Young Goodman Brown came forth at sunset into the street at Salem village; but put his head back, after crossing the threshold, to exchange a parting kiss with his young wife. And Faith, as the wife was aptly named, thrust her own pretty head into the street, letting the wind play with the pink ribbons on her cap while she called to Goodman Brown.

“Dearest heart,” whispered she, softly and rather sadly, when her lips were close to his ear, “prithee put off your journey until sunrise and sleep in your own bed to-night. A lone woman is troubled with such dreams and such thoughts that she’s afeard of herself sometimes. Pray tarry with me this night, dear husband, of all nights in the year.”

“My love and my Faith,” replied young Goodman Brown, “of all nights in the year, this one night must I tarry away from thee. My journey, as thou callest it, forth and back again, must needs be done ’twixt now and sunrise. What, my sweet, pretty wife, dost thou doubt me already, and we but three months married?”

“Then God bless you!” said Faith, with the pink ribbons; “and may you find all well when you come back.”

“Amen!” cried Goodman Brown. “Say thy prayers, dear Faith, and go to bed at dusk, and no harm will come to thee.”

So they parted; and the young man pursued his way until, being about to turn the corner by the meeting-house, he looked back and saw the head of Faith still peeping after him with a melancholy air, in spite of her pink ribbons.

“Poor little Faith!” thought he, for his heart smote him. “What a wretch am I to leave her on such an errand! She talks of dreams, too. Methought as she spoke there was trouble in her face, as if a dream had warned her what work is to be done to-night. But no, no; ’twould kill her to think it. Well, she’s a blessed angel on earth; and after this one night I’ll cling to her skirts and follow her to heaven.”

With this excellent resolve for the future, Goodman Brown felt himself justified in making more haste on his present evil purpose. He had taken a dreary road, darkened by all the gloomiest trees of the forest, which barely stood aside to let the narrow path creep through, and closed immediately behind. It was all as lonely as could be; and there is this peculiarity in such a solitude, that the traveller knows not who may be concealed by the innumerable trunks and the thick boughs overhead; so that with lonely footsteps he may yet be passing through an unseen multitude.

“There may be an Indian behind every tree,” said Goodman Brown to himself; and he glanced fearfully behind him as he added, “What if the devil himself should be at my very elbow!”

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*Goodman:* title of respect for farmer or householder.
His head being turned back, he passed a crook of the road, and, looking forward again, beheld the figure of a man, in grave and decent attire, seated at the foot of an old tree. He arose at Goodman Brown’s approach and walked onward side by side with him.

“You are late, Goodman Brown,” said he. “The clock of the Old South was striking as I came through Boston, and that is full fifteen minutes agone.”

“Faith kept me back a while,” replied the young man, with a tremor in his voice, caused by the sudden appearance of his companion, though not wholly unexpected.
QUESTIONS

Benchmark IX-C3: Analyze the overall style of prose works, including narration, imagery, diction, dialogue, plot, and characterization

1. During the Colonial period, the forest embodied all that was evil, including the unknown. This is most apparent in which of the following paragraphs?

A 1 and 2  
B 6 and 7  
C 8 and 9  
D 11 and 12

Benchmark IX-B3: Analyze ways in which writers play with language (e.g., the use of pun, euphemism, oxymoron, verbal irony, hyperbole, understatement)

2. In the final paragraph, Goodman Brown tells the man he meets in the woods that “Faith kept me back a while.” Literally, he means that his wife made him late. What other meaning could this remark have had?

A His religious faith almost kept him from the journey.  
B His faith in his marriage was more important than the journey.  
C Faith is necessary to complete the things one is required to do.  
D The remark could have no meaning beyond the literal one.

3. This excerpt suggests that all people must, at some time, choose between good and evil. All of the following contribute to the reader’s perception that Goodman Brown knows that he is about to embrace evil except

A paragraph 3, Goodman Brown says, “. . . of all nights in the year, this one night must I tarry away from thee.”  
B paragraph 7, Goodman Brown thinks, “. . . [it was] as if a dream had warned her what work is to be done to-night.”  
C paragraph 8, “. . . Goodman Brown felt himself justified in making more haste on his present evil purpose.”  
D paragraph 1, “Young Goodman Brown came forth at sunset into the street at Salem village . . .”

4. This excerpt suggests that Hawthorne’s philosophical position includes which one of the following ideas?

A Man is predisposed to do evil.  
B Man’s first impulse is to do good.  
C Man creates his own reality.  
D Man is responsible for his actions.
ANSWERS

1. C
2. A
3. D
4. A