

# Nathaniel Hawthorne's Young Goodman Brown's Apocalypse

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Most criticism and reflection of Nathaniel Hawthorne's Young

Goodman Brown centers on a good versus evil theme. Critics also debate

interpretations of the main character's consciousness; is Brown awake or

dreaming. What is certain is that he lives and dies in pain because his

belief in his [righteousness](#) isolates him from his community. It is also

certain that [Hawthorne](#)'s interpretation of Brown's "mid-life crisis" has

ambiguity and leaves a reader with many different feelings about what and

why certain things have happened. Hawthorne's use of symbolism in his allegorical tale *Young Goodman Brown* causes the main character's revelations about the sin within his community, his family and himself. *Young Goodman Brown's* journey into the forest is best defined as a kind of "general, indeterminate allegory, representing man's irrational drive to leave faith, home, and security temporarily behind, for whatever reason, and take a chance with one(more) errand onto the wilder shores of experience" (Martin). Brown has a [curiosity](#) that "kills" his naive outlook on life and changes him until his death. He has a mission to go into the forest and meet the devil. A mission that he begins out of curiosity and a "deep need to see if the teachings of his childhood, his religion, and his culture, have armed him sufficiently to look the devil in the face and return unscathed" (Hodara 1). The symbol of the forest, late at night, can be interpreted as the untamed regions of Brown's heart where the devil roams freely as he roams in the forest. The forest is the devil's

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