

CONDENSED CLASSICS

THE SCARLET LETTER

By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE

Condensation by George S. Barton
Worcester, Mass.



Nathaniel Hawthorne, American writer, was born in Salem, Mass., July 4, 1804. His earliest boyhood days were spent in Salem, but when he was 14 years old, the family moved to Maine. Here the young lad continued the solitary walks of which he was so fond, but in the wilderness instead of the narrow streets of Salem. Even at this early date he had acquired a taste for writing, and carried a little blank book in which he jotted down his notes.

After a year in Maine, Hawthorne returned to Salem to prepare for college. He amused himself by publishing a manuscript periodical, and at times speculated upon the profession he would follow in the future.

For some years Hawthorne lived in Concord, Mass., in the old Manse, and wrote "Mosses from an Old Manse," "Twice Told Tales" and "Grandfather's Chair." He joined the Brook Farm colony at West Roxbury, but found that the conditions there suited neither his taste nor his temperament, and he remained but one year.

While serving as surveyor of customs at Salem he found among some old papers a large letter "A" embroidered on red cloth, and speculating upon the origin and history of the letter, his imagination was so stirred, that upon his retirement from office he wrote "The Scarlet Letter."

Some other stories of Hawthorne are "The Blithedale Romance," "The Wonder Book," "The Snow Image," "Mosses from an Old Manse" and "The Dolliver Romance" were left unfinished at the author's death. He died at Plymouth, N. H., on the 19th of May, 1864, and five days later was buried at Sleepy Hollow, a beautiful cemetery at Concord where he used to walk under the pines when living at the old Manse. Over his grave is a simple stone, inscribed with the single word, "Hawthorne."

ONE summer morning over two centuries ago the grass plot before the jail in Prison Lane was occupied by many of the inhabitants of Boston. The door opened and the town beadle appeared followed by a young woman carrying a baby about three months old. On the breast of her gown, in red cloth, appeared the letter A, and it was that scarlet letter which drew all eyes toward her.

The place appointed for her punishment was not far from the prison door, and in spite of the agony of her heart, Hester Prynne passed with almost a serene deportment to the scaffold where the pillory was set up, and under the weight of a thousand unrelenting eyes the unhappy prisoner sustained herself as best a woman might.

A small, intelligent appearing man, on the outskirts of the crowd attracted Hester's attention, and he in his turn eyed her till, seeing that she seemed to recognize him, he laid his finger on his lips.

Then, speaking to a townsman he said, "I pray you, good sir, is this woman, and wherefore is she set up to public shame?"

"You must needs be a stranger, friend," said the townsman, "else you would have heard of Mistress Hester Prynne. She hath raised a scandal in godly Master Dimmesdale's church. The penalty thereof is death, but the magistracy in their mercy, have doomed her to stand a space of three hours on the platform of the pillory, and for the remainder of her life to wear a mark of shame in her bosom."

"A wise sentence!" remarked the stranger. "It irks me, nevertheless, that the partner of her iniquity should not at least stand by her side. But he will be known—he will be known!"

Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale, a young minister of high native gifts, who had already wide eminence in his profession, was urged to exhort Hester to repentance and confession. Addressing her, he advised that she name her fellow sinner even if he had to step from a high position to stand beside her, for it was better so than to hide a guilty heart through life.

Hester shook her head, keeping her place upon the pedestal of shame with an air of weary indifference.

That night her child writhed in convulsions, and a physician, Mr. Roger Chillingworth, none other than the stranger Hester had noticed in the crowd, was called. Having seen the baby's pain he turned and said: "Hester, I ask not wherefore thou hast fallen into the pit. It was my folly and thy weakness. What had I—a man of thought—to do with youth and beauty like thine? I might have known that in my long absence this would happen."

"I have greatly wronged thee," murmured Hester.

"We have wronged each other," he answered. "But I shall seek this man whose name thou wilt not reveal, and sooner or later he must be mine. I shall contrive nothing against his life. Let him live. One thing, thou that wast my wife, I ask. Thou hast kept his name secret. Keep likewise, mine. Let thy husband be to the world as one already dead, and breathe not the secret, above all to the man thou wottest of."

"I will keep thy secret as I have his."

Freed from prison Hester did not flee, but established herself in a small cottage just outside the town, incurring no risk of want for she possessed the art of needlework which provided food for herself and child. She had named the little one "Pearl," as being of great price, and little Pearl grew up a lovely child. People wished to take her away and the matter was discussed in the mother's presence by Governor Bellingham and his guests—Rev. John Wilson, Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale, and Dr. Chillingworth.

"God gave me the child!" cried Hester, and turning to the young clergyman, Mr. Dimmesdale, she exclaimed, "Speak thou for me. Thou wast my pastor. Thou knowest what is in my heart and what are a mother's rights, and how much the stronger they are when that mother has but her child and the scarlet letter! I will not loose the child! Look to it!"

"There is truth in what she says," began the minister. "There is a quality of awful sacredness between this mother and this child. It is good for this poor sinful woman that she hath an infant confided to her care—to be trained by her to righteousness. Let us leave them as providence hath seen fit to place them!"

"You speak, my friend, with a strange earnestness," said Roger Chillingworth, smiling at him.

"He hath adduced such arguments that we will leave the matter as it stands," said the governor. The affair being so satisfactorily concluded, Hester and Pearl departed.

Rev. Mr. Dimmesdale's health failing he consulted Dr. Chillingworth. Taking him as a patient, the doctor decided to know the man's inmost nature before trying to heal him. Arrangements were made for the two men to lodge together so that he might be constantly under the doctor's observation.

As Doctor Chillingworth proceeded with his investigation, begun as he imagined with the integrity of a judge desirous only of truth, a terrible fascination seized him and insisted that he do his bidding. He now dug into the poor clergyman's heart, like a miner seeking gold; and Mr. Dimmesdale grew to look at him with an unaccountable horror.

Often Mr. Dimmesdale tried to speak the truth of his past from the pulpit but had cheated himself by confessing his sinfulness in general terms. Once, indulging in the mockery of repentance, he mounted the scaffold where Hester had stood. There was no danger of discovery for everyone was asleep. Even so he was surprised by Hester and Pearl, returning from a death bed in the town, and presently by Roger Chillingworth.

"Who is that man?" gasped Mr. Dimmesdale, in terror. "I shiver at him, Hester. Canst thou do nothing for me? I have a nameless horror of the man."

Remembering her promise, Hester was silent.

"Worthy sir," said the doctor, advancing to the platform. "Pious Master Dimmesdale! Can this be you? Come, good sir, I pray you, let me lead you home! You should study less, or these night-whimsies will grow upon you."

Hester now resolved to do what she could for the victim whom she saw in her former husband's grip. One day she met the old doctor in the woods seeking herbs and implored him to be merciful, saying that she must now reveal the secret of their former relationship no matter what befell.

A week later Hester awaited the clergyman in the forest and told him about Roger Chillingworth and their relationship, bidding him hope for a new life beyond the sea in some rural village.

"Thou shalt not go alone," she whispered.

Arthur Dimmesdale attained the proudest eminence a New England clergyman could reach. He had preached the election sermon on the holiday celebrating the election of a new governor.

Hester had taken berths to England, and on the holiday the shipmaster informed her that Roger Chillingworth had booked passage on the same vessel; saying nothing, she turned and stood by the pillory with Pearl.

The minister, surrounded by leading townsmen, halted at the scaffold and calling Hester and Pearl to him mounted the scaffold steps. Telling Hester he was a dying man and must hasten to assume his shame, he turned to the market-place and spoke with a voice that all could hear.

"People of New England! At last, at last I stand where seven years since I should have stood. Lo, the scarlet letter which Hester wears! Ye have all shuddered at it! But there stood one in the midst of you, at whose brand of sin ye have not shuddered."

With a convulsive motion he tore away the ministerial gown from his breast. It was revealed! Then sinking down on the scaffold he died, his head resting on Hester's bosom.

Afterwards, conflicting accounts arose about the scene on the scaffold. Many testified to seeing a scarlet letter on the minister's bosom, while others denied it, saying that Dimmesdale's confession implied no part of Hester's guilt.

Roger Chillingworth died, bequeathing his property to Pearl.

Hester and Pearl lived in England for years, then Pearl marrying, Hester returned alone to the little dwelling by the forest.

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THE SANDMAN STORY

CANARIES ARE YELLOW

ONCE upon a time there lived a very small witch in a very small hut on the edge of a wide, sandy, hot, glaring desert.

Now, just opposite across the end of the desert was a tiny wizard. He was about 1,000 years older than the witch, but that made no matter in the way that such people count time. The witch had a pretty niece, and the wizard a handsome nephew. Of course, the boy and girl knew each other, but of this the uncle and aunt did not approve.

"If I hear of your meeting that girl



I will turn you into a wolf," said the wizard to Don, his nephew.

"If you ever speak to that boy again I will lock you in the deepest, darkest cavern in the world," the witch told Adele, her niece.

One bright moonlight night the boy and girl met at a bush in the desert half-way between the hut of the witch and that of the wizard.

"Meet me here tomorrow at this time and we will flee from our homes," said the boy. "I will bring our donkey and in two days we will be beyond the reach of our uncle and aunt."

Now, the lad did not know that a tiny bird had been listening all the while. It was a wren which disliked the girl, for it was jealous of the attention given her.

Don ran away to the spot where his uncle, the wizard slept. Adele went back to her aunt's hut, but behind her flew the wren.

That afternoon when Adele was spinning in a shed, the wren told the witch of the plot to run away.

"You see what kind of a child you have cared for so kindly," said the wren. "Here she is getting ready to leave you forever."

"I will follow them," replied the witch. "They will both die in the desert, but I do not care. My broth is cooking and will take a long time,

but I can catch up to them. You know I can change myself into a wren just like you."

About nine that evening the girl, with a bundle in her hand stole out to the bush and there she found the lad waiting. She mounted the donkey, and they set off across the sand. It was cool. The moon rose and turned the desert into gold.

"We will go off in this direction," said Don. "We will have to cross the yellow water before we get into safety. As it is magical in its power, we must not let it touch us, for if it does, we will remain forever yellow."

Now after they had gone about three hours, the witch, in the shape of a wren, started after them. She caught sight of them just as they were nearing the yellow water. Don leaped across, then threw over it a log, on which the donkey bearing Adele came safely. The witch, who was later than she thought, flew fast and hard. As she skimmed low near the earth she fluttered just above the log when Don cast it down into the water. One end flew up and hit her. Down she tumbled into the magical water. In to it she went as a bird and out of it she came as a bird, only she was a bright lemon yellow. She fluttered about in a wild rage. She could not talk; only sang. Never again would she become a woman; never again would she become a bird.

But Don and Adele got safely out of the desert and found a happy home among friends in the North.

(Copyright.)

Beauty Chats

By Edna Kent Forbes

EXERCISE FOR BEAUTY

MOST WOMEN prefer coffee in bed and a hot bath to a series of exercises and a cold shower. Women are like cats in this respect, that they hate cold and avoid anything strenuous.

The result is that few of them get enough of the sort of exercise they need. One woman to whom I wrote advising fifteen minutes of exercise every morning, replied indignantly that keeping a six-room house and running two children was all the exercise she needed! But it never occurred

to her that doing household tasks after a set rule made it all the more necessary for her to do some sort of gymnastics bringing other motions in to play.

The housewife ought to study out the sort of motions she does most frequently in her work, and take exercises that will benefit other sets of muscles. Stenographers and office workers need exercises for developing the chest, overcoming rounded shoulders and developing the legs, since their work is sitting and bending. Girls who work at machines go-

ing through one set of motions over and over, should pick exercises to use other parts of their body, lest they, too, grow one-sided in development.

Workers and idlers alike need physical exercising, based on scientific study. Fifteen minutes a day is ample, and includes the time for the bath. The result will be greater efficiency, longer youth, better looks and greater vitality.



A little daily exercise will increase one's beauty and health.

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(Copyright.)

What the Sphinx Says

By Newton Newkirk



"We improve our fore-sight by exercising our hind-sight."

CROSBY'S KIDS



WHY DON'T YER GROW?
I CAN'T MY MOTHER FEEDS ME ON ROUND BUNS
WHY DON'T YER TELL HER TO FEED YER ON LONG BUNS

Off Again, On Again

STRICKLAND W. GILLILAN

(Copyright.)

THE 4-FLUSHER.

He thought that labor should be paid the very highest price. (He sought the workman's suffrage and he knew that listened nice.) He sobbed about their poverty and wept o'er "meager wage"— You would have wondered much if aught his sorrow could assuage.

But when he bought the stuff produced by laborers "underpaid," He kicked his trousers nearly off because it wasn't made A whole lot cheaper than it was—it pained him to the bone To see a workman prosper when the money was his own.

Pucker Brush Eloquence.

A great singer pours forth melody and is generally made happy by an

encore and sometimes gets two or three and I think by the incidents of the past week Pucker Brush should have an encore of praise.

Mr. Hignett's sermon was certainly inspiring and the facts of the Christian life were laid down so forcibly to the congregation that it caused, with the help of the gospel workers, ten to come forward and take the minister by the hand and confess—Pucker Brush Items in Dallas County (Ia.) Record.

IT WAS EVER THUS.

There was a man in our town Who would not advertise, And when his business ship went down It caused no great surprise.

As Time Flits.

Sixty seconds make one minute, sixty sucker births make an hour, etc.

FRAGMENTARY CONVERSATION

"Scattering remarks," said the stenographer as she blew the parings away from the dicta-graph.

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BESSIE LOVE



It will be surprising news to thousands of admirers of Bessie Love, the popular movie star, to learn that she only recently graduated from the Los Angeles high school. Not that Miss Love is backward in her studies—far be it from that, as she graduated with honors, but she really is young and completed her education on schedule time.

Catarrhal Deafness Cannot Be Cured

by local applications as they cannot reach the diseased portion of the ear. There is only one way to cure Catarrhal Deafness, and that is by a constitutional remedy. HALL'S CATARRH MEDICINE acts through the Blood on the Mucous Surfaces of the System. Catarrhal Deafness is caused by an inflamed condition of the mucous lining of the Eustachian Tube. When this tube is inflamed you have a rumbling sound or imperfect hearing, and when it is entirely closed, Deafness is the result. Unless the inflammation can be reduced and this tube restored to its normal condition, hearing may be destroyed forever. Many cases of Deafness are caused by Catarrh, which is an inflamed condition of the Mucous Surfaces. ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS for any case of Catarrhal Deafness that cannot be cured by HALL'S CATARRH MEDICINE. All Druggists 75c. Circulars free. F. J. Cheney & Co., Toledo, Ohio.

Hirsute Courage.

"The Arabs follow the custom of their prophet Mohammed, who never shaved."

"I suppose that is one reason why they are always so ready to beard their enemies."

A Lady of Distinction.

Is recognized by the delicate fascinating influence of the perfume she uses. A bath with Cuticura Soap and hot water to thoroughly cleanse the pores, followed by a dusting with Cuticura Talcum Powder usually means a clear, sweet, healthy skin.—Adv.

When a girl under 25 declares that she will never marry she hopes she isn't telling the truth.

Sure Relief



BELL-ANS FOR INDIGESTION

BIG ULCER ALL HEALED

"Here is another letter that makes me happy," says Peterson, of Buffalo. "One that I would rather have than a thousand dollars."

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Dear Sir:— "I was an untold sufferer from old running sore and ulcers. I had tried most everything without any relief from pain. A friend told me of your wonderful ointment and the first box took away the pain that had not left me before in years, and after using just nine dollars' worth of the salve I am cured. The ulcer was 9 inches by 6 1/2 inches, is all healed and I can walk. Never, never will I be without Peterson's again."

"You may use this to recommend your ointment, if you wish. I cannot say enough to praise it." Yours truly, Mrs. Albert Southcott, Medina, N. Y. Mail orders filled by Peterson Ointment Co., Inc., Buffalo, N. Y.

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