

## Faith, Hypocrisy, and the Loss of Innocence in “Young Goodman Brown”

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### ABSTRACT

This research paper analyses Nathaniel Hawthorne’s short story “Young Goodman Brown” as a critical exploration of faith, hypocrisy, and human nature within Puritan society. Set in seventeenth-century New England, the story follows a young man whose mysterious journey into the forest challenges his belief in the goodness of his community and his wife, Faith. Through powerful symbolism, including the forest, Faith’s pink ribbons, and the devil figure, Hawthorne reveals the hidden sinfulness beneath outward religious devotion. The paper examines the psychological transformation of Goodman Brown, whose experience leads to doubt, isolation, and despair. Whether the events in the forest are real or imagined remains ambiguous, but their impact on Brown is permanent. His loss of faith ultimately destroys his ability to trust others or find spiritual peace. By combining textual analysis with scholarly interpretations, this study highlights Hawthorne’s message about the dangers of moral extremism and the fragile nature of faith. Therefore, the story remains a timeless reflection on the complexity of good and evil in human life.

Keywords: Good, Evil, Faith, Human, Hypocrisy.

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