

# Summary Of The Scarlet Letter

## Nathaniel Hawthorne

*The Scarlet Letter* Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2000-09-19 Introduction by Kathryn Harrison Commentary by Nathaniel Hawthorne, W. D. Howells, and Carl Van Doren A stark tale of adultery, guilt, and social repression in Puritan New England, *The Scarlet Letter* is a foundational work of American literature. Nathaniel Hawthorne's exploration of the dichotomy between the public and private self, internal passion and external convention, gives us the unforgettable Hester Prynne, who discovers strength in the face of ostracism and emerges as a heroine ahead of her time. As Kathryn Harrison points out in her Introduction, Hester is "the herald of the modern heroine." Includes a Modern Library Reading Group Guide

**The Scarlet Letter** Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2013-04-03 A throng of bearded men, in sad-coloured garments and grey steeple-crowned hats, inter-mixed with women, some wearing hoods, and others bareheaded, was assembled in front of a wooden edifice, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes. The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might originally project, have invariably recognised it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison. In accordance with this rule it may safely be assumed that the forefathers of Boston had built the first prison-house somewhere in the Vicinity of Cornhill, almost as seasonably as they marked out the first burial-ground, on Isaac Johnson's lot, and round about his grave, which subsequently became the nucleus of all the congregated sepulchres in the old churchyard of King's Chapel. Certain it is that, some fifteen or twenty years after the settlement of the town, the wooden jail was already marked with weather-stains and other indications of age, which gave a yet darker aspect to its beetle-browed and gloomy front. The rust on the ponderous iron-work of its oaken door looked more antique than anything else in the New World. Like all that pertains to crime, it seemed never to have known a youthful era. Before this ugly edifice, and between it and the wheel-track of the street, was a grass-plot, much overgrown with burdock, pig-weed, apple-pern, and such unsightly vegetation, which evidently found something congenial in the soil that had so early borne the black flower of civilised society, a prison. But on one side of the portal, and rooted almost at the threshold, was a wild rose-bush, covered, in this month of June, with its delicate gems, which might be imagined to offer their fragrance and fragile beauty to the prisoner as he went in, and to the condemned criminal as he came forth to his doom, in token that the deep heart of Nature could pity and be kind to him.

**The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne (Book Analysis)** Bright Summaries, 2019-03-28 Unlock the more

straightforward side of The Scarlet Letter with this concise and insightful summary and analysis! This engaging summary presents an analysis of The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne. The “scarlet letter” of the title is the letter “A”, which the protagonist Hester Prynne must wear as punishment for having committed adultery. However, Hester’s virtuous behaviour throughout the narrative makes clear, the line between guilt and innocence is not clear-cut, and she proves an easy character to sympathise with. Through her story, Hawthorne examines the stifling role of Puritanism in her society and the double standards applied to men and women in matters of morality. The Scarlet Letter was chosen by The Guardian as one of the 100 greatest novels ever written in English, and it is widely considered to be a classic of American literature. Find out everything you need to know about The Scarlet Letter in a fraction of the time! This in-depth and informative reading guide brings you: • A complete plot summary • Character studies • Key themes and symbols • Questions for further reflection Why choose BrightSummaries.com? Available in print and digital format, our publications are designed to accompany you on your reading journey. The clear and concise style makes for easy understanding, providing the perfect opportunity to improve your literary knowledge in no time. See the very best of literature in a whole new light with BrightSummaries.com!

*The Scarlet Letter* Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2020-08-30 □□□ The Scarlet Letter □□□□ Summary Plot Overview□ Special Important Quotations Explained□ Author Biography Information and Image The Scarlet Letter is the story of Hester Prynne a young attractive woman who has been convicted of the crime of adultery and has been sentenced to wear a scarlet letter A sewn to her dress. The novel, which is set in middle 17th century Boston, is a vivid picture of the archaic social beliefs and customs that were indicative of early colonial American life. It is a time in which adultery was not only considered immoral but was a crime, people believed in witches, and extreme puritanical beliefs ruled everyday life. Hawthorne's narrative is a haunting portrait of days long past.

**The Scarlet Letter** Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2019-12-17 The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a real classic. You should grab it and read it to experience it yourself. Here's a simple plot to The Scarlet Letter: In Puritan Boston, Massachusetts, a crowd gathers to witness the punishment of Hester Prynne, a young woman who has given birth to a baby of unknown parentage. She is required to wear a scarlet A on her dress when she is in front of the townspeople to shame her. The letter A stands for adulteress, although this is never said explicitly in the novel. Her sentence required her to stand on the scaffold for three hours, exposed to public humiliation, and to wear the scarlet A for the rest of her life. As Hester approaches the scaffold, many of the women in the crowd are angered by her beauty and quiet dignity. When demanded and cajoled to name the father of her child, Hester refuses. As Hester looks out over the crowd, she notices a small, misshapen man and recognizes him as her long-lost husband, who has been presumed lost at sea. When the husband sees Hester's shame, he asks a man in the crowd about her and is told the story of his wife's adultery. He angrily exclaims that the child's father, the partner in the adulterous act, should also be punished and vows to find the man. He chooses a new name, Roger

Chillingworth, to aid him in his plan. The Reverend John Wilson and the minister of Hester's church, Arthur Dimmesdale, question the woman, but she refuses to name her lover. After she returns to her prison cell, the jailer brings in Roger Chillingworth, a physician, to calm Hester and her child with his roots and herbs. He and Hester have an open conversation regarding their marriage and the fact that they were both in the wrong. Her lover, however, is another matter and he demands to know who it is; Hester refuses to divulge such information. He accepts this, stating that he will find out anyway, and forces her to hide that he is her husband. If she ever reveals him, he warns her, he will destroy the child's father. Hester agrees to Chillingworth's terms although she suspects she will regret it. Following her release from prison, Hester settles in a cottage at the edge of town and earns a meager living with her needlework, which is of extraordinary quality. She lives a quiet, somber life with her daughter, Pearl, and performs acts of charity for the poor. She is troubled by her daughter's unusual fascination with Hester's scarlet A. The shunning of Hester also extends to Pearl, who has no playmates or friends except her mother. As she grows older, Pearl becomes capricious and unruly. Her conduct starts rumors, and, not surprisingly, the church members suggest Pearl be taken away from Hester. Hester, hearing rumors that she may lose Pearl, goes to speak to Governor Bellingham. With him are ministers Wilson and Dimmesdale. Hester appeals to Dimmesdale in desperation, and the minister persuades the governor to let Pearl remain in Hester's care. Because Dimmesdale's health has begun to fail, the townspeople are happy to have Chillingworth, a newly arrived physician, take up lodgings with their beloved minister. Being in such close contact with Dimmesdale, Chillingworth begins to suspect that the minister's illness is the result of some unconfessed guilt. He applies psychological pressure to the minister because he suspects Dimmesdale is Pearl's father. One evening, pulling the sleeping Dimmesdale's vestment aside, Chillingworth sees a symbol that represents his shame on the minister's pale chest. Tormented by his guilty conscience, Dimmesdale goes to the square where Hester was punished years earlier. Climbing the scaffold, he admits his guilt but cannot find the courage to do so publicly.... ... The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

*The Scarlet Letter* Nathaniel Hawthorne, 1906 In the puritan atmosphere of colonial New England, Hester Prynne is forced to wear a scarlet A (for adultery) for giving birth to an illegitimate daughter. The child's father, the minister Arthur Dimmesdale, knows peace only after he has been shamed into confessing. Hester, however, acknowledging no sin, cannot find such peace. Here is a masterful account of religious and sexual oppression, hypocrisy, and intrigue by one of the giants of American fiction.

**The Scarlet Letter** Evergreen Literature Books, Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2020-01-17 The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a real classic. You should grab it and read it to experience it yourself. Here's a simple plot to The Scarlet Letter: In Puritan Boston, Massachusetts, a crowd gathers to witness the punishment of Hester Prynne, a young woman who has given birth to a baby of unknown parentage. She is required to wear a scarlet A on her dress when she is in front of the

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**The Scarlet Letter "Annotated and Illustrated Book" For Children** Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2020-03-22 The Scarlet Letter opens with a long preamble about how the book came to be written. The nameless narrator was the surveyor of the

customhouse in Salem, Massachusetts. In the customhouse's attic, he discovered a number of documents, among them a manuscript that was bundled with a scarlet, gold-embroidered patch of cloth in the shape of an A. The manuscript, the work of a past surveyor, detailed events that occurred some two hundred years before the narrator's time. When the narrator lost his customs post, he decided to write a fictional account of the events recorded in the manuscript. The *Scarlet Letter* is the final product. The story begins in seventeenth-century Boston, then a Puritan settlement. A young woman, Hester Prynne, is led from the town prison with her infant daughter, Pearl, in her arms and the scarlet letter A on her breast. A man in the crowd tells an elderly onlooker that Hester is being punished for adultery. Hester's husband, a scholar much older than she is, sent her ahead to America, but he never arrived in Boston. The consensus is that he has been lost at sea. While waiting for her husband, Hester has apparently had an affair, as she has given birth to a child. She will not reveal her lover's identity, however, and the scarlet letter, along with her public shaming, is her punishment for her sin and her secrecy. On this day Hester is led to the town scaffold and harangued by the town fathers, but she again refuses to identify her child's father. The elderly onlooker is Hester's missing husband, who is now practicing medicine and calling himself Roger Chillingworth. He settles in Boston, intent on revenge. He reveals his true identity to no one but Hester, whom he has sworn to secrecy. Several years pass. Hester supports herself by working as a seamstress, and Pearl grows into a willful, impish child. Shunned by the community, they live in a small cottage on the outskirts of Boston. Community officials attempt to take Pearl away from Hester, but, with the help of Arthur Dimmesdale, a young and eloquent minister, the mother and daughter manage to stay together. Dimmesdale, however, appears to be wasting away and suffers from mysterious heart trouble, seemingly caused by psychological distress. Chillingworth attaches himself to the ailing minister and eventually moves in with him so that he can provide his patient with round-the-clock care. Chillingworth also suspects that there may be a connection between the minister's torments and Hester's secret, and he begins to test Dimmesdale to see what he can learn. One afternoon, while the minister sleeps, Chillingworth discovers a mark on the man's breast (the details of which are kept from the reader), which convinces him that his suspicions are correct. Dimmesdale's psychological anguish deepens, and he invents new tortures for himself. In the meantime, Hester's charitable deeds and quiet humility have earned her a reprieve from the scorn of the community. One night, when Pearl is about seven years old, she and her mother are returning home from a visit to a deathbed when they encounter Dimmesdale atop the town scaffold, trying to punish himself for his sins. Hester and Pearl join him, and the three link hands. Dimmesdale refuses Pearl's request that he acknowledge her publicly the next day, and a meteor marks a dull red A in the night sky. Hester can see that the minister's condition is worsening, and she resolves to intervene.

**The Scarlet Letter** Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2019-10-14 In this book summary, study guide, character list, glossary are included as bonus. In June 1642, in the Puritan town of Boston, a crowd gathers to witness an official punishment. A young

woman, Hester Prynne, has been found guilty of adultery and must wear a scarlet A on her dress as a sign of shame. Furthermore, she must stand on the scaffold for three hours, exposed to public humiliation. As Hester approaches the scaffold, many of the women in the crowd are angered by her beauty and quiet dignity. When demanded and cajoled to name the father of her child, Hester refuses. As Hester looks out over the crowd, she notices a small, misshapen man and recognizes him as her long-lost husband, who has been presumed lost at sea. When the husband sees Hester's shame, he asks a man in the crowd about her and is told the story of his wife's adultery. He angrily exclaims that the child's father, the partner in the adulterous act, should also be punished and vows to find the man. He chooses a new name - Roger Chillingworth - to aid him in his pl

The Scarlet Letter Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2017-03-30 Like all of Hawthorne's novels, *The Scarlet Letter* has but a slender plot and but few characters with an influence on the development of the story. Its great dramatic force depends entirely on the mental states of the actors and their relations to one another, -relations of conscience, - relations between wronged and wrongers. Its great burden is the weight of unacknowledged sin as seen in the remorse and cowardice and suffering of the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale. Contrasted with his concealed agony is the constant confession, conveyed by the letter, which is forced upon Hester, and has a double effect, - a healthful one, working beneficently, and making her helpful and benevolent, tolerant and thoughtful ; and an unhealthful one, which by the great emphasis placed on her transgression, the keeping her forever under its ban and isolating her from her fellows, prepares her to break away from the long repression and lapse again into sin when she plans her flight. Roger Chillingworth is an embodiment of subtle and refined revenge. The most striking situation is perhaps *The Minister's Vigil*, in chapter xii. The book, though corresponding in its tone and burden to some of the shorter stories, had a more startling and dramatic character, and a strangeness, which at once took hold of a larger public than any of those had attracted. Though imperfectly comprehended, and even misunderstood in some quarters, it was seen to have a new and unique quality; and Hawthorne's reputation became national.

*The Scarlet Letter (MAXNotes Literature Guides)* Michael Petrus, 2013-01-01 REA's MAXnotes for Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* The MAXnotes provides a comprehensive summary and analysis of *The Scarlet Letter* and a biography of Nathaniel Hawthorne. Places the events of the novel in historical context and discusses each chapter in detail. Includes study questions and answers along with topics for papers and sample outlines.

The Scarlet Letter (Illustrated) Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2021-01-22 Like all of Hawthorne's novels, *The Scarlet Letter* has but a slender plot and but few characters with an influence on the development of the story. Its great dramatic force depends entirely on the mental states of the actors and their relations to one another, --relations of conscience, -- relations between wronged and wrongers. Its great burden is the weight of unacknowledged sin as seen in the remorse and cowardice and suffering of the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale. Contrasted with his concealed agony is the constant confession, conveyed by the

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**The Scarlet Letter** Nathaniel Hawthorne,1959-08 A stark and allegorical tale of adultery, guilt, and social repression in Puritan New England, *The Scarlet Letter* is a foundational work of American literature. Nathaniel Hawthorne's exploration of the dichotomy between the public and private self, internal passion and external convention, gives us the unforgettable Hester Prynne, who discovers strength in the face of ostracism and emerges as a heroine ahead of her time. As Kathryn Harrison points out in her Introduction, Hester is the herald of the modern American heroine, a mother of such strength and stature that she towers over her progeny much as she does the citizens of Salem.

Summary of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* by Milkyway Media Milkyway Media,2019-10-07 *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a novel depicting the Puritan community of Boston in mid-17th century. It tells the story of Hester Prynne, a woman who has committed adultery, and the impact of her affair on those around her, particularly her husband and her lover... Purchase this in-depth summary to learn more.

The Scarlet Letter Nathaniel Hawthorne,2019-12-20 *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne is a real classic. You should grab it and read it to experience it yourself. Like all of Hawthorne's novels, *The Scarlet Letter* has but a slender plot and but few characters with an influence on the development of the story. Its great dramatic force depends entirely on the mental states of the actors and their relations to one another, -relations of conscience, - relations between wronged and wrongers. Its great burden is the weight of unacknowledged sin as seen in the remorse and cowardice and suffering of the Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale. Contrasted with his concealed agony is the constant confession, conveyed by the letter, which is forced upon Hester, and has a double effect, - a healthful one, working beneficently, and making her helpful and benevolent, tolerant and thoughtful; and an unhealthful one, which by the great emphasis placed on her transgression, the keeping her forever under its ban and isolating her from her fellows, prepares her to break away from the long repression and lapse again into sin when she plans her flight. Roger Chillingworth is an embodiment of subtle and refined revenge. The most striking situation is perhaps The Minister's Vigil, in chapter xii. The book, though corresponding in its tone and burden to some of the shorter stories, had a more startling and dramatic character, and a strangeness, which at once took hold of a larger public

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Prentice Hall Library Nathaniel Hawthorne,

**The Scarlet Letter (Annotated) Classic Unabridged Complete Guide** Nathaniel Hawthorne,2020-04-11 Nathaniel Hawthorne's THE SCARLET LETTER reaches to our nation's historical and moral roots for the material of great tragedy. Set in an early New England colony, the novel shows the terrible impact a single, passionate act has on the lives of three members of the community: the defiant Hester Prynne; the fiery, tortured Reverend Dimmesdale; and the obsessed, vengeful Chillingworth. With THE SCARLET LETTER, Hawthorne became the first American novelist to forge from our Puritan heritage a universal classic, a masterful exploration of humanity's unending struggle with sin, guilt and pride. Set in Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony during the years 1642 to 1649, the novel tells the story of Hester Prynne who conceives a daughter through an affair and then struggles to create a new life of repentance and dignity. Containing a number of religious and historic allusions, the book explores themes of legalism, sin, and guilt. The Scarlet Letter was one of the first mass-produced books in America. It was popular when first published and is considered a classic work today. It inspired numerous film, television, and stage adaptations. Critics have described it as a masterwork and novelist D. H. Lawrence called it a perfect work of the American imagination.

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**The Scarlet Letter: the Annotated Edition (Study Guide)** Nathaniel Hawthorne, 2020-04-03 Nathaniel Hawthorne's THE SCARLET LETTER reaches to our nation's historical and moral roots for the material of great tragedy. Set in an early New England colony, the novel shows the terrible impact a single, passionate act has on the lives of three members of the community: the defiant Hester Prynne; the fiery, tortured Reverend Dimmesdale; and the obsessed, vengeful Chillingworth. With THE SCARLET LETTER, Hawthorne became the first American novelist to forge from our Puritan heritage a universal classic, a masterful exploration of humanity's unending struggle with sin, guilt and pride. Set in Puritan Massachusetts Bay Colony during the years 1642 to 1649, the novel tells the story of Hester Prynne who conceives a daughter through an affair and then struggles to create a new life of repentance and dignity. Containing a number of religious and historic allusions, the book explores themes of legalism, sin, and guilt. The Scarlet Letter was one of the first mass-produced books in America. It was popular when first published and is considered a classic work today. It inspired numerous film, television, and stage adaptations. Critics have described it as a masterwork and novelist D. H. Lawrence called it a perfect work of the American imagination.

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## **Summary Of The Scarlet Letter Introduction**

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