

The scarlet letter – one paragraph



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In *The Scarlet Letter*, Nathaniel Hawthorne argues that letting things fester inside for too long will destroy people and tear them away from the ones they love most, ultimately eradicating their lives.

He portrays this theme through the character of Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale and how the congregation of the church, being a man of the cloth, and Pearl have affected the deterioration of his being and have taken away his chances at a happy life with Hester and Pearl. Reverend Dimmesdale's and Hester's affair has profoundly changed Reverend Dimmesdale's life, but not for the better. His secret of their affair is kept tightly bound within his walls of concealment, having no way of being let out.

The first brick of many laid upon Dimmesdale's wall of concealment, making him bury his secret even further from the outside, was the congregation of the church. The congregation viewed him as a grand religious figure in which they should all achieve to become, and looked up to him as their leader guiding them on their pathway to God. But, Dimmesdale was farther away from God than any one being in his congregation, for upon his soul, he had the sin of adultery.

And although the congregation of the church was able to see the paleness in the young minister's cheek, (116) they dismissed this for they knew their minister would never commit a sin that would go against his teaching. As a result of severe pressure from his congregation to be the perfect minister, Dimmesdale cannot own up to his mistake for the church's sake, or all would fall apart. Subsequently, his next level of his wall of concealment is that he is a man of the cloth, a holy figure, a savior from God

to his church, and one with this respectability would not throw their positions away for the lust of another person. His church would never question the fact that he would never be intimate with a woman, for it was seen as a despicable act that they knew he would never think of committing. Their minister was only supposed to show love to one being, and that being was God. But underneath his love for God was a more passionate and fervent love, of which he shared with a woman, but could not show.

Last of all of the blocks laid upon this wall Dimmesdale has built up with concealment, is the sight of Pearl through his eyes. Pearl has questioned him, asking if he would ??? stand here with mother??? (149) and her on the scaffold and confess to the world that he himself is her father, and the unknown lover of Hester Prynne. But Dimmesdale cannot do so, for he would be put to death with the violent words he confessed of his sin. Consequently, he must remain mute and keep his secret locked within his walls of concealment. As a result of keeping his secret affair veiled and hidden, he attempts to purify himself. The reverend??™s purification method was none the less of starvation, of which physically changed his appearance drastically.

His cheeks had gone pale, as the church had noticed, his ??? form grew emaciated,??? (117) and along with that, although his voice was indeed still rich and sweet, there began to develop a ??? melancholy prophecy of decay in it.??? (117) He was slowly breaking himself off from life, killing himself little by little. As though starving himself was not enough, he began to somewhat mutilate himself, forming a ??? scarlet token on his naked breast??? (144) similar to that of Hester??™s scarlet letter ??? A???.

Dimmesdale is replicating the suffering Hester has been through upon himself so he can sympathize to her true state of damage and hurt. The reverend desires with passion to be with her, but in the Puritan society they dwell in would never stand for it.

Therefore, their affair must remain concealed between the two of them and they both must stay separate from each other in order to lead even a slightly happy life.