

## CHAPTER 4 “THE INTERVIEW”

### WORDS:

amenable	ignominy	potent
besmirch	infamy	quaff
dismal	insubordination	repute
draught	leech	stripes
efficacy	multitude	type
expostulation	paramour	wot (wottest)
feigned	peremptory	

### QUESTIONS:

1. How does Hester act when she returns to prison?
2. Why does the jailer call a doctor?
3. What is the doctor's name?
4. Where did the “doctor” learn his skill?
5. Quote two lines that indicate the doctor and Hester know each other before this meeting.
6. What is the relationship between Chillingworth and Hester?
7. Why should Hester's marriage be a failure?
8. Did Hester ever love her husband? Quote Hester to support your answer.
9. What does Chillingworth vow to do?
10. What secret does Chillingworth make Hester promise to keep?
11. What symbol is introduced for Chillingworth in Hester's final lines in this chapter?

### NOTES:

*sagamore*: a chief or a great man among the Indians of New England

*simples*: medicinal plants

*Lethe*: one of the rivers of Hades. The dead who were about to be reincarnated were supposed to drink of it to forget their past lives.

*Nepenthe*: a drug thought by the ancient Greeks to banish pain and sorrow and produce forgetfulness

*Paracelsus*: the pseudonym of Phillipus Aureolus Theophrastus Bombastus ab Hohenheim (1493-1541). He wandered from country to country practicing magic, alchemy, and astrology. Though he occupied the chair of physic and surgery at Basel, he was denounced as a quack. he is sometimes called the father of modern chemistry.

*the Black Man*: Christians believe that God gave Satan, or the Devil, the infernal region, or hell, to rule—a punishment for his rebelliousness when he was an angel in heaven. The night was, naturally, the devil's domain (since the sun is a traditional

symbol of God, Jesus, and wisdom), and nocturnal animals were his favorite representatives on earth (ie., black cats, bats, spiders). Moreover, hell, being a fiery place, was, for the 17<sup>th</sup> century English, constantly being covered in soot (as we would expect if fire could only come from wood or coal), hence the Devil is called, for these reasons and more, the Black Man.

The following graphic (from *The New York Review of Books*, Dec. 21, 2006) depicts a clandestine meeting between a witch and the devil. Notice how he sports a black gown, seems to be wearing a black mask (with abundant curls behind) and appears to be missing his right hand. The creature that is chained up is a mythical hybrid complete with claws, two sets of ears, a serpent's tail, and small goatee. This might also be a transaction where the witch (easily identified by her steeple crowned hat) is trading for the beast.

