

Young goodman brown analysis essay

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Fate in the Hands of the Devil Through a vivid portrayal of a dismal and foreboding mood, Hawthorne sets the background for Goodman Brown's grueling battle with faith. The dark mood painted by Hawthorne, also reflects Goodman Brown's incredible loneliness, a theme that runs consistently throughout the story. Despite the pleas of his wife, Faith, Goodman Brown leaves the spiritual comfort of his Salem home and finds himself on "a dreary road, darkened by all the gloomiest trees of the forest" (Hawthorne). Hawthorne's choice of words defines the mood of the entire story.

The forest road and trees are not just dull or dark, but "dreary" and "gloomy." The sounds from the forest add to the mood. Voices of unseen riders and "hoofs clatter[ing] [...] in the empty air" (Hawthorne) contribute to Goodman Brown's unease. The reader finds himself/herself drawn into Goodman Brown's trek with an utter sense of foreboding. Describing Goodman Brown's developing loneliness, Hawthorne sets the mood: "It was all as lonely as could be; and there is this peculiarity in such a solitude" (Hawthorne).

The peculiarity Hawthorne speaks of comes from several sources. Goodman Brown is, after all, literally alone with the devil after leaving his wife, also alone, on this un-holiest of all journeys. In addition, Hawthorne guides the reader to feel Goodman Brown's loneliness by alienating him from those he has loved and trusted most through his life. One by one, from Goody Cloyse, Goodman Brown's catechism teacher, to Deacon Gookin, his moral and spiritual advisor, to ultimately his wife Faith, the people in his life whom he most trusted and in whom he had the most "faith" join the march to worship Satan. Hawthorne sets the mood of "Young Goodman Brown" in two distinct

ways. His vivid description of Goodman Brown's journey through the forest, including the forest's unique characteristics and sounds, helps establish the level of darkness and shadowlike overtone necessary to allow the reader to feel Goodman Brown's loss of f/Faith.

Further, Hawthorne establishes the mood of the story by focusing on Goodman Brown's loneliness. While it is clear that Goodman Brown grows old with friends and family at his side, he is nevertheless judged at the end of the story when no one could find words to commemorate the death of a faithless man.