

How nathaniel hawthorne creates the strongest and most admirable character

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



Characters, serving as the bedrock or lifeblood of books, are essential to the creation of books. Authors have to be extremely meticulous in order to ensure the success of a book through its well-rounded characters. Nathaniel Hawthorne created such a vivid character that she lives in the readers' hearts eternally.

Hester Prynne, the main character in *The Scarlet Letter*, accommodates all the elements a memorable character needs. The book *The Scarlet Letter* has a setting in Boston, Massachusetts. It records the shameful sequence of events after the adultery between Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale. At the beginning of the story, Hester's crime was revealed while Dimmesdale concealed his crime and suffered internal punishment throughout the story. By using other characters, giving his character a genuine soul, and recording his character's development, Hawthorne was capable of creating the "strongest and most admirable character in all literature."

Throughout the book, Hawthorne used numerous quotes from the minor characters to present his audience of Hester's characteristics. By using this technique, Hawthorne enabled his audience to have the ability to create their own image of Hester. Hawthorne first introduced Hester through a conversation of the town's women, "This woman has brought shame upon us all, and ought to die" (Hawthorne 56). By reading this comment on Hester, Hawthorne's audience receives a negative impression on Hester before knowing her position and faults. The next part of the scene continues to use the town's people's reactions and comments to shape Hester as a shameful person. By reading the story, the readers can easily interpret the

meaning of the “scarlet A” on Hester’s bosom indicates “adultery.” However, the town’s people shifted their opinions on her as the story continues. At the beginning, not only the rich ignored Hester’s effort, but also the poor and weak people in the society. “Hester bestowed all her superfluous means in charity, on wretches less miserable than herself, and who not infrequently insulted the hand that fed them” (Hawthorne 93). However, through her continuous efforts and her strong personality, Hester was able to take care of a child independently and shift people’s opinion: “Such helpfulness was found in her so much power to do, and power to sympathise that many people refused to interpret the scarlet A by its original signification. They said that it meant Able; so strong was Hester Prynne, with a woman’s strength” (Hawthorne 185). Through the change of the town’s people, the audience came to realize the strength in Hester, especially if they pay attention to the process Hester went through before the acceptance of the town’s people. Through the comments of the minor characters, Hawthorne enabled his audience to have the freedom to create a negative image on Hester first and shift their opinions as the story goes on.

The success of Hester as a novel character also relates to the fact which Hawthorne provided Hester a genuine soul. The description of Hester does not only explain Hester as a character but more importantly, its vivid words also enable Hester to walk out of the book and appear as an alive person. The word choice and logic appears so closely relatable to life which causes the readers to feel the resonance in real life: “She clutched the child so fiercely to her breast, that it sent forth a cry; she turned her eyes downward

at the scarlet letter, and even touched it with her finger, to assure herself that the infant and the shame were real" (Hawthorne 65). Through this statement, the audience acknowledges the character created by Hawthorne is genuine and un-godlike and can easily relate to her feelings. This type of description occurs throughout the story and enables the audience to reflect on Hester's strong character and begin to admire this characteristic. " Alone in the world, cast off by it, and with this sole treasure to keep her heart alive, she felt that she possessed indefeasible rights against the world, and was ready to defend them to the death" (Hawthorne 127). With this statement, Hawthorne was able to express the loneliness of Hester to his audience which emphasizes her strength. Known by most readers, most women in Hester's situation do not have the ability to take care of the situation as well as Hester did, especially the women back in that era. Women back then were supported mostly by man. They follow the crowd, do not have the courage to say " no", and rarely stand up for themselves. Therefore, Hester became the unique and admirable character with her firm character. "' I will not speak!' answered Hester, turning pale as death, but responding to this voice, which she too surely recognized" (Hawthorne 75). Hester managed to stand up for herself even though she was troubled and scared. Her strength is recognized through Hawthorne's powerful yet genuine words which enables the readers to relate and reflect on her as a real person.

In addition, Hawthorne thoroughly understood the importance of the development of a character because most readers would not appreciate a character who remains the same throughout the story. In the beginning of

the story, Hester appeared as a prideful person through her action at the scaffold. “ until, on the threshold of the prison-door, she repelled him, by an action marked with natural dignity and force of character, and stepped into the open air, as if by her own free will” (Hawthorne 57). By repelling the town-beadle, Hester was presented to the audience as the prideful character who fight against her fate. However, with the pressure of the town’s people, Hester “ never battled with the public, but submitted, uncomplainingly, to its worst usage; she made no claim upon it, in requital for what she suffered; she did not weigh upon its sympathies” (Hawthorne 183). Through these words, readers will be touched with Hester’s pitiful situation and admire her ability to strengthen herself and continue to live. The audience will notice Hester’s pride did not fade away as time passes by; instead, it was planted deeply in Hester’s heart. With the strength of her prideful characteristic, Hester grows to be stronger every day as she grows from a lady to a true woman. Hester’s development might seem negligible while one reads the story, but by comparing the difference of Hester from the beginning and the end of the story, one will surely notice the admirable transformation of Hester.

Through the success in Hester as a character, the readers can clearly identify the unique techniques used by Hawthorne while he creates the memorable story. With the words of the minor characters, Hawthorne enabled his readers the freedom to imagine Hester’s characteristics. With the creation of Hester’s genuine soul, Hawthorne provided his readers the realistic character who had the ability to walk out of the book to connect with

the readers. With the development of Hester, Hawthorne prompted the readers to stay interested as the story develops and reflect on their own faults and defects at the end. Therefore, Hester Prynne, the main character in *The Scarlet Letter* who stands out and shines brightly as the strongest and most admirable character in all literature, owes the credit to her creator: Nathaniel Hawthorne.