kissed his lips. And with her kiss, the spell of grief that had been over her all her life was broken. Her tears fell on her father's cheek.

"Farewell, Hester," said the reverend.

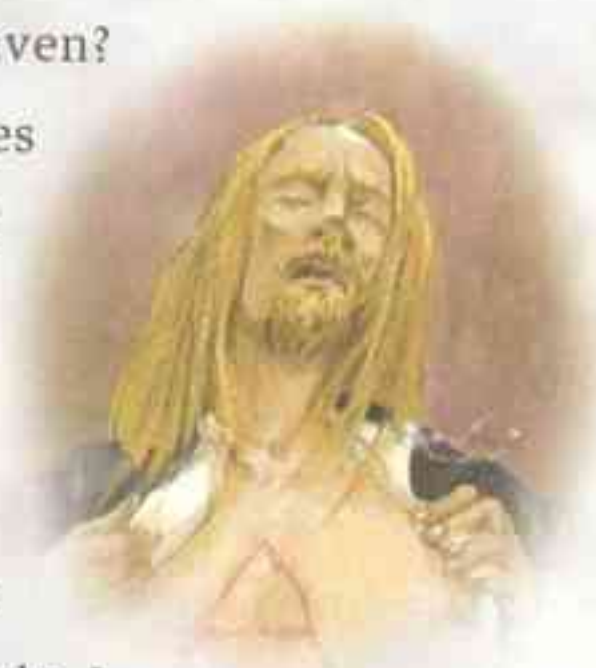
KEY WORDS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> motion <i>n.</i> 动作 | <input type="checkbox"/> kneel <i>v.</i> 跪下 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> tear <i>v.</i> 撕开 | (kneel-knelt-knelt) |
| (tear-tore-torn) | <input type="checkbox"/> spell <i>n.</i> 咒语 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> horror-stricken <i>adj.</i> 受惊吓的 | <input type="checkbox"/> grief <i>n.</i> 悲痛 (的缘故) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> emblazon <i>v.</i> 用鲜艳色彩装饰 | <input type="checkbox"/> farewell <i>int.</i> 再会, 别了 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> victory <i>n.</i> 胜利 | |

“Shall we not meet again in Heaven?
Shall we not spend our eternal lives
together? Certainly we’ve paid
enough of a price for that,” she said
to him.

“Only merciful God knows,” said
the reverend. “If He had not brought
me here to tell the truth to these people, I
would have been lost forever. Praise to His name!
His will is done! Farewell!”

With that word came the reverend’s last breath.
The crowd was silently still, in a state of shock and
awe.



KEY WORDS

□ breath *n.* 呼吸

□ awe *n.* 敬畏

As the days passed, many people spoke of the scarlet letter, just like Hester's, that they had seen imprinted on the reverend's breast.

Some thought he had inflicted it upon himself through terrible self-torture. Others thought that Roger Chillingworth had used drugs and magic spells to inflict it upon him. And still others believed that Heaven had placed it there to punish him for his sin.



imprint v. 印

inflict v. 施加

Many of the religious authorities defended Reverend Dimmesdale's character and pronounced that his dying words declared no guilt in the matter of Hester Prynne and her daughter. They said that the reverend had merely used his last Earthly moments to deliver a powerful sermon through his own example. But the moral that stood out from the poor reverend's miserable experience was ultimately, "Be true! Be true! Be true!"



religious *adj.* 宗教的
defend *v.* 为……辩护
character *n.* 名声

declare *v.* 宣称
moral *n.* 道德上的教训
ultimately *adv.* 最终

After the object of Roger Chillingworth's quest for revenge was gone, the old man simply withered away into nothing. He died within the same year and left a great amount of money and property to Hester Prynne's little daughter Pearl.

Pearl and Hester disappeared for some time after that. But eventually, Pearl became the richest heiress in the New World, and Hester Prynne returned to her little cottage to continue her simple existence of hard work and charity.

KEY WORDS

- quest *n.* 追求
- wither *v.* 变枯槁
- property *n.* 财产

- eventually *adv.* 最终
- heiress *n.* 女继承人
- existence *n.* 生活

When she finally died at a very old age, she was buried next to an unmarked grave, which along with hers shared a single blank tombstone. Some years later, there mysteriously appeared a shield engraved on the tombstone. If one were to read it, they would see the inscription, "On a Black Background, the Letter A in Red."



KEY WORDS

- share *v.* 合用
- shield *n.* 盾形物

- engrave *v.* 刻上
- inscription *n.* 铭文, 碑文

Comprehension Quiz

你读懂了多少

A

用所给词语完成句子。

devoured

frame

occupied

crowd

- ① While he was _____ with the task, there came a knock on the door.
- ② But in my present _____ of body, I don't need your medicine.
- ③ He _____ the food as if he were an animal that had not eaten for a long time.
- ④ Hester and Pearl joined the _____.



B

根据故事内容判断正误，正确的选T，错误的选F。

- ① Hester Prynne did not tell Dimmesdale that Chillingworth was her husband.
- ② Pearl was happy when Dimmesdale kissed her.
- ③ Reverend Dimmesdale and Hester held hands and kissed in the forest.
- ④ Hester told Reverend Dimmesdale that she and Pearl would go away with him.

☐ T ☐ F

☐ T ☐ F

☐ T ☐ F

☐ T ☐ F

答案

A ① occupied ② frame ③ devoured ④ crowd

B ① F ② F ③ T ④ T

C 根据故事内容回答下列问题。

- ① What did Hester do after she and Reverend Dimmesdale agreed to run away together?
(a) She gave him a big kiss on the lips.
(b) She slapped his face.
(c) She took the scarlet letter off her breast.
- ② What happened when Pearl kissed Reverend Dimmesdale's lips on the scaffolding?
(a) She was arrested.
(b) The spell of grief over her life was broken.
(c) She had to wear a scarlet A.

D 根据故事内容，将下列句子重新排序。

- ① Reverend Dimmesdale became angry that Hester hadn't told him Chillingworth was her husband.
- ② Reverend Dimmesdale and Hester Prynne decided to leave the colony.
- ③ People encircled Hester Prynne, staring and pointing at the mark on her bosom.
- ④ Reverend Dimmesdale wrote his election sermon enthusiastically.
- ⑤ Hester Prynne begged Dimmesdale to forgive her.

_____ ⇨ _____ ⇨ _____ ⇨ _____ ⇨ _____

答案

C ①(c) ②(b)

D ①⇨⑤⇨②⇨④⇨③

p. 4-5



尽管波士顿聚居地的奠基者们致力于创造一个乌托邦式的社会，但他们为自己的城镇建造的第一批设施中却有一个公墓和一座监狱。这一天，镇上的居民聚集在了监狱外面。从第一批清教徒定居者踏足这块新世界聚居地的时候算起，到现在已经过去了20年。

“女人们，”一个女人叫道，“要是让我们来判决赫斯特·普林这种坏女人的话，那处罚一定不会像本镇的长官们给她的那么轻！”

“没错！”另一个女人随声附和，“他们至少该用滚烫的烙铁在她额头上打个记号！只是在她袍子的前襟上打个记号，那她什么时候都能把它给盖起来！”

“没错！”又一个女人叫道，“她是可以想怎么盖就怎么盖，可那记号始终都会在她心里！”

这时，钉满铁钉的监狱大门突然开了，一个身着黑衣、令人畏惧的魁梧身影从里面的黑暗中闪了出来。他想用手去把一个年轻女人引领出来，可她推开了他的手，按自己的意愿气度凛然地走到了外面。

p. 6-7

这女人怀抱着一个三个月大的婴儿。婴儿第一次体验到阳光照在脸上的感觉，不由得眨了眨眼睛。做母亲的无遮无掩地站在民众中间，还放低了怀抱中的婴儿，好让人家看清楚她的袍子。她脸上泛着羞红，但也带着骄傲的笑容。在她袍子的前襟上有一个巨大的“A”字，由红色的细布制成，周围绣着华丽的金线。这个图案非常精美，独具匠心。

赫斯特·普林是个身材高挑的年轻女人。她有着优雅的轮廓，深色的头发泛着柔光。认识她的人无不啧啧称叹，为她的美貌，也为她在如此境况下依然保有的高贵仪态。

“她的针线手艺肯定非常好。”其中一个女人评论道，“可是，通过这种方式来展现手艺是多么地丢人啊！”

“看在国王的份上，让开吧！”狱卒高声叫道，“从现在直到中午，大家都有机会来好好看看这个坏女人。来吧，赫斯特，到市场上去亮亮你的红字吧！”



p. 8-9

围观的人群闪出一条路来，赫斯特·普林便朝着用于当众处罚的地方走去。她平静地走到了刑台跟前，刑台在市场的西头，挨着波士顿最古老的那座教堂。刑台是一个台子，是当众实施刑罚以儆戒市民遵纪守法的场所。台子上有一具颈手枷，用途是紧紧箍住犯人的脑袋，把它固定在大众的注视之下。不过，赫斯特·普林并没有被判戴颈手枷，等待她的刑罚只是在刑台上站上三个小时。



她登上了刑台，刑罚也就此开始。围观的人肃立无声，紧盯着她和那个红字。赫斯特已经做好了面对公众嘲弄和辱骂的准备，但眼前的沉寂却让她觉得更加难以承受。她站在那里，思绪回到了自己的内心深处，过往的记忆慢慢浮现出来。恍惚之中，她看到了自己的快乐童年，感觉十分真切。接着，她看到自己的脸在镜中凝望，散发着青春的美丽光彩。再下来，她看见了一张男人的面孔。那个男人比年轻的自己大很多，目光暗淡，皮肤也因为多年的遁世研究而没了血色。他略微有点儿畸形，左肩要比右肩稍高一点儿。

p. 10-11

赫斯特·普林的回忆到这儿就停住了。她重新意识到自己还站在刑台上，身处本镇居民的包围之中。那些人也还在盯着她，盯着她胸襟上的红字。她低头看了看胸前的红字，伸手摸了摸它，确定这东西是真实的。它的确是真实的，跟怀中的婴儿和灼烧的羞耻感一样真实。

站了一小会儿之后，赫斯特看到人群的边缘有一个她无法视若无睹的人。那是个白种男人，站在一个土著居民的旁边。他身材矮小，脸上满是皱纹，衣装是文明人打扮和野蛮人装束的混合体。尽管他用了心来掩盖自己的身体特征，但还是可以清楚地看到他的左肩比右肩高。她呆呆地望着他，怀里的婴儿因为她抱得太紧而哭了起来，而她却听而不闻。

那个外乡男人也紧盯着赫斯特·普林。一开始，他的目光是漫不经心的。当他渐渐意识到她眼下的困境的时候，脸上显出了恐惧的表情。



p. 12-13

“请问一下，好心人，”那人对一个本镇居民说，“这女人是谁，为什么要领受这样的当众羞辱呢？”

“你一定不是本镇的人吧。”本镇居民回答道，“这儿所有人都知道赫斯特·普林，也知道她那些肮脏事。她已经在丁梅斯代尔牧师的教堂信众当中激起了公愤。”

“你说得对。”那人答道，“我的确是个外乡人。我曾经被南方的那些野蛮人俘虏，关了很长时间。跟我讲讲这个赫斯特·普林的罪行吧。”

“这女人是一位英格兰学者的妻子。那位学者决定上我们这个聚居地定居，于是就打发自己的妻子先来。可是，那人已经两年没有音信了，而他年轻的妻子也就按自个儿的主意做下了蠢事。”

“哦，我明白你的意思了。”陌生人苦笑着说，“那么，她怀里那婴儿的父亲是谁呢？”

“这对所有人来说都还是个令人困惑的谜。”本镇居民说道，“普林夫人拒绝把另一名罪人供出来。”

“她丈夫应该回来，把这件事情弄清楚。”陌生人说道。



“当然了，如果他还活着的话。”本镇居民表示赞同，“这样的事通常都是死罪，可本镇的长官们觉得她丈夫没准儿已经葬身海底，因此就发了善心。不过，这以后，在她的有生之年里，她都得戴着这个通奸者的红色记号。”

“这是个明智的处罚。”陌生人说道，“她的记号将会成为劝诫人们远离罪孽的活训条。可是，叫我生气的是那个共案犯没有跟她一起示众，但他终究会被人发现的。一定会的！”

陌生人举步离去，赫斯特·普林的目光却一直停留在他的身上。让她宽慰的是，她身处人群的包围之中，不用独自面对那个人。

突然间，一个声音打断了她的思绪：“赫斯特·普林，现在听我说！”旁边教堂的阳台上站着贝林厄姆总督，那里是本镇长官们用来宣布判决的。阳台上还有其他的显要，跟总督和他的侍从们站在一起。

赫斯特·普林把脸转向了阳台。她刚才听见的声音来自约翰·威尔逊，波士顿最年长的牧师。



“赫斯特·普林，”老牧师接着说道，“我已经跟你们这儿的丁梅斯代尔牧师说了，说他应该强迫你说出那个邪恶男子的姓名，就在此处此地，是他引诱你堕落到了这可悲的境地。”

贝林厄姆总督接上了话茬：“善心的丁梅斯代尔牧师，你是她的牧师，对她的灵魂负有责任。你应该敦促她说出真相，以此证明她的悔改之心。”

作为对这番话的回应，丁梅斯代尔牧师起身向人群致意。这位年轻的神职人员毕业于英国的一所名牌大学，他富于感染力的声音和令人惊叹的才智使他在本地殖民者当中赢得了极大的尊崇和爱戴。

“跟这个女人谈谈吧，兄弟。”威尔逊牧师催促道，“只有你能拯救她的灵魂！”

丁梅斯代尔牧师看着刑台上的女人。“赫斯特·普林，”他开了口，“你听见善心的威尔逊牧师所说的话了吧。我要求你说出共案犯的姓名，那将会使你们两人都得到心灵的安宁。别因为对他不合时宜的怜悯与温情而保持沉默！”

牧师的声音非常有力，就连赫斯特·普林怀中的婴儿都受了感染。婴儿抬眼看着牧师，脸上的表情半是喜悦，半是悲伤。然而，面对牧师的请求，赫斯特只是摇了摇头。

“妇人，别挑战上天仁慈的限度！”威尔逊牧师怒气冲冲地说道，“说出那个人的名字，这样的悔改表现足以让你把胸前的红字取下来！”

“绝不！”赫斯特·普林叫道。她深深地凝视着丁梅斯代尔牧师的眼睛。“这个字母在我的心上烙得太深了，要取掉可不是那么容易。我愿意承受自己的痛苦，也愿意替他承受痛苦！”

“说吧！”刑台周围的镇上居民嚷道，“把孩子父亲的名字说出来！”

人群的叫喊声严厉而又冷酷，她似乎认出了其中一个声音，一下子变得脸色苍白。但她还是坚持着：“我不会说的。我的孩子永远不会有尘世间的父亲，她只能去认识那天上的父亲！”

“她不会吐露他的名字，”丁梅斯代尔喃喃地说道，一边斜倚在阳台上，以手抚膺。“她不会说的！”他向人群宣告。

p. 20-21

一回到牢房里，赫斯特就陷入了神经质的歇斯底里状态，婴儿也大声哭个不停。狱卒布拉克特先生时刻不停地监视着她，免得她伤害自己或是婴儿。到了最后，狱卒找了个医生来看她。这医生正是那个陌生人、赫斯特站在刑台上时对她产生了兴趣的那个人，他的名字叫罗杰·奇林沃思。



狱卒把医生领进了监房。一看到他，赫斯特·普林就僵得跟死人一样。

“别担心，”医生对狱卒说，“我会悉心照料普林夫人和她的孩子的。很快，你的牢房就会安静下来。”

医生用当地的一些植物配制了一剂草药，那是他从土著人那里学来的。

“给，普林夫人，把这给你的孩子喝吧，只有你给她才会要的。这药能让她平静下来。”

赫斯特推开了他的手。“难道你想毒死这无辜的婴儿来报复吗？”她轻声说道。

“妇人，别傻了！”医生用一种冷漠而让人宽心的腔调回应道，“我不会伤害这个可怜的私生儿的。”

她犹犹豫豫地把药剂喂给婴儿喝了，婴儿安然地进入了梦乡。

p. 22-23



这之后，医生又给了一些药让赫斯特自己吃。她警惕地看着装药的杯子，说道：“我怎么知道你不会毒死我来报复呢？”

“赫斯特，”医生回答道，“难道你这么不了解我、竟以为我的目的会这么简单吗？让你带着胸前这份燃烧的耻辱活下去不就是最好的报复吗？”

听了这话，她笑了笑，把药吃了下去。药力渐渐发作的时候，医生接着说道：“你知道，我应该猜到会发生这样的事的。在我们结婚的那一天，我就应该看到，红字在我们走过的那条教堂走廊的尽头闪耀。”

“你知道，”她对他说，“我一直都在跟你说实话。我总是跟你说，我对你没有爱意，也不愿装出有爱意的样子。不过，对不起，我让你受了很大的委屈。”

“不，”他回答道，“我们都让对方受了委屈。我不应该缔造这样违背常情的婚约，以我的衰朽之年来禁锢你花一般的青春。我们之间的账已经扯平了。可是，我要报复那个懦夫，那个让你独自承受羞辱的人。就算你不告诉我他的名字，我也能找出来的。我一定能！现在，我只要求你保守秘密，别让镇上的人知道我是你的丈夫，也别告诉那个我打算报复的男人。”

“我会替你保守秘密，就像替他保密一样。”赫斯特说道。

p. 26-27



跟医生谈过之后不久，赫斯特·普林的牢狱生涯就结束了。但是，跟镇上的居民生活在一起，她的磨难才刚刚开始呢。

赫斯特有离开本镇的自由，可她决定留下来面对自己的终身刑罚。她带着婴儿搬进了郊区的一栋小屋。凭借做针线活儿的高明手艺，她能够过上体面的生活，可她只把很少一部分收入用到了自己身上。她把幼小的女儿打扮得漂漂亮亮的，还用多余的钱来做善事。

赫斯特手艺很好，所以镇上的人总是请她做活儿。可是，他们也总是用自己的表情和言语提醒她，让她没法忘掉自己身上的耻辱。

赫斯特给女儿起名叫珠儿，这不是因为珍珠的非凡美丽或是高昂价值，而是因为她为这个孩子付出的巨大代价。不管怎样，婴儿很快长成了一个美丽却古怪的幼童。每当看着女儿、察觉到这个小女孩儿的古怪举止的时候，赫斯特心里就会涌起担忧，担心这个孩子不知怎地也跟自己身上的红字有了联系、受到了它的影响。

p. 28-29

随着珠儿的成长，事情变得明朗起来，那就是你无法强迫这孩子遵守规则。她连自己母亲最简单的命令都不听，而且喜怒无常。情形似乎是，赫斯特内心的争斗正在珠儿的身上上演。



赫斯特希望看到珠儿跟别的孩子玩耍，可她跟自己的母亲一样是个被排斥的人，而且在十分幼小的时候就接受了这样的处境。命运在珠儿周遭筑起了一堵坚不可摧的墙。在偶尔碰见镇上一些清教徒家庭的孩子、被这些品行不良的孩子所包围的时候，珠儿就会变得非常凶悍。她会朝他们扔石头，还会像个小野人似的尖叫。

看到好勇斗狠的女儿，赫斯特不禁跪地发问：“亲爱的天父，我带到世上来的是个什么样的东西啊？”听到母亲这样的哀号，幼小的珠儿只会看她一眼，冲她露出精灵般慧黠的笑容。

珠儿身上最奇怪的事情之一是，幼儿时期的她最先注意到的东西并不是母亲的笑容，这跟大多数幼儿都不一样。她最先注意到的东西是母亲胸襟上那鲜红色的“A”字。

p. 30-31

几年之后，珠儿已经能够四处游逛了。有一天，她采来了一束野花，于是就把花枝投向母亲胸上的红字。每当投中的时候，她便开心地跳上跳下。

赫斯特的第一反应是用手挡住胸前的红字，但她把花枝击打在胸膛上的痛楚看作是赎罪苦行的一部分，于是克制住了。母亲的痛苦一目了然，珠儿却只是笑，眼里闪着邪恶的光芒。

“你真的是我的孩子吗？”赫斯特开玩笑地问她，“谁造了你，谁把你打发到这儿来的？”

“你跟我说呀，”珠儿回答道，一下子变得非常严肃，“告诉我吧。”

“是天父把你送来的。”赫斯特迟疑了一下，然后回答道。

可是，她的迟疑没有逃过孩子那敏锐的洞察力。“不是他把我送来的。”珠儿叫道，“我没有天父！”

“好了，”赫斯特叫道，“你不能说这种话。我们所有人都是他创造的！”

“不，你必须告诉我。”珠儿一边笑，一边跳来跳去。“告诉我吧！”

赫斯特战栗起来，没法回答她的问题。

p. 32-33

有一天，赫斯特带着珠儿上贝林厄姆总督的官邸去。她跟珠儿说，上那儿去是为了把总督叫她绣的一副手套送回去，真正的原因却是她听到了一些传言，说镇上的人正在计划把女儿从她身边夺走。

那些人怀疑珠儿是恶魔的孽种，因此打算将她带走以便拯救赫斯特的灵魂。赫斯特还听说，贝林厄姆总督正是这个计划的主脑人物。这一来，她便决定去跟他谈谈。

那一天，她给珠儿穿上了一件绣有金线的鲜红色裙子，看起来正像是她身上那个鲜红色的“A”字。这么着，孩子本身也似乎成了红字的延伸形式，一个活生生的红字。

当她们到达豪华的总督官邸时，珠儿看到了一丛盛开的玫瑰，于是就叫母亲帮自己摘一朵红玫瑰。



p. 34-35

赫斯特没有答应，珠儿一下子泪如雨下，还发出了尖利刺耳的叫声。不过，她又一下子静了下来，因为她看见有人朝她们走了过来。

那群人里有贝林厄姆总督、威尔逊牧师、年轻的阿瑟·丁梅斯代尔牧师，还有罗杰·奇林沃思医生。丁梅斯代尔牧师最近身体不大好，负责医治他的奇林沃思医生成了他长伴身边的密友。

总督惊讶地看着一身鲜红的小女孩儿，问道：“这个小不点儿是谁啊？”

“呃，这是不幸的赫斯特·普林的女儿。”威尔逊牧师说，“她就是我们最近谈起过的那个孩子。”

“哦，”贝林厄姆总督说，“我们现在就来办这件事吧。赫斯特·普林，”

他说，一边直视着她胸口的红字，“我们进行了大量的讨论，讨论我们有没有责任去保护你和你孩子的永恒灵魂。最好的做法是把这孩子带走、给她穿上朴素的衣服、让她接受天地间真理的陶冶，你不这么觉得吗？”

“我比任何人都更适合教育我的女儿。”赫斯特·普林说，她把手指放在胸前的红字上，“我从这里学到了不少东西。”

“妇人，”总督说道，“那是你耻辱的标志。正是因为它，我们才觉得把孩子交给更正派的人是最好的做法。”



p. 36-37

“不管怎么说，”赫斯特·普林平静地说，“它给了我教训，而这教训能让我女儿更聪明、更美好。”

“这得由我们说了算。”贝林厄姆说。接着，他在一把椅子上坐了下来，打算把珠儿拉到自己的两膝之间。可是，这小孩子不习惯母亲之外任何人的

碰触，于是就逃开了。

威尔逊牧师以善于跟小孩子打交道著称，这时便接着往下进行测验。“珠儿，你能告诉我是谁造了你吗？”

赫斯特·普林在家里教过孩子，教过她清教徒信仰中有关人类灵魂起源的教义。可是，珠儿决定用恶作剧的方式来回答这个严肃的问题。于是她宣布，自己不是上天造的，而是从监狱大门边的野玫瑰丛里采来的。

“这太可怕了，”总督叫道，“眼前这个三岁的孩子竟然说不出自己是谁造的！”

赫斯特·普林把孩子拉进自己怀里，“上帝给了我这个孩子，以此补偿他从我这里夺走的一切。她是我的幸福所在，也是我的磨难！除非我死了，你们休想把她从我身边夺走！”

“孩子，”老牧师威尔逊说道，“珠儿将会得到很好的照顾，比她从你这儿得到的好！”



p. 38-39

“上帝把她给我，就是要我照管她！”赫斯特·普林大声叫道。接着，她转向年轻的丁梅斯代尔牧师，喊道：“帮我说句话吧！你是我的牧师，我的灵魂由你负责！你比这些人更了解我！别让他们把她从我身边带走！”

“她说得有道理。”丁梅斯代尔牧师用颤抖而富有感染力的声音说道，“上帝把这个孩子给了这位母亲，就是为了教导她改邪归正。这样的纽带是神圣的。我们有什么资格说，上帝把孩子给她是个错误？我们有什么资格去夺走仁慈的主赐予她生活的唯一福分？”

“说得好，”威尔逊牧师说，“您怎么看，贝林厄姆总督？这位善心的牧师为赫斯特·普林做了很有说服力的辩护。”

“的确如此，”总督回答道，“珠儿可以留在母亲身边，而我们也不会再多说什么闲话了。到适当的时候，教堂的执事人员要负责让她进学校、上教堂。这就行了。”

这之后，小珠儿抓住了丁梅斯代尔牧师的一只手，把它放在了自己的脸颊上。牧师东张西望了一番，然后亲了亲她的额头。

p. 40-41

“真是个奇怪的孩子。”奇林沃思医生说道，“我们可以对她的本性做一番研究，没准儿能由此识破她那不道德父亲的身份。”

“这么做本身就是不道德的。”威尔逊牧师答道，“我们还是为这事情祈祷，让上帝来做主吧。”

事情解决之后，赫斯特·普林和珠儿离开了总督的官邸。走到房子外面的时候，她们碰见了希宾斯太太。这个满心怨恨的女人是贝林厄姆总督的姐姐。几年之后，她因为搞巫术而被处决了。

“赫斯特，赫斯特，”她嘶嘶地唤道，“今天晚上，你们俩能跟我们一起去参加和那个魔鬼的聚会吗？”

“我们不去！”赫斯特·普林回答道，“我要跟女儿一起待在家里。不



过，要是他们夺走了我女儿的话，我就会跟你去，用我自己的血把我的名字签在那邪恶魔鬼的簿子上！”

到了这会儿，我们可以说，还在这么小的年纪，这孩子就已经拯救了赫斯特·普林的灵魂，使它逃离了魔鬼撒旦的陷阱。

第3章 复仇

p. 44-45



大约就在罗杰·奇林沃思以医生的身份在镇上安顿下来的时候，年轻牧师丁梅斯代尔的健康开始恶化了。镇上的人把牧师患病与医生到来之间的巧合看作是上帝的安排。镇里的长者因此认为，将丁梅斯代尔牧师的健康交到奇林沃思医生的手上乃是上帝的旨意。

这两人很快就成了形影不离的伙伴。丁梅斯代尔牧师被奇林沃思给迷住了，因为他作为医生和长者都具有丰富的经验，而奇林沃思也花了大量时间来寻找丁梅斯代尔的病因。奇林沃思确信，牧师身体上的疾病源自心智上的困扰，只是还不能确定究竟是什么在困扰牧师的心灵。

没多久，他们两个人搬进了同一座房子。可随着时间的推移，镇里的人开始看到了奇林沃思医生的另一面。搬到镇里来之后，他的面貌和举止都起了显著的变化。他曾经又平静又慈祥，如今他的脸上却出现了邪恶的神情。镇子里有了传言，说牧师糟糕的健康状态是魔鬼撒旦造成的，后者以罗杰·奇林沃思的形象出现，在牧师的身上作祟。

p. 46-47

有一天终于出了事，牧师到奇林沃思的实验室去拜访他，他常常在那里把采集来的植物制成药物。当时，医生正在检视一把样子丑怪的植物，那是从他们的房子旁边的墓地里采来的。

“这些叶子是我在旁边那片墓地里找到的。”医生指着窗子说，“以前我还没见过这个品种。我发现它长在一个没有标记的坟墓上，怀疑它是从那个死人的心里长出来的。说不定，它代表着随那个人埋葬的一个可怕的秘密。要是他在活着的时候把秘密讲出来就好了。”

“也许他想讲，只是没法讲出来而已。”牧师说道，一边紧抓住自己的胸膛，似乎那地方正在痛苦地悸动。“在忏悔自己罪过的时候，我教堂里那些信众总是有如释重负的感觉。”

就在这时，医生和牧师看到赫斯特·普林和珠儿正在穿过墓地的一条小路上走。珠儿很没礼貌地从一个坟头蹦到另一个坟头，后来又从一丛牛蒡里摘来了一把带刺的果子，还沿着那个红色“A”字的笔画，把果子扎在母亲的衣服上。



p. 48-49

“噢，那孩子对法律和权威毫无敬意。”罗杰·奇林沃思说，“就在另一天，我还看见她把马槽里的水溅到了总督身上。天啊，她究竟有什么毛病？”

突然间，珠儿跑到窗子跟前，把一枚刺果扔向丁梅斯代尔牧师，然后就笑了起来，招呼她的母亲：“我们走吧，妈妈。要不然，那个魔鬼就要抓到你了，就跟他当初抓到牧师一样。快走吧，要不然他会抓到你的！可他抓不到我！”

“对于赫斯特·普林来说，跟把耻辱藏在心里相比，还是把它亮在胸前的红字上更好受，你不觉得吗？”母女俩从窗边走远的时候，医生问牧师。

“是的，我觉得是这样。”牧师回答道，“不过，我现在只想谈我的健康问题。依你之见，我久病不愈的原因是什么？”

“坦白说，”医生说道，“我想知道你是不是有什么秘密瞒着我。你把你所有的问题都跟我说了吗？”

p. 50-51

显然，这句追根究底的问话难住了牧师。“但……我当然全都说了，”他结结巴巴地说，“当然，我是绝不会把心灵里的某些部分袒露给一名世俗的医生的。”



“可是，如果你不肯袒露你的思想和灵魂的话，我又怎么能治愈你的身体呢？”

听了这话，牧师突然勃然大怒。他把医生的手从自己面前推开，做了个狂乱的手势，然后冲出了房间。

不出几个小时，牧师就回到了医生的实验室里，为自己的突然发作道歉。不费吹灰之力，他们两人之间的友情又恢复如初。可就在当天晚些时候，牧师正在自己的椅子上睡觉，医生悄无声息地溜进了他的房间。他把手放到熟睡的牧师胸口上，拽开了他的衬衫，看着他袒露的胸膛。眼前所见让医生战栗了一下。接着，他的脸上浮现出了一种心满意足的刻毒神情。

这天之后，罗杰·奇林沃思和阿瑟·丁梅斯代尔牧师之间的关系发生了微妙的改变。医生依旧一脸平静，暗地里却一边操纵牧师，一边做着复仇的打算。

p. 52-53

因为自己犯下的罪行，丁梅斯代尔经常偷偷地惩罚自己。他会强迫自己不食不眠，甚至会用鞭子把自己抽得鲜血淋漓。一天晚上，他想到了一种自我惩罚的新方法。于是，他在半夜里穿好衣服，悄悄地离开了居所。

如同梦游一般，牧师走到市场的西头，走到了赫斯特·普林七年前站过的那个刑台跟前。

在五月里那个漆黑的夜晚，牧师沿着刑台的阶梯拾级而上，站到了顶端的台子上。他觉得，整个镇子已经沉睡，不会有人发现自己。

不过，站在那里的时候，他的心却被恐惧所攫住，感觉那个红字正在自己的胸腔里燃烧。那正是他痛苦和疾病的根由。接着，突然之间，他发出了一声尖叫。他叫得又响亮又悠长，心里觉得镇上的所有人都会惊醒，会跑到这个耻辱之地来看自己。

然而，并没有人向他跑过来，睡得昏昏沉沉的本镇居民一定是把他的声



音当成了野兽的嚎叫或是巫婆的怪笑。

p. 54-55

这之后，牧师察觉到远处有一点灯光正渐渐接近。当灯光近得足以看清提灯人的时候，牧师发现那人是威尔逊牧师。威尔逊牧师没有注意到牧师的存在，依然走了过去。牧师知道，温思罗普总督可能刚刚去世，而威尔逊牧师在总督的停尸房做了一次通宵祈祷，现在才回来。



威尔逊牧师走了之后，又一点灯火朝这边过来了。牧师发现，这一次来的是赫斯特·普林和珠儿。

“赫斯特·普林，”牧师说道，“是你吗？”

“丁梅斯代尔牧师，”赫斯特叫道。看见牧师站在黑暗之中的刑台顶上，她非常地吃惊。“是我，是我和珠儿。我们刚从温思罗普总督的停尸房过来，我在那儿给他量了袍子的尺寸。这会儿，我们正要回我们的小屋去。”

“赫斯特，珠儿，上这儿来。”牧师说道，“你们都在这上面站过，当时我却没跟你们站在一起。”

赫斯特默默地抓起珠儿的手，牵着她拾级走上刑台。牧师在黑暗之中摸到了珠儿的手，然后牵住了它。一股新鲜的生命力注入了他的心房，血液在他的脉管里奔流。他灵魂里的重负减轻了！

p. 56-57

“牧师，”小珠儿说，“明天中午，你能跟我和妈妈一起站在这里吗？”

“不行，明天不行。”牧师说道，“不过，总有一天我会这么做的。”

“那是哪一天呢？”珠儿问道。

“在最后的审判日，我会和你还有你的母亲一起站在上帝面前。”牧师回答道。

这话让珠儿笑了起来。突然间，一颗流星闪过，一下子照亮了夜空。这片光芒之中矗立着胸佩红字的赫斯特，手抚着自己胸膛的牧师，还有跟他们两个手牵手的珠儿。

牧师再次把目光转向地面，看见珠儿正在用手指着从远处走来的一个人。那个人渐渐走近，他们看到，来者是罗杰·奇林沃思。

“赫斯特，那个人到底是谁？”牧师问道，“我开始害怕他了。我开始恨他了！”



“我能告诉你他是谁。”珠儿说。接着，她把嘴凑到牧师耳边，轻轻咕哝了几句莫名其妙的话，然后大声笑了起来。

“孩子，你是在作弄我吗？”牧师问道。

“你不诚实。”小女孩说，“你明天中午不愿意跟我和妈妈一起站在这里！”

p. 58-59

“尊贵的先生，”罗杰·奇林沃思说道，这会儿他已经走到了刑台跟前。“这么晚了，你到底在这儿干什么？难道你是在梦游吗？”

“你怎么知道我在这儿？”牧师畏怯地问道。

“我并不知道你在这儿，只是刚从总督的停尸房回家而已。你最好马上跟我回家，要不然明天就没精神布道了。”

“好吧，”牧师说道，“我跟你一起回家。”他突然间觉得又凄凉又沮丧，就像刚被人粗暴地从梦中唤醒一样。

刑台相遇那天晚上之后，赫斯特·普林开始担心牧师正在走向疯狂。她记起了几年前自己跟罗杰·奇林沃思的约定，那就是她必须为他的真实身份保守秘密，不能说出他是自己的丈夫。

可是，到了现在，她觉得自己做了错事，没有警告牧师当心奇林沃思的可怕图谋。她决定去跟奇林沃思谈谈，告诉他自己不能再遵守那个约定。她必须告诉牧师，究竟是谁在折磨他。

没过多久，赫斯特就有了和医生谈话的机会。几天之后的一个下午，她在树林里看到了医生，他正在采集植物。

“去玩吧，”她对珠儿说，“我想跟医生说句话。”接着，她转头对奇林沃思说道：“医生，我有件重要的事情要跟你谈。”



p. 50-51

“噢，赫斯特太太，”他微笑着说，“我听说，镇议会可能很快就会同意你把胸前的红字取下来了。”

“如果我值得这样的宽恕的话，它自己就会掉下来。”她回答道，同时留意到过去的七年时间已经把奇林沃思变成了一个恶魔般的怪物。她知道，一定是孜孜以求报复的生活使他的心智、身体和灵魂堕落到了如此阴暗邪恶的地步。

“我脸上有什么东西，让你这么严肃地盯着看？”医生问道。

“一些让我想哭的东西。”她回答道，“不过，还是让我们来谈谈另一个不幸的人吧。七年之前，我答应为你的身份保守秘密，可我有责任帮助这个正在被你慢慢杀死的人。我一定要告诉他你是谁，兴许能让他明白你为什么要折磨他。”

p. 62-63

“那个懦弱的牧师已经意识到了我的影响和诅咒。”奇林沃思说，“他只是恐惧得不敢向自己承认而已。你太愚蠢了，竟然想帮助这样一个低等的可怜虫。他抛下了你和孩子，这些年里一直任由镇上的人处置你们。”

“我一定得帮他。”赫斯特叫道。“这个红字告诉我该这么做。我不会再保守你的秘密了。”

“去吧，去告诉他吧。”奇林沃思说，“我真是可怜你，把自己的善心浪费在那个软弱无能的男人身上。”

“我也可怜你。”赫斯特回答道，“可怜你为这样的仇恨所苦，仇恨已经把你从一个睿智的人变成了一个恶魔！”

赫斯特在小溪下游找到了玩耍的珠儿。小女孩儿在自己裙子的前襟上排出了一个绿色的“A”字，就跟她母亲的一样。



“噢，我的珠儿，可你的绿色‘A’字跟我注定要佩戴的那个意思不一样。你知道我为什么要戴着这个字母吗？”

“我知道，”珠儿回答道，“跟牧师把手放在胸前的原因一样。”

第4章 树林

p. 66-67

赫斯特依然很坚决，打算把罗杰·奇林沃思的真实身份告诉牧师。有一天，赫斯特得知牧师会从树林中经过，于是就带着珠儿去截他。她们走进树林的时候，珠儿叫了起来：“妈妈，阳光不喜欢你！它溜到一边躲起来了，就因为你胸口的那个‘A’字！”



“那你最好跑过去，试试把它抓住吧！”她母亲回答道。小女孩儿还真地捉住了太阳，站在它灿烂的光辉之中。

她们渐渐走到了树林深处，珠儿便央求母亲坐下来休息一会儿。

“给我讲个故事吧。”她提出了要求。

“讲什么故事呢？”赫斯特问道。

“讲那个魔鬼的故事吧，他在树林里作祟，带着他那本又大又重的黑簿子，上面还有铁箍呢。告诉我吧，他是怎么让人们用自己的血在他那本簿子上签名的！你碰见过那个魔鬼吗，妈妈？”

p. 68-69

“这些是谁告诉你的？”赫斯特问道。

“昨天晚上，我们在你照看的那座房子里的时候，那个老妇人说起了魔鬼的事，她以为我睡着了。她还说，那个红字就是魔鬼留在你身上的记号。”

“要是你以后不再追问的话，我就给你讲一个跟魔鬼有关的故事。”赫斯特说，“我见过魔鬼一次，这个红字就是他的记号。”

突然间，赫斯特听到林子里传来了脚步声。

“珠儿，赶紧上别的地方玩去吧。我要跟正朝我们走过来的那个人说话。”

“是魔鬼吗？”珠儿问道。

“当然不是了，傻孩子。是牧师。”

“真的是他。”珠儿说道，她现在已经看见了正从昏暗的树林里穿过的牧师。“他还把手放在自己的胸口上。那是因为他魔鬼的簿子上写下了自己的名字，魔鬼在他的心上留下了记号。可是，为什么他不像你那样把记号戴在外面呢？”

“赶紧走，孩子！”赫斯特叫道，“待在小溪边，别跑太远！”

珠儿走开了，一边还自个儿唱着歌。赫斯特看见牧师沿路走来，样子比以往任何时候都要虚弱和沮丧。

p. 70-71

“阿瑟·丁梅斯代尔，”她大声叫他，“丁梅斯代尔牧师！”

“谁在叫我？”牧师紧张地应道，“赫斯特，是你吗？”



“是的，是我。”她回答道。由于各自的处境，他们已经有七年多的时间没有单独相处过了。他们都很紧张，但也都很高兴见到对方。

他目不转睛地看着她，问道：“赫斯特，你找到平静了吗？”

她凄然笑了笑，垂下眼看着自己胸前的记号。“你呢？”

“没有，我找到的只有黑暗和绝望！我向信众宣讲纯洁，心里却为自己的真实面目感到空虚和痛苦。我觉得，魔鬼撒旦一直在嘲笑我。”

“你不该这样折磨自己。”赫斯特说，“你已经深切地忏悔了许多年，应该学会把罪恶留给过去！”

“不行，赫斯特，”牧师叫道，“我配不上身上这些神圣的衣装。你很幸运，可以把那个‘A’字戴在胸上，我的记号却在我身体里面燃烧！要是我能有一个朋友，能向他倾诉我罪行的真相就好了！”

p. 72-73

“我就是那个朋友，也是你罪行的共犯。”赫斯特说道。然后，她努力向牧师说明他们今天见面的理由。“你还有一个死敌，就跟你住在同一个屋檐下。”

“同一个屋檐下的敌人？”牧师惊讶地说道，“你这话是什么意思？”

“噢，阿瑟，”赫斯特叫道，“原谅我吧。很久以前，我答应了别人对你进行欺骗。那个老人，那个人们称之为罗杰·奇林沃思的医生，曾经是我的丈夫！”

牧师脸上出现了可怕的狂暴表情。他一下子坐倒在地，用双手捂住了自己的脸。

“我早该知道的！”牧师呻吟道，“从我第一次见到他的那一天起，我的心就告诉我，他掩藏着一个可怕的秘密。我为什么就不明白呢？噢，赫斯特·普林！你得为这事负责！我绝不会原谅你！”他大声叫喊。

赫斯特·普林用双臂环抱住牧师，把他拉向自己。他的脸颊靠在了她胸前的红字上。他想要挣脱开，但她没有放手。

“你一定得原谅我。”她翻来覆去地说道，“一定得原谅我。”



p. 74-75

“好吧，”牧师轻声叫道，“现在我原谅你了。我们并不是世上最坏的罪人，那个老人的报复比我的罪行更歹毒。他是在残忍地杀害我。我们做下的事情没有他的那么邪恶。”

“是的，我们做过的事情有它自己的神圣性。而在我们互相倾吐爱意的时候，也曾经这样告诉过对方。”她低语道，“你忘记了吗？”

“没有，”他也低语道，“我没有忘记。”

这是他们生命中最绝望的时分。可就在这样的绝望之中，却有一种魔力

让他们两人流连忘返。他们坐在昏暗的树林之中，手牵着手，亲吻着对方。

“罗杰·奇林沃思知道你会揭穿他的身份。”牧师说道，“如今他会当着整个镇子来指认我。”

“不，我觉得他不会向众人揭露你的罪过。”她说，“他会找到其他的秘密方法来满足自己对复仇的邪恶欲望。你必须离开这个可怕的人！”

“没错，他打算杀死我。”牧师歇斯底里地叫道，“可我该怎么办呢，赫斯特？帮帮我吧，求求你！”

p. 76-77

“大海带你来到了这个‘新世界’，也能够带你回到那个旧世界。你应该回英国去，要不就到德国、法国，甚至意大利去生活。”

“可我怎么能离开我现在的工作呢？就算我的灵魂已经万劫不复，可其他人还需要我的帮助呢。”

“如果你被自身的苦难压垮的话，就帮不了任何人。你必须抛下这个地方。”她说，“未来会充满新的成功机会。做什么都行，千万别坐以待毙！”

以待毙！”

“噢，赫斯特，”牧师叫道，“我只能死在这儿了。我没有力量、也没有勇气孤身回那个陌生冷漠的世界去冒险。”

这时，赫斯特用深深的低语回答了他：“你不会孤身一人的。”

听了这话，阿瑟·丁梅斯代尔凝视着她的眼睛，心里充满了欢欣和希望。

“我们用不着回头看。”赫斯特说，“过去的已经过去了。看！”

接着，她用手指扯下了胸前的红字，把它扔到了溪边的一块岩石上。红字躺在那儿，闪闪发光，如同一件遗失的珠宝。

p. 78-79

赫斯特发出了一声如释重负的深长叹息，就此卸下了心上那副耻辱与痛苦的担子。自由的感觉让她意识到它曾经有多么沉重。她摘下了自己的帽子，让美丽的深色头发泻落在肩上。接下来，阳光穿过树梢照进来，洒满了整个树林。

赫斯特再次望向牧师，眼里充满了喜悦。她说：“现在，你得认识认识我们的小珠儿！你虽然见过她，但还不算跟她真正认识！她是个怪孩子，可你会非常非常爱她的。”

“你觉得她会想结识我吗？”牧师满怀希望地说道，“我一直都有些怕小珠儿。”

“噢，这真是太惨了。”赫斯特回答道，“她会非常爱你的。这会儿她离这儿不远，我叫她过来。珠儿！珠儿！”

珠儿到别的地方为母亲采花去了。她听到母亲的叫声，便慢慢地走了回来。

“过来，”赫斯特说，“我要你跟牧师做好朋友。”

可是，珠儿没听母亲的命令。她只是指着母亲的胸部——那儿已经没了



红字——开始躁起脚来。

p. 80-81

“我明白了，”赫斯特说，“小孩子不喜欢看到熟悉的事物发生改变，就算一丁点儿改变也不行。她是在怀念那个字母，因为从生下来的时候起她就一直看到它在我身上。”赫斯特指了指溪边的红字，说道：“字母在那儿，珠儿。把它拿给我吧。”

“你自己去捡好了。”珠儿回答道。

赫斯特拿这孩子没办法，只好叹了口气，走到溪边，重新把红字戴到胸前。

“现在你认得妈妈了吗，孩子？”她对女儿说。

“是的，现在你真的是我妈妈了！”小珠儿说道，然后跳过小溪到了他们身边。

“过来看看他，珠儿。他想跟你打个招呼。他爱你，你也爱他吗？”赫斯特问道。

“他真的爱我们吗？”珠儿问道，用聪敏的目光直视着母亲的眼睛，“他会跟我们手牵手地走到镇里去吗？”

“现在不行，孩子。”赫斯特回答道，“不过，要不了多久他就会一直跟我们一起了。”

“他还会总把手放在胸前吗？”珠儿问道。

丁梅斯代尔被孩子的问题弄得很是窘迫，于是俯下身去亲了亲她的额头，希望能软化她对自己的态度。可是，他的嘴唇刚一离开珠儿的额头，她就跑到溪边，像洗脏东西一样洗掉了额上的吻痕。接下来，在母亲和牧师讨论近期团聚的计划时，她一直离他们远远的。



第5章 真相大白

p. 84-85



离开树林之后，牧师简直不敢相信刚才的会面是真的。他们刚才已经确定，欧洲的各个城市是他们开始新生活的最佳地点，而四天之后正好有一艘船从波士顿港开往“旧世界”。赫斯特之前通过慈善工作结识了那艘船的船长，因此能够安排他们三人跟船一起走。

在赫斯特把自己的计划告诉牧师的时候，牧师欣喜若狂，说了一句：“真是太幸运了，因为我刚巧要在三天之后进行选举布道。”

为庆祝新总督宣誓就职而举行的选举布道会堪称是每位新英格兰神职人员职业生涯的顶点。

跟赫斯特谈过之后，回家路上的丁梅斯代尔觉得自己的身体充满了力量，这对他来说是极不寻常的。他发现，自己不管做什么事都不会觉得疲倦。

p. 86-87

终于，牧师回到了他安静无人的书房里，打算为自己最重要的那场选举

布道撰写讲稿。正当他专心致志工作的时候，响起了敲门声。他一边说“请进，”一边担心看到的会是个邪恶的幽灵，结果正如他的预期。来者是罗杰·奇林沃思，牧师一言不发。

“你好，牧师。”奇林沃思说，“我看你需要我的治疗，好让你集中精神和力量去写选举布道的讲稿。”

“这次不用。”牧师郑重地回答道，“最近我到林子里去散了散步，精神和体力都大有好转。我不需要你提供的任何药物。”

此时他们都已经明白，他们不再是相互信任的朋友，却反成了不共戴天的敌人。

“牧师，你真的不需要我来帮助你完成这次重要的布道吗？天知道，明年你可不一定还在这儿，还能有机会再做一次这样的布道。”

“是啊，上天保佑，那时我会在一个更好的地方。”牧师回答道，“不过，按我现在的身体状况，我是不需要你的药物的。”

“好吧，听你这么说我很高兴。”医生说道。



p. 88-89

医生走了之后，牧师叫仆人给自己送来了一份丰盛的饭食。他狼吞虎咽地吃着，样子就像一头饿了很长时间的动物。这以后，他忙了一整夜，把一张又一张写好的讲稿扔下书桌。他文思泉涌，仿佛上天在借他的手发布神谕。

早上醒来的时候，牧师手里还拿着笔，而布道文已经奇迹般地完成了。

新总督就职的日子到了，市场上挤满了镇里的人。他们都在等着看官员的游行队伍，等着听牧师布道。赫斯特和珠儿也在人群里面。

在她们的周围，到处都是欢庆活动、角力比赛和其他形式的竞赛。此时此刻，这个戒律森严的清教徒社会里充满了在许可范围内尽情作乐的人们。

珠儿问起牧师会不会来，赫斯特说：“他会来的，但却不会跟我们一起。如果今天能看到他的话，我们也不要跟他说话。”

罗杰·奇林沃思也来参加庆祝活动了。赫斯特第一眼看到他的时候，他正在跟第二天开往欧洲的那艘船的船长说话。

p. 90-91

稍后，赫斯特跟船长搭上了话。他告诉她，奇林沃思也会跟他们一起出航。这个吓人的消息让她心里一沉，再看到奇林沃思的时候，她觉得他的笑容里带着一种可怕的隐秘含义。可是，赫斯特没有时间去揣摸船长带来的这个糟糕的消息。

牧师布道的时间就快到了。看到丁梅斯代尔牧师的时候，她觉得他似乎变成了另一个人，一个她从来没见过的人。她心里一阵悲凉，感觉就像他身处于另一个世界似的。

接下来，赫斯特看到了希宾斯太太。希宾斯太太问她，最近有没有在树



林里碰见过牧师。她否认了，希宾斯太太却接着告诉她，牧师到林子里去过，而且在魔鬼的簿子上签下了自己的名字。希宾斯太太还说，魔鬼有办法在那些不肯承认自己签了名的人身上留下记号。

更让赫斯特·普林难受的是，庆祝活动让许多边远地方的人也来到了镇上。那些人围在她身边，紧盯着她身上的耻辱标记，一边还在指指点点。



p. 92-93

这一天，赫斯特心里的痛苦更甚于刚戴上红字的那一天。而谁也不知道的是，同样的耻辱标记也烙在圣人般的丁梅斯代尔牧师身上。

就在这时候，市场东头的高台上传来了牧师的声音。那声音有力而又雄辩，响彻了整个市场。听到他意义深刻的话语，人们都安静了下来。很多人都说，他们从没听过有人能像今天的他那样，讲得如此睿智、如此崇高、如此神圣。

牧师站在高台上，滔滔不绝地宣讲着如同神启的有力言辞。这一刻，他达到了他最可自豪的光辉顶点。

与此同时，赫斯特领着珠儿站在那座旧刑台的旁边，那个耻辱的记号依然在她胸前燃烧。

p. 94-95

牧师的布道结束之后，音乐声响了起来，一队年高德劭的本镇名流走上了人群之中的一条通道。

当他们走到市场西头的时候，人们欢呼起来。欢呼声停歇下来的时候，赫斯特看见了牧师，被他异常苍白虚弱的样子吓了一跳。看情形，刚才那次堂皇有力的演说已经耗尽了他最后的力气。如今他看起来非常衰弱，似乎连站都站不住了。威尔逊牧师担心他会跌倒，赶紧走到他身边，打算搀住他的胳膊，但却被他挣脱开了。他继续自个儿往前走，活像一个蹒跚学步的婴儿。到了这会儿，他已经离刑台很近了。

众人惊诧莫名地看着他，琢磨着他肉体的虚弱是否正是他神圣力量的另一个标志。突然间，牧师转向刑台，然后伸出了双臂。



“赫斯特，”他叫道，“我的小珠儿，上我这儿来！”他脸上的神情昭示着巨大的痛苦。可是，珠儿还是跑到了他的身边，用双臂抱住了他。赫斯特也慢慢向他走去，就像被一双无形的手推着似的。

p. 97

赫斯特搀着牧师，珠儿则牵着牧师的手，他们一起拾级登上了刑台。

“你疯了吗？”站在近旁的罗杰·奇林沃思低声说道，“离那女人和孩子远点儿！你会玷污自己的好名声，掉进耻辱的泥潭里！到了这地步，我就帮不了你了！”

“哈哈，”牧师冲奇林沃思笑了笑，“诱惑者，这次你来得太迟了。凭借上帝的帮助，我现在就要摆脱你！”

人群骚动不安地看着站在刑台上的三个人。那些官高位显的贵人们全都无法理解牧师的举动。

老奇林沃思跟在他们身后。他似乎正是这一出悔罪戏剧里的另一个演员，眼下也在这最后一幕的舞台上亮了相。他用阴鸷的目光看着牧师，说道：“你尽管找遍天涯海角，去找一个能够避开我的地方。可除了这座刑台之外，天上地下都不会有你的藏身之处。”

p. 88-89

牧师望向了赫斯特。“这难道不比我们在树林里制定的那些计划更好吗？”

“我不知道。这可能会让我们所有人都没了性命。”她回答道。

“上帝会佑护你和珠儿的。至于我嘛，我本来就已经快死了。这是我面对自身耻辱真相的最后机会。”

然后，牧师转过头去，对着其他的神职人员，对着总督，对着贵人们和在场的众人。

“新英格兰的人们！”他用庄严豪迈的声音叫道，“看看我，看看这个耻辱的罪人吧！七年之前，当总督要求赫斯特·普林说出共案犯的名字的时候，我就应该站在这里了！你们都看到了这女人佩戴的红字，可你们中间还有一个人，他的耻辱标记你们还没看见！”



这时候，牧师已经虚弱到了快要摔倒的地步。可他仍然勉强独自站立着，还向前走了一步，离赫斯特和珠儿远了一些。“不过，你们现在必须见证上帝的伟大力量，见识真正的耻辱印记。看着！”

p. 100-101



牧师飞快地扯开自己的法袍，露出了赤裸的胸膛。众人注视着刻在他胸口血肉之上的那个骇人奇观，一下子吓呆了。牧师脸上浮现出了胜利的神情，紧接着就倒在了刑台的地板上。

赫斯特用双手捧起了牧师的头，老奇林沃思跪倒在他身边，说道：“你摆脱我了！你摆脱我了！”

“我的小珠儿，”牧师对身边的孩子说道，“现在你能吻我一下吗？”

女孩儿探身向前，吻了吻他的嘴唇。随着这个吻，终生缠绕着她的伤心魔咒得到了破解。她的泪水滴落在父亲的面颊上。

“永别了，赫斯特。”牧师说道。

“难道我们不能在天堂再会吗？难道我们不能一起度过永恒的生命吗？我敢肯定，我们已经为此付出了足够的代价。”她对他说。

“只有仁慈的上帝才会知道。”牧师说道，“如果他没有让我到这儿来告诉人们真相的话，我会永远沉沦下去的。赞美他的圣名！他的意愿达成了！永别了！”

说完这句话，牧师吐出了最后一口气。人群鸦雀无声，沉浸在震惊与敬畏之中。

随着时间的流逝，许多人谈起了他们当时看到的那个红字。那红字烙在牧师的胸膛上，跟赫斯特衣服上的红字一模一样。

有些人认为，是牧师通过骇人听闻的自我折磨将红字烙在了自己身上；也有人认为，是罗杰·奇林沃思用药物和魔法给牧师打上了红字；还有人相信，是上天把红字放在了那个地方，为的是惩罚牧师的罪过。

许多宗教权威人士都为丁梅斯代尔牧师的人格辩护。他们宣称，牧师临终的话语并不表明他在赫斯特·普林母女的事情上有任何过错。他们还说，牧师只是在利用自己尘世生活的最后时刻，用自己做例子来进行一次有力的告诫。然而，从这位可怜牧师的悲惨遭遇中凸现出来的道德准则最终只是：要真诚！要真诚！要真诚！”

复仇的目标消失之后，罗杰·奇林沃思老人也就此枯萎消亡了。他当年死了，把巨额的金钱和财产留给了赫斯特·普林的幼女珠儿。

在那以后，珠儿和赫斯特消失了一段时间。不过，最终珠儿成了“新世界”最富有的女继承人，而赫斯特·普林则回到了自己的小屋，继续着以辛劳作和善行为内容的朴素生活。

她最终得享高年，死后葬在一座没有标记的坟墓旁边，两座坟墓共享着一块空白的墓碑。一些年以后，墓碑上没来由地出现了一个雕刻的盾形徽记。如果有人要去细看的话，就会看到这样一行铭文：“在一片黑色的背景上，有个红色的‘A’字。”



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国权音字 15-2007-0350号
ISRC GN-A16-07-0293-0/A·H
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