

From *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne

After her return to the prison, Hester Prynne was found to be in a state of nervous excitement, that demanded constant watchfulness, lest she should perpetrate violence on herself, or do some half-frenzied mischief to the poor babe. As night approached, it proving impossible to quell her insubordination by rebuke or threats of punishment, Master Brackett, the jailer, thought fit to introduce a physician. He described him as a man of skill in all Christian modes of physical science, and likewise familiar with whatever the savage people could teach in respect to medicinal herbs and roots that grew in the forest. To say the truth, there was much need of professional assistance, not merely for Hester herself, but still more urgently for the child—who, drawing its sustenance from the maternal bosom, seemed to have drunk in with it all the turmoil, the anguish and despair, which pervaded the mother's system. It now writhed in convulsions of pain, and was a forcible type, in its little frame, of the moral agony which Hester Prynne had borne throughout the day. (Hawthorne, 2008, 104-105)

Hawthorne, N. (2008) *The Scarlet Letter*. The Floating Press.

1. Why was constant watchfulness necessary for Hester Prynne upon her return to the prison?

- a) To prevent her from escaping
- b) To ensure she was properly punished
- c) To protect her from violence
- d) To monitor her conversations

2. Who decides to bring a physician to assist Hester Prynne?

- a) Master Brackett, the jailer
- b) Hester Prynne herself
- c) The magistrate overseeing her case
- d) The townspeople

3. How does Master Brackett describe the physician?

- a) Skilled in physical science and familiar with medicinal herbs
- b) A renowned Christian healer
- c) An expert in mental health and therapy
- d) Trained in the treatment of spiritual ailments

4. Why does the child urgently need professional assistance?

- a) The child is displaying rebellious behavior
- b) The child is experiencing physical convulsions and pain
- c) The child requires education on medicinal herbs
- d) The child is not receiving proper sustenance

5. What does the child's condition symbolize?

- a) The child's resentment towards Hester Prynne
- b) The child's connection to the natural world
- c) The child's innocence amidst Hester's anguish
- d) The child's inherited moral agony

Answers:

- 1. To protect her from violence
- 2. Master Brackett, the jailer
- 3. Skilled in physical science and familiar with medicinal herbs
- 4. The child is experiencing physical convulsions and pain
- 5. The child's inherited moral agony