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世界名著 佳段阅读

# 红字 *The Scarlet Letter*

纳撒尼尔·霍桑 著



外文出版社  
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## I THE PRISON-DOOR

1►► A THRONG of bearded men, in sad-coloured garments and grey, steeple-crowned hats, intermixed with women, some wearing hoods, and others bareheaded, was assembled in front of a wooden edifice, the door of which was heavily timbered with oak, and studded with iron spikes.

2►► The founders of a new colony, whatever Utopia of human virtue and happiness they might

### 一、狱门

1◀◀ 一群留着胡须的男人，身穿黯色长袍、头戴灰色尖帽、与一些蒙着兜头帽或脑袋上什么也没戴的女人混在一起，聚在一所木头大房子前面，房门是用厚重的橡木制成，上面钉满大铁钉。

2◀◀ 新殖民地的创建者们，无论他们起初对人类品德和幸福的美妙理想是什么，都毫无例外地认为应该划出一块处女地

originally project, have invariably recognised it among their earliest practical necessities to allot a portion of the virgin soil as a cemetery, and another portion as the site of a prison. In accordance with this rule, it may safely be assumed that the forefathers of Boston had built the first prison-house, somewhere in the vicinity of Cornhill, almost as seasonably as they marked out the first burial-ground, on Isaac Johnson's lot, and round about his grave, which subsequently became the nucleus of all the congregated sepulchres in the old churchyard of King's Chapel.

3 ►► ...

当墓地，另一片土地用来修建监狱，这是最基本的需要之一。根据这一惯例可以正确地推断：波士顿的创建者在谷山一带的某处地方修建了第一座监狱，几乎与此同时，人们在艾萨克·约翰逊地段划出一块墓地，后来便以这块墓地为中心，形成了王家教堂的那一大片墓地。

3 ◀◀ .....

## 2 THE MARKET-PLACE

1▶▶ ...

2▶▶ “Goodwives,” said a hard-featured dame of fifty, “I’ll tell ye a piece of my mind. It would be greatly for the public behoof, if we women, being of mature age and church-members in good repute, should have the handling of such malefactresses as this Hester Prynne. What think ye, gossips? If the hussy stood up for judgment before us five, that are now here

## 二、市场

1◀◀.....

2◀◀ “好妻子们，”一个五十岁、面目可憎的妇女说，“我跟你们说说我的想法。如果让我们这些上了年纪、名声又好的教会会友来处置像海丝特·白兰那种坏女人对大伙都有好处。你们觉得怎么样，女同胞们？要是那个破烂站在现在聚在一起的五个姐妹面前听候判决，她能像那些可敬的治安官们赏给她

in a knot together, would she come off with such a sentence as the worshipful magistrates have awarded? Marry, I trow not!"

3►► "People say," said another, "that the Reverend Master Dimmesdale, her godly pastor, takes it very grievously to heart that such a scandal should have come upon his congregation."

4►► "The magistrates are God-fearing gentlemen, but merciful overmuch,—that is a truth," added a third autumnal matron. "At the very least, they should have put the brand of a hot iron on Hester Prynne's forehead. Madam Hester would have winced at that, I warrant me. But she—the naughty baggage,—little

的那样判决轻易过关吗？天啊，我才不信呢！”

3◀◀ “听人说，”另一个女人说，“尊敬的丁梅斯代尔教长，就是她的牧师，对在他的教民中出了这样的丑事而伤心欲绝。”

4◀◀ “那帮官老爷都是敬神的先生，可惜心太软——这是事实，”第三个半老的妇女补充说。“最起码，他们应该在海丝特·白兰的脑门上用烙铁烙个记号。我保证那能让海丝特太太有点怕。可她——那个破烂货绝不在乎他们在她外套的前襟上贴个什么呢！你们等着瞧，她可能用一个胸针或者像异教徒的

will she care what they put upon the bodice of her gown! Why, look you, she may cover it with a brooch, or such like heathenish adornment, and so walk the streets as brave as ever!”

5▶▶“Ah, but,” interposed, more softly, a young wife, holding a child by the hand, “let her cover the mark as she will, the pang of it will be always in her heart.”

6▶▶“What do we talk of marks and brands, whether on the bodice of her gown, or the flesh of her forehead?” cried another female, the ugliest as well as the most pitiless of these self-constituted judges. “This woman has brought shame upon us all,

首饰这类东西挡住胸口，还像原来那样招摇过市！”

5◀◀“啊，不过，”一个手里抱着孩子的年轻媳妇轻声插嘴说，“让她随便盖那个记号吧，她的心里会受折磨的。”

6◀◀“我们谈论记号和标记在她前襟上还是脑门上有什么用呢？”另一个女人叫嚷着，在这几个自封的法官中她长相最丑，也最无情。“这个女人给我们大伙都丢了脸，应该去死。没有法律管这种事吗？圣经里和法典上全都明明白白写着呢。那些当官的使它失了效，如果他们的妻子、女儿走上邪路，他



and ought to die. Is there not law for it? Truly there is both in the Scripture and the statute-book. Then let the magistrates, who have made it of no effect, thank themselves if their own wives and daughters go astray!"

7▶▶ "Mercy on us, goodwife," exclaimed a man in the crowd, "is there no virtue in woman, save what springs from a whole-some fear of the gallows? That is the hardest word yet! Hush, now, gossips; for the lock is turning in the prison-door, and here comes Mistress Prynne herself."

8▶▶ The door of the jail being flung open from within, there appeared, in the first place, like a black

们还得感谢自己。”

7◀◀ “天哪，女同胞们，”人群中一个男人大叫道，“女人除了看到绞刑架害怕外，身上就没有德性了吗？这话说得太言重了！轻点，女同胞们！牢门的锁在转动，海丝特太太本人就要出来了。”

8◀◀ 牢狱的大门从里面打开了，最先出现在众人面前的是严酷可怕的狱吏，他的腰边挎着宝剑，手握权杖，像个阴影似的出现在阳光底下。这个人的外表所表现出来的人性就象征和

shadow emerging into the sunshine, the grim and grisly presence of the townbeadle, with a sword by his side and his staff of office in his hand. This personage prefigured and represented in his aspect the whole dismal severity of the Puritanic code of law, which it was his business to administer in its final and closest application to the offender. Stretching forth the official staff in his left hand, he laid his right upon the shoulder of a young woman, whom he thus drew forward; 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. She bore in her arms a child, a baby of some three months old, who winked and turned aside

代表着清教徒法典的全部冷酷无情，他的任务就是负责对触犯法律的人最终和最直接执行惩罚。此时他伸出左手举着权杖，用右手抓着一个年轻妇女的肩膀，他就这样往前推着她；到了监狱大门口的门槛边，她用了一个颇能说明她个性的力量和天生的尊严的动作，推开狱吏，像是她自由的意志一般走进露天。她怀里抱着一个孩子，一个差不多三个月左右的婴儿，那孩子眨着眼睛，把她的小脸转到一边躲避着过分刺眼的阳光——因为从她出世到现在为止，只习惯于监狱中的土牢或其他暗室那

its little face from the too vivid light of day; because its existence, heretofore, had brought it acquainted only with the grey twilight of a dungeon, or other darksome apartment of the prison.

9►► When the young woman—the mother of this child—stood fully revealed before the crowd, it seemed to be her first impulse to clasp the infant closely to her bosom; not so much by an impulse of motherly affection, as that she might thereby conceal a certain token, which was wrought or fastened into her dress. In a moment, however, wisely judging that one token of her shame would but poorly serve to hide another, she took the baby on her arm, and,

种阴晦的光线。

9◄◄ 当那年轻的妇女——婴儿的母亲——完全站在人群面前时，她的第一个下意识动作似乎是把孩子紧贴胸前；她这么做与其说是出于母爱的激情，不如说她想掩盖身上的某个标记，这个标记是被拧在她的衣服上或缝上的。然而，她马上就明白过来了，用一个耻辱的标记来掩盖另一个根本无济于事，她用一条胳膊架着孩子，面孔通红，却露出高傲的微笑，用毫无愧色的目光环视着她的同镇人和街坊。在她的裙袍的前胸上，一

with a burning blush, and yet a haughty smile, and a glance that would not be abashed, looked around at her townspeople and neighbours. On the breast of her gown, in fine red cloth, surrounded with an elaborate embroidery and fantastic flourishes of gold thread, appeared the letter A. It was so artistically done, and with so much fertility and gorgeous luxuriance of fancy, that it had all the effect of a last and fitting decoration to the apparel which she wore; and which was of a splendour in accordance with the taste of the age, but greatly beyond what was allowed by the sumptuary regulations of the colony.

10 ►► ...

个用红色细布做成、周围用金丝线精心绣成奇巧花边的一个字母 A 露了出来。这个字母制作得非常别致和富有艺术创造性，体现了那么独具匠心、丰富华美的想象力，佩在衣服上构成尽美尽善的装饰，而她的衣服与她这个年龄的审美观十分相配，只是其艳丽程度大大超出了殖民地的俭朴标准所允许的范畴。

10 ◀◀.....

11 ◀◀ “她擅长做针线，这是肯定的，”一个旁观的女人评论道，“在这个烂货之前，哪个女人会想过用这个办法显白自

11▶▶“She hath good skill at her needle, that’s certain,” remarked one of her female spectators; “but did ever a woman, before this brazen hussy, contrive such a way of showing it! Why, gossips, what is it but to laugh in the faces of our godly magistrates, and make a pride out of what they, worthy gentlemen, meant for a punishment?”

12▶▶“It were well,” muttered the most iron-visaged of the old dames, “if we stripped Madam Hester’s rich gown off her dainty shoulders; and as for the red letter, which she hath stitched so curiously, I’ll bestow a rag of mine own rheumatic flannel, to make a fitter one!”

13▶▶“O, peace, neighbours, peace!” whispered

己？女同胞们，她那不是在当面笑话我们那些好心肠的治安官，借那些绅士认为的刑罚手段来出风头吗？”

12◀◀一个面孔板得最紧的老太婆嘟囔着，“要是我们能把海丝特太太那件华丽的外衣从她秀气的肩膀上扒下来就好了；至于她绣得那个古怪的红字，我会给她一块我害风湿病用过的法兰绒破布片，用那个做出来更合适！”

13◀◀“噢，安静，乡邻们，安静！”她们当中最年轻的同伴悄声说；“别让她听见！那个红字不是针绣的，她感觉到

their youngest companion. “Do not let her hear you! Not a stitch in that embroidered letter, but she has felt it in her heart.”

14▶▶ The grim beadle now made a gesture with his staff.

15▶▶ “Make way, good people, make way, in the King’s name!” cried he. “Open a passage; and, I promise ye, Mistress Prynne shall be set whee man, woman, and child may have a fair sight of her brave apparel, from this time till an hour past meridian. A blessing on the righteous Colony of the Massachusetts. Where iniquity is dragged out into the sunshine! Come along, Madam Hester, and show your scarlet letter in the

都扎在她心上。”

14◀◀ 狱吏此时用权杖做了个姿势。

15◀◀ “让开路，好心的人们，让开路，以国王的名义！”他叫嚷着。“让开一条路；我保证，白兰太太要被安排在一个男女老少都可以看清她漂亮衣服的地方，从现在起到午后一点让大家看个够。祝福正确的马萨诸塞殖民地，一切罪恶都得拉出来见见太阳！过来，海丝特太太，在市场上亮亮你的红字吧！”

market-place!”

16▶▶ A lane was forthwith opened through the crowd of spectators. Preceded by the beadle, and attended by an irregular procession of stern-browed men and unkindly-visaged women, Hester Prynne set forth towards the place appointed for her punishment.

17▶▶ ...

18▶▶ Could it be true? 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. Yes! — these were her realities,— all else had vanished!

16◀◀ 围观的人群中挤出了一条通路。狱吏在前面开路，不成形的队伍注视着她，男人眉头紧拧，女人面孔紧板，海丝特·白兰走向指定让她示众的地方。

17◀◀ .....

18◀◀ 这是真的吗？她把孩子往胸前猛地一抱，孩子立刻发出哭叫；她垂下眼睛注视着那鲜红的字母，还用指头摸了一下，以便使自己确信婴儿和耻辱都是真的。是啊——这就是她的现实——别的全都消失了！



### 3 THE RECOGNITION

1▶▶ ...

2▶▶ Then, touching the shoulder of a townsman who stood next to him, he addressed him in a formal and courteous manner.

3▶▶ “I pray you, good sir,” said he, “who is this woman?— and wherefore is she here set up to public shame?”

### 三、相认

1◀◀.....

2◀◀ 于是，他碰了碰站在旁边的一个本镇居民的肩膀，谦恭地说。

3◀◀ “我问您，好心的先生，”他说，“这位妇女是谁？——为什么要站在这里示众受辱？”

4◀◀ “你大概在这儿是陌生人，朋友，”那个镇上人回答着，



4▶▶“You must needs be a stranger in this region, friend,” answered the townsman, looking curiously at the questioner and his savage companion, “else you would surely have heard of Mistress Hester Prynne, and her evil doings. She hath raised a great scandal, I promise you, in godly Master Dimmesdale’s church.”

5▶▶“You say truly,” replied the other. “I am a stranger, and have been a wanderer, sorely against my will. I have met with grievous mishaps by sea and land, and have been long held in bonds among the heathen-folk, to the southward; and am now brought hither by this Indian, to be redeemed out of my captivity. Will it please you, therefore, to tell me of Hester Prynne’s —

好奇地打量这个发问者和他的野性的同伴，“不然你一定会听到过海丝特·白兰太太和她邪恶的行为。我可以向你保证，她在虔诚的丁梅斯代尔牧师的教堂里已经引起了丑闻。”

5◀◀“您说得正确，”那人回答。“我是个外地人，一直迫不得已地到处流浪。我在海上和陆上屡遇风险，在南方被异教徒囚禁了很久；如今又被这个印第安人带到这里来找人赎身。因此，请问您能不能告诉我有关海丝特·白兰的事吗？——我把她的名字说对了吗？——这个女人犯了什么过错，什么罪恶