Nathaniel hawthorne-gothic elements

Nathaniel Hawthorne uses ' gothic' elements in his stories a great deal. The story it stuck out to me the most in was Young Goodman Brown. The main things in the story that made the gothic elements stick out to me are some of the settings, and characters, and events that happen within the story. This whole story is crawling with gothic elements, some very obvious and others not so much. The story starts of in the late 16th early 17th century in Salem Massachusetts. This is the time during the Salem witch trials. This was probably, not the best time to be in Salem if I had to guess.

The story starts of sunny, not so gloomy but suddenly gets that way as soon as Goodman Brown leaves his wife Faith on his errand in the woods. Anything at dusk will have that gloomy eerie filling, but woods have that little something extra that makes them extra eerie. " He had taken a dreary road, darkened by all the gloomiest trees ofthe forest, which barely stood aside to let the narrow path creep through, and closed immediately. " (Perkins 449) The imagery that pops up in your head when you read this is not the only thing I get out of this sentence a little creepy.

The word usage is what really gets me. Hawthorne's use of words was just amazing. The way he made you feel, you could tell it was not anywhere you would want to be. The words dreary, gloomiest and creep just gives you the chills. Once Goodman Brown is in the woods the setting only gets more gloomy and dreary. Another really strange scene is when Goodman Brown can see the bright sky, and then all of a sudden a big black cloud forms right over Brown's head. Everywhere else he could see the " Blue Sky" (Prekins 453) except over him. Is that not creepy or what?

The book calls the dark cloud a " black mass of cloud. " (Perkins 453) This is when all the dark things happen. Some of the characters in Young Goodman Brown that have a gothic since to them are very obvious. The Devil is an example of one that to me was a little tricky at first. This part of the story threw me. It took me reading it for the second time to actually figure out that was the devil was the gentleman that Goodman met in the woods the whole time. After sitting back and actually thinking about it, it's quite obvious that this man is in fact the devil.

The strange thing that I found about the devil is he was about the same age as Goodman Brown and favored him " in expression more than features. " (Perkins 449) So he was not at all what you think the devil would appear like. The one thing that did make since that was dark about the man, was his walking stick. " His staff, which bore the likeness of a great black snake, so curiously wrought that it might almost be seen to twist and wriggle itself like a live serpent. " (Perkins 449) This was the dark thing that should have warned Goodman about the man.

Goodman Brown is another one that is a little off. Though you do not see it in the beginning of the story, you do more toward the end. Goodman seems like a god Christian fellow, especially when he says, " With heaven above and Faith below, I will yet stand firm against the devil. " (Perkins 453) This is when the cloud talked about earlier appears and Goodman soon after loses his faith. One thing that caught my eye about Goodman Brown and why I thought he was somewhat corrupted is when he goes up to the altar. He tries fighting it the whole time, but eventually gives in.

The elements in the story Young Goodman Brown that has the gothic feel to them are somewhat obvious, and the reason why he uses these elements. The reason Hawthorne uses Gothicism is to show that there can be evil in everyone. The devil can show up anywhere. Goodman Brown found this out the hard way, he also found out sometimes you truly do not know someone. Some people can surprise you, and not be who you think they are. This is the biggest thing I got out of this story. Works Cited Perkins, George and Barbara. The American Tradition in Literature. New York, New York: mcGraw-Hill, 2009.