

Destiny in naturalism assignment

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**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

This corner stone of the genre is used to great effect in Nathaniel Hawthorn's "Young Goodman Brown," where the author exploits the evil of man to display this key feature of literary Naturalism, that of destiny, by Juxtaposing the reality of the seemingly devout puritan's of Salem with the veiled truth behind their double lives. We are first Introduced to Young Goodman Brown In a typical, realist way; with the minor details that culminate In an accurate depiction of the way day to day life Is for the middle class protagonist and his wife.

With Hawthorne ever-present use of foreshadowing however, the reader Is at once thrust Into the world of naturalism with the mention of Brown's wife Faith's pink ribbons. This vivid symbol serves throughout the work to remind the reader of Faith's goodness, and yet, in the end, serves to display that however good she might have been, Faith is destined for something darker. As Faith begs her husband not to leave her on his Journey, the good and pure wife senses, if not knows, that something foul awaits her dear husband at the end of his travels.

This collocation, upon inspection, alludes to the vile that lurks beneath the rather benign facade of our Just-begun story. As Goodman Brown Journeys on his way we are introduced to a character that bears striking resemblance to Brown. In their conversation Brown learns of the intimate nature In which his new companion Is acquainted with his family. As his fellow traveler speaks of his experiences with Brown's family, the old man talks of some less than favorable events that he has undertaken with Brown's father and grandfather. Upon learning of these events, Goodman Brown replies, " We are a people of prayer, and good works, to boot, and abide no such

wickedness" (1200). This recall of his families past hints of Brown's eventual fate and speaks to the life he is destined to lead. Though he believes he is of right and good lineage, he in fact is not. As the two continue their conversation, we find that Brown has changed his mind, and that the "evil purpose" (1199), which he was set out on his Journey to accomplish, is no longer something he intends to complete.

From this short distance into the story we see the force of destiny so heavily pulling on our main characters life: though he has decided that he shall not continue, it is as if something stronger than he, something not of this world is yet pulling him towards his eventual fate. As Brown is being moved further along toward his destination by his elder guide, strange occurrences begin to pass. These unexplainable events, which perhaps happen only in our Young Goodman Brown's mind, are textbook supernatural, and serve to underscore the dubbing of this short work of fiction as Naturalist.

The pull of destiny is nowhere seen more vivid than in Young Goodman Brown's realization deep in the forest that his beloved wife is going, the same night, to the same place that he has thus decided not to go.

Bewildered and faint-hearted, Brown looks up to the night sky above to see "a cloud, though no wind was stirring, hurried across the zenith, hiding the brightening stars" (1203). As this troublesome sight sweeps north in the direction he is supposed to be headed, he watches and listens and inexplicably enough hears the voices of his fellow towns people of Salem, and finally, to his horror, his cherished Faith's lamenting voice.

As the cloud and the voices sweep away, down from above flutters a lone pink ribbon. This otherworldly occurrence points directly to the foregone conclusion that is Young Goodman Brown's fate. His destiny is so etched in stone that even his marriage to such a good and pure woman cannot keep him from the indomitable evil that so unabashedly seeks his soul. As Brown realizes that his Faith is now on her way to the same place he was going, and that his faith in the good of humanity is eroded, he gives in to the forces of destiny saying, " My Faith is gone.

There is no good on earth; and sin is but a name. Come, devil! For to the is this world given" (1204). When Brown finally reaches his destination and wholly realizes what he has come o partake in, a " dark figure" stands up before all that are gathered and begins to speechify to him and his wife about their fellow towns people; those that they believed they knew so well. " There are all whom ye have revered from youth. Ye deemed them holier than yourselves, and shrank from your own sin, contrasting it with their lives of righteousness, and prayerful aspirations heavenward.

Yet, here are they all, in my worshipping assembly! This night it shall be granted you to know their secret deeds; how hoary-bearded elders of the church have whispered wanton words o the young maids of their households; how many a woman, eager for widows weeds, has given her husband a drink at bed-time, and let him sleep his last sleep in her bosom; how beardless youths have made haste to inherit their fathers' wealth; and how fair damsels?? blush not sweet ones! ?? have dug little graves in the garden, and bidden me, the sole guest, to an infant's funeral" (1206).

These horrifying revelations, displaying the true nature of the people whom Brown and Faith live among in Salem, is yet another efficacious display of Hawthorn's liberate use of destiny as it was described by his fellow Naturalist writers. Believing that they were surrounded by other devout puritan souls, the couple lived their lives as they were taught they should, never suspecting that their fate was so perilously chained to the unseen acts of evil that were daily transpiring around them.

Their destiny was to fall into collusion with their deceptively good neighbors, not to follow their counterfeit virtuous ways however, but alas to follow their vile, iniquitous ways. Yet all the while, as they followed like the good and pure that they strove to be, Young Goodman Brown and his dear sweet Faith were following that which was diametrically opposed to the life of a right and honorable puritan.

Just as the pull of destiny was so pervasive in Young Goodman Brown's life, so was the same force strongly seen in the life of the stories author.

Nathaniel Hawthorne is today consolable one AT America's greatest writers, Ana It seems Tanat en was always destined to be so. From childhood the pull of the written word began weaving its ways through Hawthorn's life when at the age of nine, " a ball playing accident left him lame for fourteen months. Released from regular schooling, he immersed himself in the family's books" (Goggling).

Just the same, destiny was showing its weight when Hawthorne graduated Bowdon College with classmates that " would become lifelong friends: his most intimate companion Horopito Bridge (who would help arrange

publication of his first book), Henry Headwords Longfellow (who would review it), and Franklin Pierce (who would become President of the United States and appoint Hawthorne consul to Liverpool)” (Gogging) -all of these acquaintances favored heavily in Hawthorn’s eventual success as a writer.

Naturalism in literature has any varied characteristics, but I believe none of them to be as important as the force of destiny on the characters of the given story. Weaving a tale that pulls the reader in is a hard task to master, but with destiny in a writer’s pocket, captivating an audience is much easier to achieve. Letting the reader in on the secret, that which the character of the story is not aware, gives the reader a sense of ownership in the unfolding plot. It is as if the reader can see into the future, to the end of story, without actually having yet gone there.

As is the case in Young Goodman Brown, we he reader knows something wicked this way comes; we know this almost from the outset. Hawthorne even goes so far as to compare and contrast in the most vivid way possible the lives of good the towns people of Salem seem to live with the shocking truth that underneath it all, these devout puritans are, in actuality, living lives more inline with the dark of the devil. Yet knowing what we know, we are unable to tear ourselves away from the text because we are now tied to the destiny of the character. As the French proverb says, “ One meets his destiny often in the road he takes to avoid it.