

# “Rappaccini’s Daughter” and Hawthorne’s Moral Landscape

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## I

It is a great fallacy, I think, of the modern scholarship that once a truth, whatever that may be, is found, it should be discarded, because it has become like a used car, so that every new critic must find a fresh avenue of approach to a work of art, apart from those established roads of previous generations. This endless search for a new territory is, in spite of its gratifying effect of expansion in knowledge, self-defeating; for this arduous endeavour, however hard we strive to reach for an ultimate conclusion, is essentially based on the premise that newness is truth. There is no real assurance that the endless succession of newness will eventually bring us to the sanctified realm of absolute truth, which like Ulysses’ horizon, is forever receding before the view of the pursuer. The concept of constant motion as the sole way to truth is, of course, a fundamental proposition of the Western civilization, and the phenomenon of limitless variety which we are now surrounded with is the inevitable conclusion of this proposition. Amid this confused amalgamation of differentiated opinions, all that we can hope to do for the sake of discerning a guiding principle for the experience of our life is to draw as clear a map of stars as we can, with the single exclusion of the North star.

I think the root of this paradoxical conclusion is the result of the fatal negligence of the other side of the coin, which is the universal heart of humanity underlying the variegated facets of individuality, and which Hawthorne, through his tragic dramas of the heart, attempted to show to us. Whereas the emphasis on the original probing of individual mind is frequently the operation of the intellect the function of which is largely to draw a line of difference in a previously unified object, the immersion into the universal heart of humanity is essentially a transcendental act of faith which is, perhaps, not, as Emerson noted, to

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negate the line, but which is, as Hawthorne thought, to explore the essential linkage behind the lines. Consequently, what we should do when confronted with a work of art is not to rummage the inside of a waste-basket, where the already dissected and discarded shreds of critical ideas are laid, in order to discover any remaining large pieces of unanalyzed materials to apply his peculiar brand of knife to, but to delve into our own heart to see whether these myriad faces of criticism reflected on the lurid mirror of the deep heart do not present an identifiable unified vision of life. It is indeed to explore the nebulous region of my half consciousness in the hope of deciphering the hieroglyphic pattern of enigmatic shapes etched on the photogravure of transcendental conviction that I have taken up the involved moral problem of one of Hawthorne's difficult works. Despite of the fact that the now-famous ambiguity of this inherently reserved author is never completely lifted up, there seems to lurk, in a moment of comparative transparency, a solid landscape of moral vision, however opaque the surrounding atmosphere appears to be.

Nathaniel Hawthorne, who, in his effort to grasp the meaning of his own secret heart, spent twelve largely solitary years in his so-called 'dismal chamber' in Salem, Massachusetts, held the firm opinion that the human ideal can only be achieved through some kind of transformation of human heart, and that the problem of morality is not the formation of external code of action but the tragic and often fatal conflict of psychological and spiritual forces. Although his Notebooks—American, English, French, and Italian—which contain innumerable germs of incipient works, and which actually provided a nucleus of idea or event to the several of Hawthorne's stories, are not, in the strict sense, the journals in the form of confronting his own soul and of indicting himself on its blackness; many of his major works contribute to paint a moral landscape which reproduced the essential texture of man's inner life. This picture having been prepared by the author who was always obsessed with the other side of the coin, and whose most conspicuous trait was forever to negate the complacent tyranny of affirmation, it should not surprise us to perceive that the main trait of this moral geography is once again ambiguity. It should also be noted that this ambiguity is not the result of an wilful act of obfuscation on the author's part but a natural growth of authentic effort, which reached its hand through the regrading generation of human civilization back to the architypal world of myth; and which delved, with the spirit of an indomitable pionior, into the nightmarish land of unconsciousness; and finally which attempted a transcendental flight toward the spiritual sphere surrounded by the mysterious haze beyond the realm of actuality. Accordingly even if any barely discernable shape of moral picture is accorded to us as the result of the author's wretling with the secret of human heart, it is more like a mirage than a tangible object and at best no more than a temporary supposition.

Needless to say, an interpretation of a work of art is, at best, no more than a sparkle of fire caused by an intensive clash between two serious hearts of the author and the reader's

own, so that every interpretation is like a wayside tavern on the way to our permanent habitat, which will never be reached on this side of paradise. This is especially true with the criticism of Hawthorne's works which began to be reevaluated radically around 1930, provoked by the incisive scholarly works of Newton Arvin and Randal Stewart, and which have received an ever-increasing critical attention that is still unabating. The important views among the numerous criticisms which are currently considered still valid include the ethical viewpoint of Terence Martin, the artistic evaluation of Richard Harter Fogle, the religious interpretation of Hyatt H. Waggoner, the philosophical outlook of Roy R. Male, the historical consideration of Michael Davitt Bell, and the psychological analysis of Frederick Crews. When we are sufficiently submerged inside the critical surface of their opinions, each one of these critics, we are forced to admit, resides in a complete world of his own, in which he seems to be a sole arbiter of all phenomenon, and which accordingly falls into his particular pattern of moral geography. As hinted in the previous pages, I have not strived to strike out into the fresh territory of critical ideas, steering clear of the trodden paths of these eminent scholars, but tried, instead, to get at the synthesis of these conflicting, though sometimes overlapping, views.

One more point I would like to mention prior to going into the details of the specific work of Hawthorne which I have selected for a close look in this paper is the fact that this particular work is a short story, one of the most important and significant story as it certainly is. Although it is a common knowledge among the scholars of Hawthorne that so far as the thematic depth is concerned, some of Hawthorne's short stories are almost on a par with the best of his novels, the scarcity of surface and the incompleteness of vision should be considered as a definite drawback which makes them somewhat inadequate to provide us with an over-all picture of Hawthorne's vision. But I think that, mutually supplementing the vacant space of each other's work, the short stories of Hawthorne, about a dozen of which are widely acclaimed as minor masterpieces, form, as a whole, as complete a picture of Hawthorne's vision as any one of his more celebrated and longer works.

## II

Excepting *The Scarlet Letter* which is universally regarded as the topmost masterpiece of American literature along with Melville's *Moby Dick*, and "Young Goodman Brown" which some critic compared to Dante's *Divine Comedy*, many of the critics consider "Rappaccini's Daughter" to be a work most characteristic of Hawthorne's unique vision of life. It is in "Rappaccini's Daughter" that a graphic picture of the author's moral vision is first presented to the public eyes, introducing his fundamental view of life that man is compelled to undertake a night journey through a forest (or a garden) of dark mystery in order to seek the ultimate truth, and that the light of truth and grace dawns only when the extreme

agony of darkness and despair is completely drained. It would be appropriate to point out the fact that, in the matter of night journey of the hero, other stories, such as "The Minister's Black Veil," "Ethan Brand," and "Young Goodman Brown," are far more forcefully and darkly depicted, but the suggestion of ultimate truth, without which the complete vision, so far as Hawthorne is concerned, is drastically defective, is completely lacking or insufficiently materialized in these works. This mysterious light which is concretely symbolized in the image of the fountain in "Rappaccini's Daughter" is revealed most strongly in *The Scarlet Letter*, when Arthur Dimmesdale uncovered to the admiring Puritan spectators the lurid scarlet letter cut on his own flesh on the infamous scaffold of the pillory. This light of saving grace, which dazzled the spiritual eyes of the dying minister at the darkest moment of his ambivalent career, comes also, after the demise of her lover, to the hardly less turbulent and nocturnal heart of Hester Prynne, granting her the final enlightenment, which led to her eventual humility before, and submission to, the will of God.

"Rappaccini's Daughter" is often considered by most critics to be a companion piece of "The Birthmark," which presents, in the person of Aylmer who is a kind of chemist, a type of intellectuals not unlike to Rappaccini, the father of the heroine, Beatrice, in "Rappaccini's Daughter." It has almost become a sort of cliché to make a sharp antithesis between the head and the heart in the critical arena of Hawthorne, and Rappaccini and Aylmer, together with Ethan Brand of "Ethan Brand" and Chillingworth of *The Scarlet Letter*, are invariably mentioned when the theme of the peril of the intellectual pride which violates the sanctity of the human heart and cuts them inevitably from the magnetic chain of humanity, is dealt with. "Young Goodman Brown," with its hero of idealistic fibre who, being unable to be content with the realm of ordinary experience, must venture forth into the perilous world of the ideal, casts an illuminating light to the understanding of the character of Geovanni, the hero of "Rappaccini's Daughter." When the focus is turned to the usually softer, but in Hawthorne's case frequently more forceful, sex, we find a strong magnetic link between Georgiana, the heroine of "The Birthmark," who has the tiny shape of a hand on the cheek of her otherwise perfect beauty, and Beatrice with her poisonous perfume emanating from her excessively beautiful body full of life and attraction. The threat of this surreptitious darkness sabotaging the proud and complacent light also appears as a grim oppressive atmosphere in *The Scarlet Letter*, where the hellish scarlet letter is etched out of the passionate love of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale, which, as they themselves felt, has the sanctity of its own.

As Shakespeare's play, *Hamlet*, has a play within a play called *The Murder of Gonzago*, and the tragic love of Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw is enveloped in the narrative shell of Nelly Dean and Mr. Lockwood in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*, "Rappaccini's Daughter" is a kind of damask embroidered with the threads of two distinct colors, which nevertheless have an organic relationship. One thread follows the pattern of cold animosity between

Rappaccini whose experimentation of medical art is pushed beyond the field of nature into the world of magic, and Baglioni whose study of medical science is strictly confined within the narrow circle of material scepticism inimical to any extraordinary value, whether it is spiritual or magical. Another thread is used to draw the peculiarly ambiguous amorous scenes in which the two lovers, Beatrice and Geovanni, experience an ambivalent feeling of love and hate toward each other when they meet among the gorgeous, though deadly, plants of Rappaccini's garden, as they are equally invested with the powerful poisonous nature.

Desiring to protect his only daughter, Beatrice, who is dearer to him than anything else in the world, from all the shocks of this drastically imperfect world 'the flesh is heir to,' Doctor Rappaccini succeeds in immunizing her against all kinds of physical danger by means of injecting into her the ever-increasing amount of poisonous fluid. Neutralizing the poison from the outside, which could be fatal to an ordinary nature, with the poison from the inside, which has become her second nature, the physical aspect of Beatrice reaches the acme of life and beauty, attracting to her other living creatures, only to destroy them with the deadly perfume emanating from her breath. Coming to Padua from the warm climate of southern Italy for the purpose of attending the university there, an exemplary young man, Geovanni, is also drawn, as if by a blind force, to Rappaccini's garden, which happens to be located just under the window of his lodging house, and in which Beatrice leads a solitary life completely secluded from the outside world. The chief occupation of Beatrice is a careful tending of various plants superbly cultivated by Rappaccini through the laborious process of intermixture of species to exhibit the excess of life and beauty, analogous to the luxuriant quality of Beatrice, which is subtly unnatural. And, differentiated from other plants both in the intensity of quality and in the enormity of size, there is one particular plant, which could almost be interpreted as another form of Beatrice, and which Beatrice, indeed, calls her sister. As in the case of Beatrice, these plants are the outcome of the inordinate desire of Rappaccini to create an entity which has a complete microcosm and has no need of macrocosm, with the result that, although it draws everything to itself with the beauty of self-sufficiency, it destroys whatever approaches the sphere of its exclusive principle.

This garden of Rappaccini with outwardly heavenly and inwardly poisonous Beatrice and plants is strongly reminiscent of Goodman Brown's forest with ambiguous Faith in and out of it; and if the plants are the sole objects in the garden reflecting the essential quality of Beatrice, there would be no deliverance of the heroine as there is 'no hopeful verse upon his (Brown's) tombstone; for his dying hour was gloom.' However Beatrice's dying hour is not gloom as testified by her confession of transcendental conviction:

"I would fain have been loved, not feared," murmured Beatrice, sinking down upon the ground. "But now it matters not. I am going, father, where the evil which thou hast striven

to mingle with my being will pass away like a dream—like the fragrance of these poisonous flowers, which will no longer taint my breath among the flowers of Eden. Farewell, Giovanni! Thy words of hatred are like lead within my heart; but they, too, will fall away as I ascend. Oh, was there not, from the first, more poison in thy nature than mine?"

Even if we ignore the overly-aspiring religious connotation which is natural enough to the context of the drama of the Puritan heart but has fallen to disfavor among the modern scholars of scientific consciousness, it is obvious that Beatrice has not completely succumbed to the poison, as Goodman Brown did, and that there is some intimation of a bright sphere on the far side of the poisonous river. This mysterious experience of the religious fantasy, as some critics seems to think the story is, is not a superfluous addition to the otherwise hopeless vision of life which is now the favorite outlook of contemporary critics, but an essential part of Hawthorne's moral vision incorporated into the artistic world of "Rappaccini's Daughter" chiefly through the image of the broken fountain, from which the continuous water flows toward the poisonous plants. It is Geovanni's fatal flaw in the form of shallowness of heart that he can only perceive the outward attractiveness and the inward deadliness of the ambiguous plants, but completely misses the reality of the broken fountain, even though Beatrice gives him the strong hint of its existence more than once in the course of their turbulent love affair, as we observe in such passages as follows:

"Forget whatever you may have fancied in regard to me. If true to the outward senses, still it may be false in its essence; but the words of Beatrice Rappaccini's lips are true from the depths of the heart outward. Those you may believe."

"It is my father's fatal science! No, no, Giovanni; it was not I! Never! never! I dreamed only to love thee and be with thee a little time, and so to let thee pass away, leaving but thine image in mine heart; for, Giovanni, believe it, though my body be nourished with poison, my spirit is God's creature, and craves love as its daily food."

However these hints are beyond Geovanni's comprehension, and when Baglioni, who is the close friend of Geovanni's father, gives him an antidote for Beatrice's poison in order to foil the experiment of Rappaccini rather than to help the cause of the son of his old friend, Geovanni forces Beatrice to take it, bringing about her tragic death, amid the triumphant and devilish guffaw of Baglioni.

### III

It seems quite clear, when we look back to his previous actions in the light of the disastrous conclusion, that Geovanni not only missed the ultimate quality of Beatrice but also misun-

derstood the functional role of Rappaccini's garden and the world outside the enclosure of the garden. In order to ascertain where he faltered and why he did in the course of his search for the ideal, it would be instructive to distinguish from one another the regions, through which Geovanni is passing, and each of which is composed of a distinctive substance of its own. As has been intimated more than once in the previous paragraphs dealing with the brief career of forlorn Geovanni, we may reasonably conclude that Hawthorne linked together here, in the story of the place of an inconspicuous location in Renaissance Italy, the three distinctive worlds, each of which has reality enough to exclude others once we are drawn into it. These three inviolable worlds, Hawthorne seems to try to convince us, are, notwithstanding their firm foundation in the soil of our experience, not self-sufficient in the universal scheme of existence, but inter-dependent to each other for the ultimate fulfilment of human development.

It may be thought, by now, to be almost redundant to name these worlds as practical, psychological, and spiritual ones respectively, which also correspond with social, artistic, and religious concerns of the author who was tugged by the two opposite forces of the magnetic chain of humanity and the Calvinistic vision of the Puritan fathers, while struggling with his peculiar world of artistic creation in his secluded, 'dismal chamber'. This three-dimensional existence of Hawthorne is most graphically exhibited in the agonizing career of Arthur Dimmesdale in *The Scarlet Letter*, in which through the three scaffold scenes the minister faces the three different worlds: the first scene, in which Hester suffers from the ignominy of being exposed with the scarlet letter embroidered on her breast, on the scaffold before the Puritan spectators, convinces the minister of the firm reality of the outside world of the Puritan community; the second scene, in which the minister stands on the scaffold unseen by anybody but Hester, Pearl, and Chillingworth in the dead hours of the night, is enacted as if inside the dark cavern of Arthur's heart; and finally the third scene, in which the desperate minister jumps up to the scaffold at the moment of his greatest honor to reveal his secret sign of infamy, opens the gate of the spiritual world to the hyper-sensitive consciousness of the dying minister.

As befitting a man of letters who, as early as the age of 16, had decided to become a career writer in spite of the imagined censure of his illustrious ancestors, Hawthorne was an artist before trying to become a man of business or to remember that he was a descendent of the eminent Puritans. This foremost concern of the writer with the artistic world (in the narrow sense of the words Hawthorne used), or the inner stage of the drama of the human heart, is usually expressed, in Hawthorne's case, through the creation of the central symbols around which the story circles. In "Rappaccini's Daughter" this central symbol is the garden, in which superficially beautiful, but substantially poisonous Beatrice flirts with the congenial plants created by the perversive brain of Rappaccini in the hope of overcoming the limitation of the natural law. The garden is essentially the symbolic place of human experience, where,

as in the brain of a person intoxicated with the potent wine of Bacchus, everything seems to move of its own accord heedless of the rein of reason or will; where the strong passion suppressed by the pervasive sunlight of the paternal authority beneath the surface of consciousness flares up, at the rare moment of mental liberation, to become the irresistible compulsion and make the hero to do what he does not intend to do; and where every object, including human being, is a paradoxical figure, an amalgamation of beauty and ugliness, life and death, good and evil.

Potent and far-reaching with its strong, though ominous, attraction as this garden is, there is another world which, enclosing, and forming a sort of frame for, it, reduces it to a tiny locality in the wide world of human habitation. This is the world which contains in it Geovanni's warm, sunny native place of southern Italy and the town of Padua with its supposedly renowned university, where the eminent medical scholar named Baglioni would hold his absolute sway, if it were not for the miraculous feats of Rappaccini. Needless to say, this sunshiny place of sensory experience is antithetical to the gloomy spot of psychological aberration in more than one sense: whereas irrationality, fantasy, and unconsciousness are the ingredients which make the world of the heart, the composition of the outer world is made possible by the use of such stuffs as rationality, concreteness, and consciousness. Although it is a fact that Hawthorne detested the work of the bookkeeper as a boy and deplored the hard material quality of the custom houses as a man where his imagination seemed just to be drying up, works like "The Canterbury Pilgrims," "The Hall of Fantasy," and "Wakefield" convincingly prove the folly and danger of staying away from 'the magnetic chain of humanity.'

As for the third dimension which lies on the far side of the dark psychic territory, it would be fairer to call it a point rather than a dimension, for the entrance to this transcendental sphere is, in the opinion of Hawthorne, as narrow as the point of a needle. The near impossible condition for attaining the ultimate light for Hawthorne's heroes is most succinctly summarized by the author in the heraldic device on the common tombstone of Hester and Dimmesdale:

It bore a device, a herald's wording of which might serve for a motto and brief description of our now concluded legend; so sombre is it, and relieved only by one ever glowing point of light gloomier than the shadow:

**"ON A FIELD, SABLE, THE LETTR A, GULES."**

As, in *The Scarlet Letter*, this 'one ever glowing point of light gloomier than the shadow' points at Arthur's death and Hester's life in death as the inevitable outcome of their essentially pure but circumstantially guilty love affair, in "Rappaccini's Daughter" it shows the dilemma of Beatrice who, in order to achieve her salvation, needs to accept the heart of



Geovanni more poisonous than her own, as shown in the deadly effect of his antidote. Although this mysterious light shone on the dying face of Arthur Dimmesdale also alights on Beatrice's face at the last moments of her life, as is evident in the passage quoted on a previous page—and even though its coming is foreshadowed in Beatrice's innocent affection toward Geovanni—the chief symbol of this third dimension in "Rappaccini's Daughter" is, as was already noted, the water from the broken fountain which every living creature, including Beatrice, absorbs into its poisonous system.

If we accept Richard Fogle's thesis that the entire event in "Rappaccini's Daughter" is essentially a manifestation of Geovanni's nature, his dealing with Baglioni whose fundamental outlook of life is materialistic scepticism shows the part of his faculty best suited to live in the phenomenal world; Rappaccini who draws Geovanni to the garden and repels him from it at the same time with his ambivalent daughter and plants can be said to be an embodiment of Geovanni's dark heart; and his romance with Beatrice who is spiritually pure, though physically poisoned, intimates the element of Geovanni potentially eligible for the eventual salvation. It goes without saying that the problem which confronts Geovanni is not a unique brand that can only happen to him and his kind, but rather we should take him to be a sort of Everyman who vacillates uncertainly in the course of his life between the three distinctive worlds of the temporary order, the disorder, and the complete order. Though, in the strict sense, the image of the heart with which Hawthorne became irrevocably obsessed belongs to the world of the disorder (or the evil)—the forest of "Young Goodman Brown" being the representative example—he often used it in a larger context including both the incomplete and the complete order (or goodness).

The most striking image of the heart in the latter sense would be that of the cave; so dark and terrible, to Hawthorne's eyes, did the inwardness of man appear, where lies hidden in grim corners not only various sins, but also sorrow, conflict, solitude, squalor, and such undesirable entities. This power of blackness, the very quality that inspired his younger friend, Hermon Melville, to launch his greatest masterpiece, *Moby Dick*, was so strong and pervasive in Hawthorne that he was often considered to have believed the total depravity of human nature, but he did not believe that man was hopelessly lost. Full of shadow and terror like the hell itself though the cave is, Hawthorne was firmly convinced that, in the deepest recess, there is a light totally unlike the sunlight outside the cave and the eternal beauty radically different from the earthly beauty which inhibits as well as pleases our hearts.

#### IV

Some of the more important short stories of Hawthorne written with the seriousness of concern with the human destiny, much like that shown in "Rappaccini's Daughter," could

profitably be used, now, to buttress the argument I have endeavored to present in as much clear light as possible, namely, that there are three dimensions or layers of entities in Hawthorne's works, especially in "Rappaccini's Daughter," even though not all these stories show concretely the entire spectrum of the moral vision of the author. Perhaps, it would be natural to start with "The Man of Adamant," since there appears in it the very image of the cave which I have taken to be the most striking as well as natural image Hawthorne adopted to embody the ever-darkening recess of the human heart. The hero of the story, a self-righteous man named Digby, is so disenchanted and disgusted with the common, superficial nature of his fellow beings, not excluding the woman who promises to be his wife, that he throws away all his worldly possessions and, cutting every tie with the outside world, goes into a deep cavern to lead a pure and holy life unmolested. It is characteristic of Hawthorne in producing a succinct effect of irony that, trying to escape the twilight-like blemishes of the society, the hero falls back to absolute seclusion in which, notwithstanding good intentions, he is obliged to face his own essential nature which is pitch darkness. As a classic testimony of this ironic situation of man's life I do not think it amiss to quote a passage from The Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans:

For we know that law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I.....For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me: but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. (Romans 7, 14-21)

Of course, this was not the dead end to St. Paul, who went on to confess his conviction of the existence of the ultimate light which would illumine the dark cavern of his dilemma, but, to Digby, the darkness is all that he can conceive in life, so that he, quite naturally, let himself be petrified into a stone in the cold air of solitude.

"The Maypole of Merrymount" shows, more elaborately, why Digby is constrained to leave his accustomed place among fellow men; for, not wishing to give the impression that the people who remain outside the cave is superior to Digby, Hawthorne provided ample evidences in other stories showing that it was not at all his intention, and "The Maypole of Merrymount" is one of them. Although the main action of the work circles around the maypole of Merrymount, and the artistic structure is built based on the moral symbolism of the antipodean settlements of Merrymount where the maypole is the center of life and of the Puritan community in which the whippole epitomizes the life style; the real interest of the story lies in the fate of Edgar and Edith. As soon as their hands are joined in the jubilant rite of matrimony around the maypole of Merrymount, the young couple is suddenly attacked by the feeling of unreality of the innocent, carefree life of the joyous community,

and the resultant presentiment of the impending gloom is soon verified by the appearance of the militant Puritans. Being forced to lead the life of toil and sorrow which is, as it were, the offspring of sin and evil; Edgar and Edith, it should be noted, do not harden their hearts, like Digby, to recede into isolation, but take heart in their mutual affection which, they believed, will be the balm to their wounds, and which, in fact, will prove to be the seed of the third and final life to come.

"Young Goodman Brown," on the other hand, describes the pitfall into which Edgar and Edith might have fallen, if their mutual faith and affection had not been strong enough to support them through unnerving distrust and sinister intimation—the pitfall so frightening and abysmal that Goodman Brown was no better than a sleepwalker even when he managed, barely, to come out of it. It would be instructive, at this point, to compare, briefly, the harrowing experience of Goodman Brown in the forest with that of Geovanni in Rappaccini's garden; for, just as Geovanni fails to penetrate the the thick layer of poison which permeates through the physical nature of Beatrice, Goodman Brown is, likewise, not able to dispel the nightmarish, though real, vision of the fluttering 'pink ribbon' of his wife, Faith. If he had been wiser and more determined to meet the challenge of the dark forces in his night journey, he would have been able to understand the real significance of the 'pink ribbon' still fluttering on Faith's head in the morning after the husband and the wife were jointly initiated into the community of evil in the devil's witch sabbath. The image of the heart, it should be added, which Hawthorne selected to show how Goodman Brown lost his faith in the eventual triumph of the light over the darkness, is, of course, the forest, the graphic though mysterious picture of which reflects the profound truth of human heart; and it is this forest that makes this short story as powerful as any work of art.

The heart symbol represented, so far, by isolated, solitary places such as cave, forest, or garden, is condensed, in "The Minister's Black Veil," in a tiny piece of black veil on the face of Hooper, an obscure young clergyman, who on a bright Sunday morning suddenly appears before his congregation wearing the veil, which started the endless course of speculation on the possible cause of the enigmatic behavior. It is, however, not so difficult, as it is for Hooper's congregation, for us to guess why the minister takes such an unusual step; for it is quite obvious that he was visited by some monstrous vision very similar to that seen by Goodman Brown. Gradually divining the hidden meaning of the minister's veil, the parish people, along with Elizabeth who is betrothed to be married to the minister, entreat him to remove the veil which is also the symbol of their own heart; and, failing to get rid of it, they attempt to minimize its potent influence by wilfully distorting its meaning. Thus, "The Minister's Black Veil" is a story which tells us the universal disinclination of man to face his own heart, and the absolute necessity of the night journey into it in order to attain the final and eternal vision of existence which dawns on the veiled face of the minister on his death bed.

The hero of "Ethan Brand" is much more like Digby of "The Man of Adamant" than like Hooper of "The Minister's Black Veil" in that Ethan Brand, like Digby, refuses to go back to the community of fellow men following the vision of 'the Unpardonable Sin' which he has finally found in his own heart after travelling to the utmost part of the earth to get. In fact, the essence of 'the Unpardonable Sin,' as revealed in the story of Ethan Brand's damnation, becomes the very isolation of the hero who has lost all the sense of reverence and sympathy for the human heart, and who is quite willing to remain so, as is evident in the following passage:

"It (the Unpardonable Sin) is a sin that grew within my own breast," replied Ethan Brand, standing erect, with a pride that distinguishes all enthusiasts of his stamp. "A sin that grew nowhere else! The sin of an intellect that triumphed over the sense of brotherhood with man and reverence for God, and sacrificed everything to its own mighty claims! The only sin that deserves a recompense of immortal agony! Freely, were it to do again, would I incur the guilt. Unshrinkingly I accept the retribution!"

In spite of his claiming the absolute damnation as his own fate, it is ironic that the marble shape of the heart remains in the lime kiln where all the other parts of his body has been turned to white lime by the infernal fire into which he hurls himself with the distorted ecstasy of self destruction.

The lime kiln which contains the hellish fire of the human heart in "Ethan Brand" is enlarged again, as in the case of the forest in "Young Goodman Brown," to a quite large proportion in "My Kinsman, Major Molineux," although the location is the exact opposite of the forest: the city. A nightmare similar to that which happens to Goodman Brown is in store for Robin, a confident, robust youth, who leaves his country home and his dear family to come to the little metropolis of a New England colony in the hope of rising in the world by the help of his kinsman, Major Molineux. Everything that he encounters as he proceeds through the night streets of the city turns out to be something else, quite different from what he has expected it to be under the bright sunshine of his countryside; and his kinsman, Major Molineux, whom he has thought is the public pillar he can rely on, is transformed, at the climactic moment of the story, into a tragic figure who evokes the feeling of terror and pity from confounded Robin. It is, finally, by the help of the ambivalent person with the two faces of red and black—intimating the existence of the light in the midst of nightmare as well as of the dark underneath the layer of sunny atmosphere—that Robin can dispel the gloom of despair and cynicism, and launch, though with a subdued confidence, into a fresh start.

## V

The outer world of reason, the inner world of compulsion, and the spiritual world of transformation—these three dimensions of moral landscape is, in my opinion, the fundamental vision of life upon which Hawthorne built the structures of most of his important works, including "Rappaccini's Daughter" and the other stories dealt briefly here, and also of the four major novels of the author which were entirely left untouched in this paper except *The Scarlet Letter*. Along with the division of the three layers of human existence, what I have endeavoured to emphasize is the direction which Hawthorne seems to say that we ought to take if we ever hope to attain the fulfilment of life, which is naturally what we live for. This direction is epitomized in the other appellation Hawthorne gives to Rappaccini's garden—the Eden of this world—since it presupposes the previous Eden which had to be given up, whatever the reason, and also foreshadows another Eden which could be quite different from the present one, just like the paradise to be regained which Milton envisioned in his *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*. William Blake who also saw life essentially as a mystery wrote his vision in much the same line in his *Songs of Innocence*, *Songs of Experience*, and his so-called "prophetic books"; but in Hawthorne's case, unlike Blake who emphasized the mystical element and Emerson in whose transcendental universe no place was allotted for the tragic quality, what constitutes the real substance of his works is the sphere of experience, that is, the secret region of the human heart. In this sense, Hawthorne approaches the tragic view of life of the Greek and the Elizabethan writers such as Sophocles and Shakespeare who in their tragedies largely dealt with the terrible calamities, which fall on the heads of the heroes, engendered by their own heroic but often erroneous passions, although the greater dignity was accorded to them as the result of these calamities. Thus, using the middle section of our existence as the focal point of the interest, Hawthorne composed his drama of the heart one after another, for in the final analysis, while we live in this imperfect world, we should not evade the pivotal spot where the cause of imperfection lies.