Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Read the following passage regarding your character. Annotate for imagery associated with the character and support for who the character is.

Pearl

**Passage #1**

Full [of](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl07.html" \l "g03) concern, therefore,--but so conscious of her own right, that it seemed scarcely an unequal match between the public, on the one side, and a lonely woman, backed by the sympathies of nature, on the other,--Hester Prynne set forth from her solitary cottage. Little Pearl, of course, was her companion. She was now of an age to run lightly along by her mother's side, and, constantly in motion from morn till sunset, could have accomplished a much longer journey than that before her. Often, nevertheless, more from caprice than necessity, she demanded to be taken up in arms, but was soon as [imperious](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#imperious) to be set down again, and frisked onward before Hester on the grassy pathway, with many a harmless trip and tumble. We have spoken of Pearl's rich and luxuriant beauty; a beauty that shone with deep and vivid tints; a bright complexion, eyes possessing intensity both of depth and glow, and hair already of a deep, glossy brown, and which, in after years, would be nearly akin to black. There was fire in her and throughout her; she seemed the [unpremeditated](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#unpremeditated) [offshoot](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#offshoot) of a passionate moment. Her mother, in contriving the child's garb, had allowed the [gorgeous](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#gorgeous) tendencies of her imagination their full play; [arraying](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#array) her in a crimson velvet [tunic](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#tunic), of a [peculiar](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#peculiar) [cut,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#cut) abundantly embroidered with fantasies and flourishes of gold thread. So much strength of coloring, which must have given a [wan](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#wan) and [pallid](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#pallid) aspect to cheeks of a fainter bloom, was admirably adapted to Pearl's beauty, and made her the very brightest little [jet](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#jet) of flame that ever danced upon the earth.

But [it](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl07.html" \l "g04) was a remarkable attribute of this garb, and, indeed, of the child's whole appearance, that it irresistibly and inevitably reminded the beholder of the token which Hester Prynne was doomed to wear upon her bosom. It was the scarlet letter in another form; [the scarlet letter endowed with life!](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl07-n.html#life) The mother herself--as if the red ignominy were so deeply scorched into her brain, that all her conceptions assumed its form--had carefully wrought out the [similitude;](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#similitude) lavishing many hours of morbid ingenuity, to create an [analogy](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#analogy) between the object of her affection, and the emblem of her guilt and torture. But, in truth, Pearl was the one, as well as the other; and only in consequence of that identity had Hester contrived so perfectly to represent the scarlet letter in her appearance.

**Passage #2**

The [discipline](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06.html#g04) of the family, in those days, was of a far more rigid kind than now. The frown, the harsh [rebuke,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#rebuke) the frequent application of [the rod,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#rod) [enjoined](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#enjoined) by [Scriptural authority,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#authority) were used, not merely in the way of punishment for actual offences, but as a [wholesome](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#wholesome) [regimen](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#regimen) for the growth and [promotion](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#promotion) of all childish virtues. Hester Prynne, nevertheless, the lonely mother of this one child, ran little risk of erring on the side of undue severity. Mindful, however, of her own errors and misfortunes, she early sought to impose a tender, but strict, control over the [infant immortality](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#infant) that was committed to her charge. But the task was beyond her skill. After testing both smiles and frowns, and proving that neither mode of treatment possessed any [calculable](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#calculable) influence, Hester was [ultimately](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#ultimately) compelled to stand aside, and permit the child to be swayed by her own impulses. Physical compulsion or restraint was effectual, of course, while it lasted. As to any other kind of discipline, whether addressed to her mind or heart, little Pearl might or might not be within its reach, in accordance with the [caprice](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#caprice) that ruled the moment. Her mother, while Pearl was yet an infant, grew acquainted with a certain peculiar look, that warned her when it would be labor thrown away to insist, persuade, or plead. It was a look so intelligent, yet [inexplicable,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#inexplicable) so [perverse,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#perverse) sometimes so [malicious,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#malicious) but generally accompanied by a wild flow of spirits, that [Hester could not help questioning, at such](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#imp) moments, whether Pearl was a human child. She seemed rather an [airy sprite,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#airy) which, after playing its fantastic sports for a little while upon the cottage-floor, would [flit](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#flit) away with a mocking smile. Whenever that look appeared in her wild, bright, deeply black eyes, it [invested](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#invested) her with a strange remoteness and intangibility; it was as if she were hovering in the air and might vanish, like a [glimmering](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#glimmer) light that comes we know not whence, and goes we know not whither. Beholding it, Hester was [constrained](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#constrained) to rush towards the child,--to pursue [the little elf](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#elf) in the flight which she invariably began,--to snatch her to her [bosom,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#bosom) with a close pressure and [earnest](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#earnest) kisses,--not so much from overflowing love, as to assure herself that Pearl was flesh and blood, and not utterly [delusive.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#delusive) But Pearl's laugh, when she was caught, though full of merriment and music, made her mother more doubtful than before.

Heart-smitten [at](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06.html" \l "g05) this bewildering and [baffling](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#baffling) spell, that so often came between herself and her sole treasure, [whom she had bought so dear,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#Pearl) and who was all her world, Hester sometimes burst into passionate tears. Then, perhaps,--for there was no foreseeing how it might affect her,--Pearl would frown, and [clench](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#clench) her little fist, and harden her small features into a stern, unsympathizing look of discontent. Not seldom, she would laugh anew, and louder than before, like a thing incapable and unintelligent of human sorrow. Or--but this more rarely happened--she would be [convulsed](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#convulsed) with a rage of grief, and sob out her love for her mother, in broken words, and seem intent on proving that she had a heart, by breaking it. Yet Hester was hardly safe in confiding herself to that gusty tenderness; it passed, as suddenly as it came. Brooding over all these matters, the mother felt like one who has [evoked](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#evoked) a spirit, but, by some irregularity in the process of [conjuration,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#conjuration) has failed to win the [master-word](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#master-word) that should control this new and incomprehensible intelligence. Her only real comfort was when the child lay in the [placidity](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#placidity) of sleep. Then she was sure of her, and tasted hours of quiet, sad, delicious happiness; until--perhaps with that perverse expression glimmering from beneath her opening lids--little Pearl awoke!

How [soon--with](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06.html" \l "g06) what strange rapidity, indeed!--did Pearl arrive at an age that was capable of [social intercourse,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#intercourse) beyond the mother's ever-ready smile and nonsense-words! And then what a happiness would it have been, could Hester Prynne have heard her clear, bird-like voice mingling with the uproar of other childish voices, and have distinguished and [unravelled](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#unravelled) her own darling's tones, amid all the entangled outcry of a group of [sportive](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#sportive) children! But this could never be. Pearl was a born outcast of the [infantile](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#infantile) world. [An imp of evil,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#imp) emblem and product of sin, she had no right among christened infants. Nothing was more remarkable than the instinct, as it seemed, with which the child comprehended her loneliness; the destiny that had drawn an [inviolable](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#inviolable) circle round about her; the whole peculiarity, in short, of her position in respect to other children. Never, since her release from prison, had Hester met the public gaze without her. In all her walks about the town, Pearl, too, was there; first as the babe in arms, and afterwards as the little girl, small companion of her mother, holding a forefinger with her whole grasp, and tripping along at the rate of three or four footsteps to one of Hester's. She saw the children of the settlement, on the grassy [margin](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#margin) of the street, or at the [domestic](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#domestic) thresholds, [disporting](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#disporting) themselves in such grim fashion as the Puritanic nurture would permit; playing at going to church, perchance; or at [scourging Quakers;](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#scourging) [or taking scalps](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl06-n.html#scalps) in a sham-fight with the Indians; or scaring one another with freaks of imitative witchcraft. Pearl saw, and gazed intently, but never sought to make acquaintance. If spoken to, she would not speak again. If the children gathered about her, as they sometimes did, Pearl would grow positively terrible in her [puny](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#puny) [wrath,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#wrath) snatching up stones to fling at them, with shrill, [incoherent](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#incoherent) exclamations that made her mother tremble, because they had so much the sound of a witch's [anathemas](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#anathemas) in some unknown tongue.

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hester

**Directions:** Read the following passage regarding your character. Annotate for imagery associated with the character and support for who the character is.

**Passage #1**

When [the](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g10) young woman--the mother of this child--stood fully revealed before the crowd, it seemed to be her first impulse to clasp the infant closely to her bosom; not so much by an impulse of motherly affection, as that she might thereby conceal a certain [token,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#token) which was [wrought](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#wrought) or fastened into her dress. In a moment, however, wisely judging that one token of her shame would but poorly serve to hide another, she took the baby on her arm, and, with a burning blush, and yet a haughty smile, and a glance that would not be abashed, looked around at her townspeople and neighbours. On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread, appeared the letter A. It was so artistically done, and with so much fertility and gorgeous luxuriance of fancy, that it had all the effect of a last and fitting decoration to the apparel which she wore; and which was of a splendor in accordance with the taste of the age, but greatly beyond what was allowed by the [sumptuary regulations](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02-n.html#sumptuary) of the colony.

The [young](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g11) woman was tall, with a figure of perfect elegance, on a large scale. She had dark and abundant hair, so glossy that it threw off the sunshine with a gleam, and a face which, besides being beautiful from regularity of feature and richness of complexion, had the impressiveness belonging to a marked brow and deep black eyes. She was lady-like, too, after the manner of the feminine gentility of those days; characterized by a certain state and dignity, rather than by the delicate, [evanescent,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#evanescent) and indescribable grace, which is now recognized as its indication. And never had [Hester Prynne](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH) appeared more lady-like, in the antique interpretation of the term, than as she issued from the prison. Those who had before known her, and had expected to behold her dimmed and obscured by a disastrous cloud, were astonished, and even startled, to perceive how her beauty shone out, and made a halo of the misfortune and [ignominy](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#ignominy) in which she was enveloped. It may be true, that, to a sensitive observer, there was something exquisitely painful in it. Her attire, which, indeed, she had [wrought](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#wrought) for the occasion, in prison, and had modelled much after her own fancy, seemed to express the attitude of her spirit, the desperate recklessness of her mood, by its wild and [picturesque](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#picturesque) [peculiarity.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#peculiarity) But the point which drew all eyes, and, as it were, transfigured the wearer,--so that both men and women, who had been familiarly acquainted with [Hester Prynne](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH), were now impressed as if they beheld her for the first time,--was that SCARLET LETTER, so fantastically embroidered and illuminated upon her bosom. It had the effect of a spell, taking her out of the ordinary relations with humanity, and inclosing her in a sphere by herself.

"She [hath](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g12) good skill at her needle, that's certain," remarked one of the female spectators; "but did ever a woman, before this brazen hussy, contrive such a way of showing it! Why, gossips, what is it but to laugh in the faces of our godly magistrates, and make a pride out of what they, worthy gentlemen, meant for a punishment?"

"It [were](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g13) well," muttered the most [iron-visaged](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#visage) of the old dames, "if we stripped [Madam Hester's](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH) rich gown off her dainty shoulders; and as for the red letter, which she hath stitched so curiously, I'll bestow a rag of mine own [rheumatic flannel,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#rheumatic) to make a fitter one!"

"O, [peace,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g14) neighbours, peace!" whispered their youngest companion. "Do not let her hear you! Not a stitch in that embroidered letter, but she has felt it in her heart."

The [grim](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g15) beadle now made a gesture with his staff.

"Make [way,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g16) good people, make way, in the King's name," cried he. "Open a passage; and, I promise ye, [Mistress Prynne](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH) shall be set where man, woman, and child may have a fair sight of her brave apparel, from this time till [an hour past meridian.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#forenoon) A blessing on the righteous Colony of the Massachusetts, where [iniquity](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#iniquity) is dragged out into the sunshine! Come along, [Madam Hester](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH), and show your [scarlet letter](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02-n.html#scarlet) in the market-place!"

A [lane](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl02.html" \l "g17) was [forthwith](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#forthwith) opened through the crowd of spectators. Preceded by the beadle, and attended by an irregular procession of stern-browed men and unkindly-visaged women, [Hester Prynne](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH) set forth towards the place appointed for her punishment. A crowd of eager and curious schoolboys, understanding little of the matter in hand, except that it gave them a half-holiday, ran before her progress, turning their heads continually to stare into her face, and at the winking baby in her arms, and at the ignominious letter on her breast. It was no great distance, in those days, from the prison-door to the market-place. Measured by the prisoner's experience, however, it might be reckoned a journey of some length; for, haughty as her demeanour was, she perchance underwent an agony from every footstep of those that thronged to see her, as if her heart had been flung into the street for them all to spurn and trample upon. In our nature, however, there is a provision, alike marvellous and merciful, that the sufferer should never know the intensity of what he endures by its present torture, but chiefly by the pang that rankles after it. With almost a serene deportment, therefore, [Hester Prynne](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH) passed through this portion of her ordeal, and came to a sort of scaffold, at the western extremity of the market-place. It stood nearly beneath the eaves of Boston's earliest church, and appeared to be a fixture there.

**Passage #2**

It [might](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl05.html#g03) be, too,--doubtless it was so, although she hid the secret from herself, and grew pale whenever it struggled out of her heart, like a serpent from its hole,--it might be that [another feeling kept her within the scene and pathway that had](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl05-n.html#anotherfeeling) been so fatal. There dwelt, there trode the feet of one with whom she deemed herself connected in a union, that, unrecognized on earth, would bring them together before the bar of final judgment, and make that [their](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl05-n.html#their) marriage-altar, for a joint futurity of endless retribution. Over and over again, [the tempter of souls had thrust this idea](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#arch-fiend) upon Hester's contemplation, and laughed at the passionate and desperate joy with which she seized, and then strove to cast it from her. She barely looked the idea in the face, and hastened to bar it in its [dungeon.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#dungeon) What she compelled herself to believe,--what, finally, she reasoned upon, as her motive for continuing a resident of New England,--was half a truth, and half a self-delusion. Here, she said to herself, had been the scene of her guilt, and here should be the scene of her earthly punishment; and so, [perchance,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#perchance) the torture of her daily shame would at length purge her soul, and work out another purity than that which she had lost; more saint-like, because the result of martyrdom.

Hester [Prynne,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl05.html#g04) therefore, did not flee. On the outskirts of the town, within the [verge](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#verge) of the peninsula, but not in close vicinity to any other habitation, there was a small thatched cottage. It had been built by an earlier settler, and abandoned, because the soil about it was too sterile for cultivation, while its comparative remoteness put it out of the sphere of that social activity which already marked the habits of [the emigrants.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl05-n.html#emigrants) It stood on the shore, looking across a basin of the sea at the forest-covered hills, towards the west. A clump of scrubby trees, such as alone grew on the peninsula, did not so much conceal the cottage from view, as seem to denote that here was some object which would [fain](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#fain) have been, or at least ought to be, concealed. In this little, lonesome dwelling, with some slender means that she possessed, and by the [license](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#licence) of the magistrates, who still kept an [inquisitorial](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#inquisitorial) watch over her, Hester established herself, with her infant child. A mystic shadow of suspicion immediately attached itself to the spot. Children, too young to comprehend wherefore this woman should be shut out from the sphere of human charities, would creep [nigh](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#nigh) enough to behold her plying her needle at the cottage-window, or standing in the door-way, or laboring in her little garden, or coming forth along the pathway that led townward; and, [discerning](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#discerning) the scarlet letter on her breast, would [scamper](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#scamper) off, with a strange, [contagious](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#contagious) fear. . . .

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Period\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dimmesdale

**Directions:** Read the following passage regarding your character. Annotate for imagery associated with the character and support for who the character is.

**Passage #1**

The [directness](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03.html" \l "g22) of this appeal drew the eyes of the whole crowd upon the [Reverend Mr. Dimmesdale;](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#DimmesdaleA) a young clergyman, who had come from one of the great English universities, bringing all the learning of the age into our wild forest-land. His eloquence and religious fervor had already given the earnest of high eminence in his profession. He was a person of very striking aspect, with a white, lofty, and impending brow, large, brown, melancholy eyes, and a mouth which, unless when he forcibly compressed it, was apt to be [tremulous,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#tremulous) expressing both nervous sensibility and a vast power of self-restraint. Notwithstanding his high native gifts and scholar-like attainments, there was an air about this young minister,--an apprehensive, a startled, a half-frightened look,--as of a being who felt himself quite astray and at a loss in the pathway of human existence, and could only be at ease in some [seclusion](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#seclusion) of his own. Therefore, so far as his duties would permit, he trode in the shadowy by-paths, and thus kept himself simple and childlike; coming forth, when occasion was, with a freshness, and fragrance, and dewy purity of thought, which, as many people said, affected them like the [speech of an angel](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03-n.html#angel).

Such [was](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03.html" \l "g23) the young man whom the [Reverend Mr. Wilson](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#WilsonJ) and the [Governor](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#BellinghamR) had introduced so openly to the public notice, bidding him speak, in the hearing of all men, to that mystery of a woman's soul, so sacred even in its pollution. The trying nature of his position drove the blood from his cheek, and made his lips tremulous.

"Speak [to](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03.html" \l "g24) the woman, my brother," said [Mr. Wilson.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#WilsonJ) "It is of moment to her soul, and therefore, as the worshipful [Governor](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#BellinghamR) says, [momentous](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#momentous) to thine own, in whose charge hers is. Exhort her to confess the truth!"

The [Reverend](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03.html" \l "g25) [Mr. Dimmesdale](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#DimmesdaleA) bent his head, in silent prayer, as it seemed, and then came forward.

["Hester Prynne,"](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH) [said](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03.html" \l "g26) he, leaning over the balcony, and looking down steadfastly into her eyes, "thou hearest what this good man says, and seest the accountability under which I labor. If thou feelest it to be for thy soul's peace, and that thy earthly punishment will thereby be made more effectual to salvation, I charge thee to speak out the name of thy fellow-sinner and fellow-sufferer! Be not silent from any mistaken pity and tenderness for him; for, believe me, Hester, though he were to step down from a high place, and stand there beside thee, on thy pedestal of shame, yet better were it so, than to hide a guilty heart through life. What can thy silence do for him, except it tempt him--yea, compel him, as it were--to add hypocrisy to sin? Heaven hath granted thee an open ignominy, that thereby thou mayest work out an open triumph over the evil within thee, and the sorrow without. Take heed how thou deniest to him--who, perchance, hath not the courage to grasp it for himself--the bitter, but wholesome, cup that is now presented to thy lips!"

The [young](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03.html" \l "g27) pastor's voice was tremulously sweet, rich, deep, and broken. The feeling that it so evidently manifested, rather than the direct purport of the words, caused it to vibrate within all hearts, and brought the listeners into one accord of sympathy. Even the poor baby, at Hester's bosom, was affected by the same influence; for it directed its hitherto vacant gaze towards [Mr. Dimmesdale,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#DimmesdaleA) and held up its little arms, with a half pleased, half plaintive murmur. So powerful seemed the [minister's appeal,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl03-n.html" \l "appeal" \t "Notes) that the people could not believe but that [Hester Prynne](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhw.html#PrynneH) would speak out the guilty name; or else that the guilty one himself, in whatever high or lowly place he stood, would be drawn forth by an inward and inevitable necessity, and compelled to ascend the scaffold.

**Passage #2**

Yet [Mr.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl10.html#g05) Dimmesdale would perhaps have seen this individual's character more perfectly, if a certain [morbidness,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#morbid) to which sick hearts are liable, had not rendered him suspicious of all mankind. Trusting no man as his friend, he could not recognize his enemy when the latter actually appeared. He therefore still kept up a familiar [intercourse](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#intercourse) with him, daily receiving the old physician in his study; or visiting the laboratory, and, for recreation's sake, watching the processes by which weeds were converted into drugs of [potency.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#potent)

**Passage #3:**

In [her](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl13.html" \l "g01) [late](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#late) [singular](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#singular) interview with Mr. Dimmesdale, Hester Prynne was shocked at the condition to which she found the clergyman [reduced.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#reduced) His nerve seemed absolutely destroyed. His moral force was [abased](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#abased) into more than childish weakness. It [grovelled](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#grovelled) helpless on the ground, even while his intellectual faculties retained their [pristine](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#pristine) strength, or had perhaps acquired a [morbid](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#morbid) energy, which disease only could have given them. With her knowledge of a train of circumstances hidden from all others, she could readily [infer,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#infer) that, besides the [legitimate](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl13-n.html#legitimate) action of his own conscience, a [terrible machinery had been brought to bear,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl13-n.html#machinery) and was still operating, on Mr. Dimmesdale's well-being and [repose.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#repose) Knowing what this poor, fallen man had once been, her whole soul was moved by the shuddering terror with which he had appealed to her,--the outcast woman,--for support against his instinctively discovered enemy. She decided, moreover, that he had a right to her utmost aid. Little accustomed, in her long [seclusion](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#seclusion) [from society, to measure her](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl13-n.html#society) ideas of right and wrong by any standard external to herself, Hester saw--or seemed to see--that there lay a responsibility upon her, in reference to the clergyman, which she owned to no other, nor to the whole world besides. The links that united her to the rest of human kind--links of flowers, or silk, or gold, or whatever the material--had all been broken. Here was the iron link of mutual crime, which neither he nor she could break. Like all other ties, it brought along with it its [obligations.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#obligations)

Chillingworth

**Passage #1**

"Thou [wilt](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html#g24) not reveal his name? Not the less he is mine," resumed he, with a look of confidence, as if destiny were at one with him. "He bears no letter of infamy wrought into his garment, as thou dost; but I shall read it on his heart. Yet fear not for him! Think not that I shall interfere with Heaven's own method of [retribution,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#retribution) or, to my own loss, betray him to the [gripe](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#gripe) of human law. Neither do thou imagine that I shall contrive aught against his life; no, nor against his fame; if, as I judge, he be a man of [fair repute.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#repute) Let him live! Let him hide himself in outward honor, if he may! Not the less he shall be mine!"

"Thy [acts](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html#g25) are like mercy," said Hester, bewildered and appalled. "But thy words interpret thee as a terror!"

"One [thing,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html#g26) thou that wast my wife, I would enjoin upon thee," continued the scholar. "Thou hast kept the secret of thy [paramour.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#paramour) Keep, likewise, mine! There are none in this land that know me. Breathe not, to any human soul, that thou didst ever call me husband! Here, on [this wild outskirt of the earth,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#outskirt) I shall pitch my tent; for, elsewhere a wanderer, and isolated from human interests, I find here a woman, a man, a child, amongst whom and myself there exist the closest [ligaments.](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#ligaments) No matter whether of love or hate; no matter whether of right or wrong! Thou and thine, Hester Prynne, belong to me. My home is where thou art, and where he is. But betray me not!"

"Wherefore [dost](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html#g27) thou desire it?" inquired Hester, shrinking, she hardly knew why, from this secret bond. "Why not announce thyself openly, and cast me off at once?"

"It [may](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html" \l "g28) be," he replied, "because I will not encounter the dishonor that [besmirches](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#besmirch) the husband of a faithless woman. It may be for other reasons. Enough, it is my purpose to live and die unknown. Let, therefore, thy husband be to the world as one already dead, and of whom no tidings shall ever come. Recognize me not, by word, by sign, by look! Breathe not the secret, above all, to the man thou [wottest](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#wot) of. Shouldst thou fail me in this, beware! His fame, his position, his life, will be in my hands. Beware!"

"I [will](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html" \l "g29) keep thy secret, as I have his," said Hester.

"Swear [it!](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html" \l "g30)" rejoined he.

And [she](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html" \l "g31) took the oath.

"And [now,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html" \l "g32) Mistress Prynne," said old Roger Chillingworth, as he was hereafter to be named, "I leave thee alone; alone with thy infant, and the scarlet letter! How is it, Hester? Doth thy sentence bind thee to wear the token in thy sleep? Art thou not afraid of nightmares and hideous dreams?"

"Why [dost](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html" \l "g33) thou smile so at me?" inquired Hester, troubled at the expression of his eyes. "Art thou like [the Black Man that haunts the forest round about us?](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#outskirt) Hast thou enticed me into a bond that will prove the ruin of my soul?"

"Not [thy](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl04.html" \l "g34) soul," he answered, with another smile. "No, not thine!"

**Passage #2:**

Old [Roger](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl10.html#g01) Chillingworth, throughout life, had been calm in temperament, kindly, though not of warm affections, but ever, and in all his relations with the world, a pure and upright man. He had begun an investigation, as he imagined, with the severe and equal integrity of a judge, desirous only of truth, even as if the question involved no more than the air-drawn lines and figures of a geometrical problem, instead of human passions, and wrongs inflicted on himself. But, as he proceeded, a terrible fascination, a kind of fierce, though still calm, necessity seized the old man within its [gripe,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#gripe) and never set him free again, until he had done all its bidding. He now dug into the poor clergyman's heart, like a miner searching for gold; or, rather, like a [sexton](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#sexton) delving into a grave, possibly in quest of a jewel that had been buried on the dead man's bosom, but likely to find nothing save mortality and corruption. Alas for his own soul, if these were what he sought!

Sometimes, [a](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl10.html" \l "g02) light glimmered out of the physician's eyes, burning blue and [ominous,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#ominous) like the reflection of a furnace, or, let us say, like one of those gleams of ghastly fire that darted from [Bunyan's awful door-way in the hill-side,](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/sl10-n.html#Bunyan) and quivered on the pilgrim's face. The soil where this dark miner was working had [perchance](http://www.eldritchpress.org/nh/nhg.html#perchance) shown indications that encouraged him.