

The Scarlet Letter



Nathaniel Hawthorne (1850)

Background

- ❖ Considered one of the finest and most important American novels ever written
- ❖ First published in 1850, during the height of the Romantic Period in American Literature
- ❖ Set in Boston, Massachusetts, in the early 1700s, during the stern Puritan Era.



Main Characters

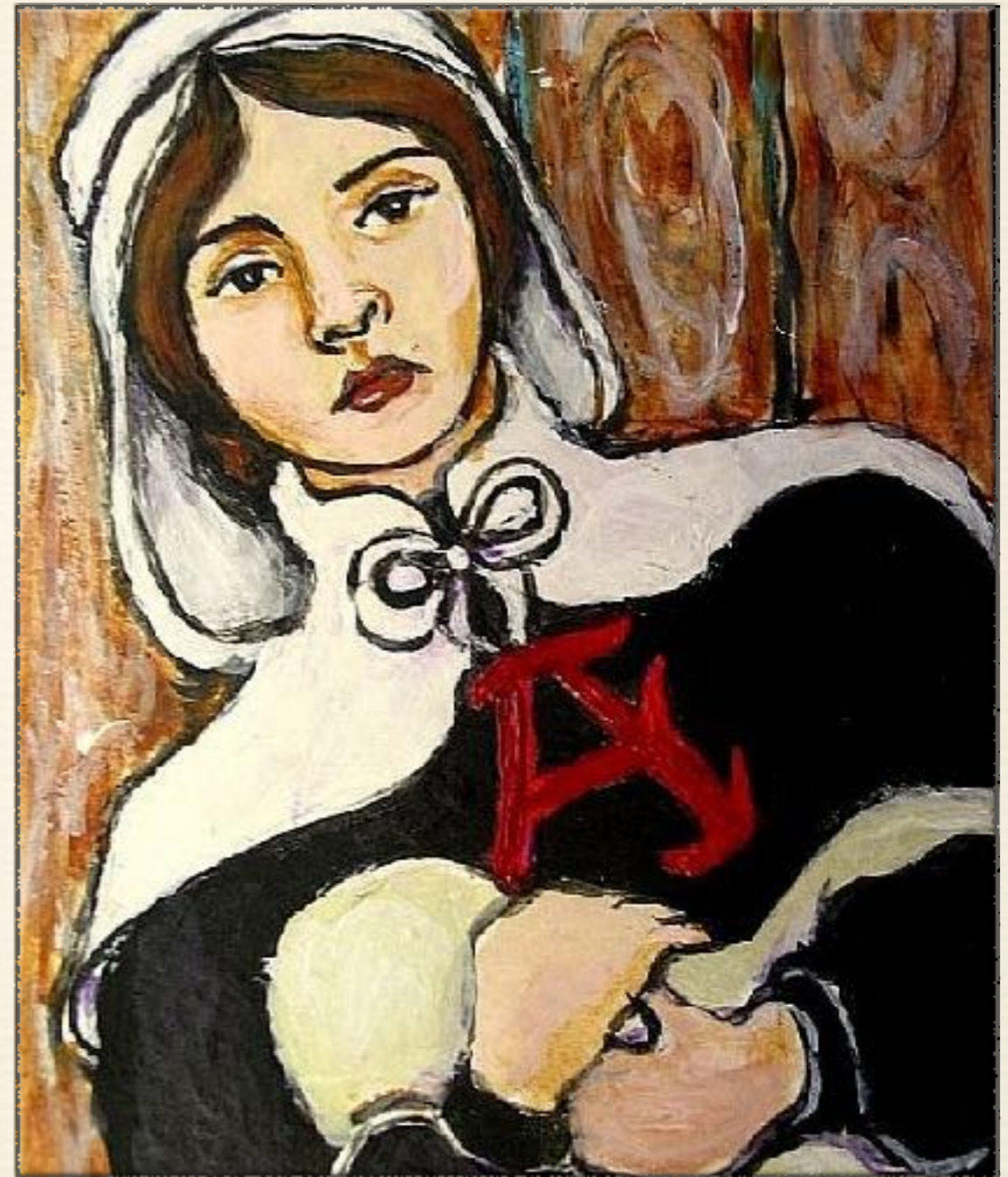
- ❖ Hester Prynne: a woman accused of adultery
- ❖ Pearl: her daughter
- ❖ Rev. Arthur Dimmesdale: the local (handsome, eloquent) minister
- ❖ Dr. Roger Chillingworth: a doctor with a past connection to Hester



En Medias Res

(“in the middle of things”)

- ❖ Hester is nearing the end of her punishment in the Boston jail.
- ❖ The novel begins on the day that she is to stand on the scaffold (elevated platform) in the town square to bare her criminal sins to the public.



Literary Terms / Vocabulary

- ❖ Juxtaposition: close proximity of two contrasting things or ideas in order to highlight their differences.
- ❖ Symbolism: (you know what this is, right?), but it is crucial to this novel.
- ❖ Ignominy: dishonor
- ❖ Epoch: a period of time in history or a person's life that is marked by notable events or particular characteristics
- ❖ Visage: face

The Plan (and Assignments)

❖ 8 chapters per week need to be read by Tuesday of that week, quizzes over each section

—Tuesday, 10/29: Chapters 1-8*

—Tuesday, 11/5: Chapters 9-16

—Tuesday, 11/12: Chapters 17-24

❖ Quizzes and such (*10/29 is a BM day, so an alternative assignment will be provided)

❖ Socratic Seminar-type discussions

❖ Other activities

❖ Questions regarding *SL* on a Benchmark and on future benchmarks

❖ An essay

In other words...**you need to read this book.**

