



Scripts.com

# Twice Told Tales

By Nathaniel Hawthorne

Throughout the ages,  
the heavens have  
unleashed their fury  
to make man tremble  
in the presence  
of the unknown.  
And as man has witnessed  
the power  
of nature's elements,  
so have some men  
sought desperately  
in this infinite power  
the secret...  
of why they are born  
and why they will die.  
While the very ground  
on which they walk,  
the earth that  
will bury them,  
remains to mock  
their existence .  
My dear Carl,  
only the vicissitudes  
of a lifetime,  
a long lifetime,  
vicissitudes that we have  
shared almost as brothers  
could have brought me out  
on a night such as this  
to drink a toast  
to your birthday.  
Of course,  
if you had been  
more considerate,  
you might have  
been born  
in better  
weather.  
Well, perhaps,  
perhaps the next time  
I am born, Alex  
I'll,  
I'll make it a day  
in spring when

everything else  
is being born also.  
Then here's to both  
of our next birthdays,  
so that we may share  
an eternity  
of the friendship  
we have known.

Mmm.

Excellent port, Carl.  
Excellent.

Worthy of a man  
who has made life  
give him full measure  
in 79 years.

Full measure?

Oh, how lonely the years  
would have been  
without you, Alex.

Only one  
other person  
could've driven  
the loneliness  
from my life.

But, what will be  
will be.

Alex?

Yes?

I wonder,  
my old friend,  
could you do me  
a favor?

Yes, of course, Carl.  
Should I not be here  
for a rendezvous  
with my 80th birthday,  
could you please  
bury this with me?

A withered rose?

Yes, well,  
it's not very much to show  
for all those years, is it?  
But to me,  
this rose is worth more

than all the  
world's treasures.  
Sylvia gave it to me  
almost 40 years ago.  
I was to wear it  
on my wedding night.  
Excuse me,  
there's something I must do.  
Sylvia.  
The time has come again.  
Another milestone  
has been reached.  
I drink to your  
infinite Patience.  
Wait for me,  
Sylvia.  
The time cannot be  
much longer  
when I will  
join you there.  
Oh, Carl, Carl,  
if you only knew  
how wrong it was  
never to have married  
because of a memory.  
My dear Alex,  
perhaps I was capable  
of loving only once.  
And if fate decreed  
that Sylvia should die  
on the eve  
of our wedding...  
Alex, has man ever  
been able to control fate?  
Why not?  
Nothing ever  
stopped me  
from living exactly  
the kind of life that I wanted.  
That all depends on  
what one wants from life.  
Alex, now, you...  
You always needed  
to be surrounded

with laughter  
and gaiety, music.  
Music is good  
for the soul.  
Nothing melts a lady  
with more dispatch  
than the sob  
of a violin.  
Oh, Carl,  
what a waste.  
Many women  
other than Sylvia  
would've loved you.  
Now there  
would be children--  
Sylvia shared  
everything with me.  
Her face filled  
my dreams.  
Her warmth  
gave me courage.  
Her memory  
gave me life itself.  
Do you think I'd allow  
another woman to intrude?  
But it is not right  
to live with a ghost.  
That was close.  
It was you with  
your talk of ghosts.  
I apologize.  
I promise that I won't bring  
such lightning again.  
The rain is stopping.  
I suppose you're going  
to blame that on me, too.  
Alex, look.  
That door hasn't  
been opened in 38 years.  
Come, my friend.  
Let's see what damage  
may have been done.  
Carl, do you think  
we ought to go in there?

Afraid of dust and  
meaningless bones, Alex?  
You're a doctor,  
you're used to these things.  
As a doctor,  
I can tell you  
you're not so far  
removed from dust  
and meaningless  
bones yourself.  
Light the candles,  
Alex, please.  
Oh.  
Two coffins?  
The one that has fallen  
is Sylvia's.  
The other is mine.  
You wanted to take  
your memories  
even to the grave.  
Water dripping down.  
The storm must've  
cracked the ceiling.  
Come help me put  
the coffin back.  
Sylvia!  
No, Carl,  
it can't be.  
Not after  
all these years.  
She would be dust.  
That's all  
that would be left.  
Yes, I know.  
But it is Sylvia.  
We both know that.  
Just as beautiful.  
Oh, Carl, put the lid  
back on the coffin  
and let's get out of here.  
I'm a doctor,  
Alex.  
I have to know what  
preserved her body.

It's sacrilegious.  
Perfect.  
Perfect.  
The flesh is firm,  
no decomposition.  
But why?  
It isn't the air in here.  
This vault isn't  
a vacuum.  
Please, let's--  
Alex.  
Yes.  
Alex.  
Look.  
It's still wet as though water  
had been dripping on it.  
But, of course.  
It rained hard tonight,  
there'd be seepage  
from the hill above.  
No, no, no,  
Alex.  
To cause a groove  
such as this,  
water would've had  
to drip on this coffin  
for a great number  
of years.  
38 years,  
perhaps.  
You mean, ever since  
Sylvia was put in here?  
Yes.  
The coffin is wet inside.  
The water must  
have seeped in  
through that hole,  
and kept it saturated.  
You can't believe  
that just plain water  
would keep  
Sylvia looking--  
I didn't say  
it was just plain water.

Old age is  
catching up  
with you.  
I say that we go  
inside and finish  
our wine. Go!  
I thought my enthusiasm  
for research  
had gone  
a long time ago.  
And now,  
here is a challenge  
that tells me  
I'm still alive enough  
to be curious.  
Impossible.  
Simply impossible.  
This liquid  
absolutely defies analysis.  
It looks like water.  
It tastes like water,  
but it isn't water.  
At least,  
not as man knows it.  
You can drink that  
if you like.  
I need something

**more familiar:**

Extraordinarily  
high mineral content.  
Sulfur, and practically  
no bacteria count.  
Can it be  
that this liquid is some  
sort of strong germicidal?  
If so,  
what could be  
in the earth  
above the crypt  
to make it so?  
Alex,  
could this be some sort  
of virgin spring?



A liquid so pure that  
its very fundamental  
structure is unknown?  
If you've found  
anything as pure  
as that in this  
sinful world,  
you are indeed  
a genius.  
I have known such  
purity only once before.  
Sylvia.  
It takes such a purity  
to make a man  
forget all other women  
for as long as he lives.  
Now, Carl,  
now that you know  
what you don't know  
about that stuff,  
do you mind if we get out  
of this unholy room?  
Just, just,  
one moment,  
there's just one other  
test that I must make.  
What are you going  
to do with that?  
We've seen  
that this liquid  
can preserve  
the illusion of life.  
Now let us see  
if it can restore it.  
Restore life?  
Yes.  
You're not serious.  
It's only  
an experiment, Alex.  
Are you too old  
for curiosity?  
Do you see?  
It's alive again.  
A fragrance as sweet

as the day  
Sylvia gave it to me.  
Do you realize  
what that means?  
No.  
I'm not sure  
that I want to know  
what it means.  
This is the work  
of the devil.  
The devil?  
He wouldn't have anything  
to do with such happiness.  
What are you  
talking about?  
Alex,  
suppose I were  
to drink  
some of this liquid  
and become young again.  
Carl, you're out  
of your mind.  
Don't you see, Alex?  
You could drink some, too,  
and we'd have another life  
of such friendship.  
I'd hardly call that  
the work of the devil.  
Do you think  
it's a possibility?  
Well, I,  
I'll be the first to try.  
Oh, no.  
What if it should turn out  
to be some sort of poison?  
You saw the second  
coffin in the crypt.  
My old friend,  
I trust you'll make all  
necessary arrangements.  
I'll pray for you.  
To Sylvia,  
who has either brought us  
eternal youth or

just eternity.

Do you feel anything?

No.

Carl, perhaps it only works  
on things like flowers.

Carl.

Carl,

what is it?

I feel faint,  
feverish.

Carl.

Look.

My face!

Alex!

Tell me

what you see.

Carl, I can't believe it!

You could be your own son!

I can't wait

to have you join me.

Come, drink the liquid!

Hurry, hurry!

Hurry, my old friend.

Yes, I am hurrying.

Do you remember

the fine figure

you cut

in your youth?

Tall, handsome.

My old friend,

you had the grace

of a panther.

I did, didn't I?

Now you shall

have it again.

Drink, drink!

By George, you didn't

walk into a room,

you glided in.

When you twirled

your cloak about,

I used to think

you were the most

magnificent thing I ever saw.

Did you really?  
Oh, I begin  
to feel it now.  
The fever?  
Good, you're going back  
through the years.  
Oh, this dizziness...  
Oh, Carl.  
Perhaps the liquid  
and whiskey don't mix.  
Oh, nonsense.  
You're going back  
to your youth  
the same way

**you left it:**

full of whiskey.  
The liquid  
is taking effect.  
I'm young again.  
I'm young!  
You've done it.  
Let me feel your grip.  
Here.  
It's like iron.  
What a night  
of miracles this has been.  
What if it wears off?  
What if the liquid doesn't  
give us youth permanently?  
We can drink some more.  
It's been dripping in the crypt  
for almost 40 years.  
It could go on  
dripping forever.  
What a wonderful way  
to be young.  
All we have to do  
is to be thirsty.  
The two thirstiest old  
coots in the world.  
The two thirstiest  
young coots!  
I can't wait

to see the expression  
on the townspeople's faces  
when they see us.

Sylvia.

If only Sylvia  
could see us.

Sylvia?

Yes, of course.

Alex,

perhaps she  
will see us.

What?

What are you saying?

Why shouldn't Sylvia  
have a chance

to share

in our miracle?

But you can't give her  
the water.

A dead person  
can't drink.

Of course not,

but there are ways.

Carl, Carl,

I beg of you,

don't try to bring

back the dead!

Alex, you said it

**yourself:**

"A chance to live  
our lives over."

If I could have that  
marriage to Sylvia--

Marriage?

Carl, you couldn't.

Alex,

I devoted

one lifetime

to Sylvia.

I'm perfectly willing

to devote another.

How are you

going to do it?

It seems that even the fates  
are conspiring to help us.  
A few years ago,  
a certain Dr. Pravaz,  
a Frenchman,  
invented a  
singular instrument.  
What does it do?  
My patients seem to object  
being jabbed by it, but  
I'd say  
it's quite effective.  
Carl, wait.  
I'm not sure that  
I want to be a part of this.  
Alex, we three were  
inseparable.  
Should Sylvia  
come back,  
I'm certain that she would  
want you to be there.  
You must stay.  
But perhaps  
you will be going too far.  
I mean, people are meant  
to grow old and die.  
Sylvia never had  
a chance to grow old.  
Perhaps this  
will give it to her.  
I thought I saw  
her finger move.  
No, I saw nothing.  
Look.  
She's trying to breathe.  
Sylvia,  
come back to me.  
Breathe.  
She's breathing  
normally.  
Sylvia.  
Sylvia, it's Carl.  
Carl Heidegger.  
I'm here.

I'm waiting for you.  
Carl?  
She's alive again.  
She remembers my name.  
Her eyes, look,  
her eyes are opening.  
She can see again,  
the Lord in His  
infinite mercy.  
Carl?  
Is everything ready  
for the wedding?  
The wedding?  
Always so absent-minded.  
Have you forgotten?  
Our wedding  
is tomorrow.  
Your wedding  
38 years ago.  
It's the last thing  
she remembers.  
What is it you say?  
38 years?  
Sylvia, it's difficult  
to explain.  
What do you mean,  
wedding of 38 years ago?  
Sylvia...  
And this rag?  
Why am I dressed  
this way?  
Sylvia, be calm.  
Just listen,  
please.  
If this is some  
hideous prank--  
No, Sylvia, no.  
It's just that something  
very strange has happened.  
Sylvia.  
Have you  
no recollection  
of the sudden illness  
that struck you

on the night  
we were to be married?  
That was just  
a few hours ago.  
I was feeling weak  
and tired, but  
I'm all right now.  
You died.  
You have been dead  
for 38 years.  
Dead?  
38 years?  
He's insane!  
You died, Sylvia.  
You've been dead  
for 38 years.  
1859?  
Alex, tell me  
he's mad.  
No, Sylvia,  
it's the truth.  
I haven't changed.  
And both of you,  
the years haven't  
changed you either.  
That's thanks  
to a miracle  
that was made known  
to us this very evening.  
What are you  
talking about?  
Please,  
come sit down.  
This evening,  
we found  
a peculiar liquid  
dripping from  
the ceiling of your crypt.  
After testing it,  
we learned  
that it had the power  
to restore eternal youth.  
Since you'd been  
preserved by it,



we were able to bring  
you back to the living.  
Carl,  
is this true?  
Oh, it's as true as heaven  
and earth, my love.  
I can stay alive?  
Forever?  
Oh, forever.  
Oh, darling,  
if you only knew  
how much I've loved  
you all these years.  
How I've cherished  
your memory  
and could dream  
of no other woman but you.  
You never married?  
There's never been  
another woman.  
We can still be married,  
as if nothing had happened.  
Nothing can  
stop us now.  
Darling, I saved  
your wedding dress.  
You didn't.  
I'll get it  
for you.  
May I get  
something for you?  
Would you care  
for some wine?  
Is it good wine, Alex?  
Such as we had  
yesterday?  
That yesterday  
of 38 years ago, of course.  
Please, Sylvia.  
When we had our  
final argument.  
Sylvia, please.  
He'll hear you.  
Don't let him know.

It would break his heart.  
And what of  
my heart, Alex?  
You had no conscience  
about that, did you?  
I loved you,  
you know that.  
Love?  
To take all a woman  
has to offer,  
and then refuse

**to marry her:**

Is that your idea of love?  
You know how I felt  
about marriage  
from the beginning.  
I loved you,  
but I wanted to be free.  
You gave  
yourself to me.  
Are you trying to say  
that I seduced you?  
Do you think  
you would've been happy  
marrying him  
to spite me?  
I wanted to  
be your wife, not  
just another woman.  
If only you had  
loved me enough.  
Isn't it love enough  
that a man would  
murder for you?  
Murder?  
Do you know  
why you became ill  
so suddenly the night  
before your wedding?  
I poisoned you.  
You think I wanted to see you  
in the arms of another man?  
But you insisted

on mocking me,  
by going ahead with  
your spite marriage to Carl.  
You forced me to do  
what I had to do.  
All right.  
Maybe I was wrong  
to have that much pride,  
but we could be  
married now.  
We've been given  
another chance.  
We can't make  
the same mistake again.  
How can I tell Carl?  
He's lived like a monk  
all these years,  
holding onto  
your memory  
as if it were  
something sacred.  
I've never destroyed  
the illusion for him.  
I don't know as  
I could do it now.  
All I know is  
I don't want  
to live again  
if I can't have you.  
Tell him the truth.  
You must, Alex.  
Please.  
I'll try.  
Sylvia, look.  
Look.  
As white and pure  
as the day you  
first tried it on.  
Put it on,  
my dear.  
A new future begins  
for us tonight.  
Go on, my dear.  
Carl,

couldn't this wait  
until tomorrow?  
I've done nothing else  
but wait.  
No, no, no, there'll be  
no more wasted years,  
no more  
wasted minutes.  
Life is  
too precious.  
Go on, my dear,  
put it on.  
I want to see you  
as lovely and radiant  
as you should be.  
Then we'll burn  
all this in the fireplace  
with all the other  
memories of the past.  
Oh.  
As my best friend, Alex,  
you must give the bride away  
tomorrow at our wedding.  
Well, it's so late.  
Must we discuss  
it now?  
Well, you don't seem  
very enthusiastic  
about our wedding.  
What do you expect?  
I just haven't grown  
used to all this, yet.  
Carl.  
Yes?  
There's something  
I must say to you.  
Yes?  
It's about Sylvia.  
What is it you want  
to say to me,  
my old friend?  
That you ruined  
my life once?  
That you're about

to do it again?  
You heard us?  
Or are you trying  
to tell me  
that you turned Sylvia  
into little more  
than a harlot?  
Carl!  
Carl!  
Don't.  
Use reason.  
Carl.  
Argh!  
Argh!  
Carl.  
Forgive me, I...  
Carl.  
We were such  
good friends.  
The water doesn't last.  
Sylvia!  
Oh, no.  
You've stopped.  
Don't stop, damn you.  
Don't stop. I need you.  
You've taken Carl  
and Sylvia away from me.  
You left me nothing.  
You left me nothing.  
Nothing.  
Man's dream  
of eternal youth:  
An illusion that begins  
with the first  
awakening of his mind  
and lasts  
until the moment  
when he goes  
to his final rest.  
Only a dream, perhaps.  
But what would life be  
without our dreams?  
Among the most beautiful  
and wonderful

of the lord's creations  
are the things that grow  
from the earth.

It is strange, indeed,  
that the verdant green  
of grass and leaf,  
the myriad colors  
and fragrances of flowers,  
all meant to be solace  
to the soul of man,  
can be so distorted  
that their very essence  
become evil,  
their only use, death.

Mistress Rappaccini.

I must apologize  
if I frightened you.

But after seeing  
you down there  
for the past three days,  
I was lost.

I had to find out your name.  
Fortunately, my landlady is  
an understanding woman.

I'm Giovanni Guasconti.

How do you do,  
Mr. Guasconti?

Now, if you'll  
forgive me--

Oh, but wait.

I wanted to talk to you.

What is it you wish to say,  
Mr. Guasconti?

Well, I, uh...

This is my first time  
in Padua.

I'm going  
to the university.

I'm from Naples.

I've read  
about Naples.

Well, it's much bigger  
than Padua,  
and has

a beautiful bay.  
In the sun,  
it glistens  
like a necklace  
that should be hung  
around a pretty girl's neck.  
May I come down there  
and tell you more about it?  
No!  
No. I...  
I'm sorry.  
I must bring this package  
to the house immediately.  
When can we talk again?  
Signore ,  
I have brought you  
fresh bedding.  
Being my landlady  
doesn't give you  
the privilege of  
spying on me.  
I-I-I felt responsible. I...  
I told you her name.  
Then tell me  
why she acted  
so afraid of me.  
I can only tell you  
what I know.  
In the 20 years that they have  
allowed me to live here,  
I have never seen  
a visitor  
go into that house.  
Why?  
Make of it  
what you will.  
You will study  
chapters 3,  
4,  
and 5.  
I hope you do  
better this time.  
Now, off with you.  
Professor.

Ah, my young friend,  
Giovanni.  
You get to look more like  
your father every day.  
You have some question  
about the lesson?  
Uh, no, sir. It's, uh...  
Quite personal. It's...  
It's about a girl.  
Oh?  
One minute, I think  
I'm in love with her.  
The next minute,

**I say to myself:**

"How can that be,  
Giovanni?"  
I've never even been close  
enough to hold her hand.  
And you think  
this is a problem  
an old science  
professor can solve?  
You've lived in Padua  
all your life.  
You might know  
the family.  
The name is  
Rappaccini.  
This girl is  
called Beatrice?  
Then you do know her?  
I have never seen her.  
No one has...  
Except you,  
apparently.  
This is crazy.  
20 years ago,  
the girl's father,  
Giacomo Rappaccini,  
taught science  
in this very room.  
There were many who thought  
he was destined to be



the greatest scientist  
of our century.  
Then, suddenly,  
he gave up his career--  
everything.  
He locked himself  
inside his house  
and no one  
has seen him since.  
But what of Beatrice?  
Surely, she--  
she may have been  
the cause of it.  
No one really knows.  
All that the people of Padua  
have learned is that  
after the girl  
was born,  
Rappaccini's wife  
deserted him,  
ran away  
with another man.  
That was when  
he left the university  
and locked his door  
in the face of the world.  
Come, come,  
there are plenty  
of other girls in Padua.  
Thank you, professor.  
You've been very kind.  
What's the matter,  
father?  
Has it grown  
too strong for you?  
The radiation  
from the acid's heat  
has exceeded even  
my expectations.  
Nevertheless, you know  
that I could destroy it  
if I wished to.  
But then I would die.  
And you don't want

to lose us both...  
Do you?  
Beatrice.  
You fail to see  
the humor, father?  
The infusion will  
take three blooms.  
You will get them.  
We share the same life,  
my friend,  
only you're  
the more fortunate.  
You don't have  
to think.  
Lisabetta did well.  
These are fine specimens.  
Your daughter  
is a fine specimen, too,  
is she not, father?  
A specimen of the  
most deadly thing  
that was ever given life.  
The day will come  
when you will thank me.  
How long would it take  
for me to die  
if these infusions  
didn't take place?  
My only concern is  
with your life.  
No matter.  
The only difference  
in being dead  
is that this house  
is bigger than a grave.  
10 seconds...  
And the potency  
is correct.  
Shall we give  
the poor creature  
a burial, father?  
We could inscribe  
on its gravestone:  
"It died that Beatrice

Rappaccini might live."  
You never understand  
how fortunate you are  
that none of the world's  
sin can touch you.  
As it touched my--  
I do not wish  
to hear her name.  
Of course not.  
Lock it  
from your mind,  
as you've locked us  
from the world.  
The world?  
What is this sudden picture  
you have of the world?  
A stupid boy  
on a balcony?  
Is that  
what you see?  
I see a human being  
who can laugh,  
and think of me  
as a woman,  
not death.  
Good morning.  
Good morning.  
What a wonderful way  
to greet the day,  
seeing such loveliness.  
We'd better not talk  
very long today.  
You're gonna be late for  
your class at the university.  
Let's see, now.  
For the past month,  
we have discussed philosophy,  
history and world events,  
and all  
from my window.  
You know what I  
dreamed last night?  
That you invited  
me down there.

And I thought I was dead  
because it was heaven.  
It isn't, is it?  
I think it must be heaven  
to be able to go  
to the university.  
Giovanni,  
you're going to be late.  
You know you are.  
All right,  
my remote Princess, I'll go.  
Now, hold onto that  
until I see you again.  
Oh, signore .  
I have use  
for this key.  
Oh, no,  
you mustn't.  
No one is allowed  
to go in there. No one.  
I won't tell them  
that you so generously  
opened the gate for me.  
I'll tell them I dropped  
in from the sky  
like an avenging angel.  
No, signore ,  
you mustn't.  
Giovanni!  
Don't!  
Don't!  
The insect will still  
have the poison on it.  
Poison?  
I saw the  
butterfly die--  
burned.  
What is it?  
What happened?  
Giovanni...  
You had no right  
to come in the garden.  
If you kept  
that kiss I threw you

from my window this morning,  
then I have every right.  
Here, these are for you.  
Thank you,  
Giovanni, but...  
I can't.  
You know,  
the closer I get,  
the more beautiful  
you are?  
Don't come closer,  
please.  
Don't ever  
come closer.  
Ever?  
Please.  
Put the flowers  
on the bench.  
Now, leave  
the garden.  
My father doesn't  
want anyone to--  
But why  
not, my dear?  
Have I ever prevented you  
from having guests?  
Father.  
You should introduce me  
to your young friend.  
I'm your neighbor, sir.  
Giovanni Guasconti.  
My pleasure, sir.  
I see that you find  
my garden attractive.  
Your garden has  
many attractions, sir.  
Giovanni, please.  
Please, leave now.  
But tomorrow  
is Easter Sunday.  
Surely, you can go  
to church with me.  
No. I've tried  
to tell you.

But of course you can go to  
church with him, my dear.

Why shouldn't you?

Did I say something  
to offend her, sir?

Young ladies  
are sometimes  
very difficult  
to understand,  
Mr. Guasconti.

Perhaps tomorrow,  
she'll--

Yes, perhaps.

Good day.

Good day, sir.

Did you feel  
very superior, father,  
making a fool  
of us both?

Under the circumstances,  
I thought I was most kind.

You see?

I even brought  
your flowers to you.  
It's strange, seeing flowers  
that weren't meant to kill.

Well, here,  
take them, my dear.

After all, he brought them  
to you with his own hands.  
He held them.

And now  
you hold them.

A very pretty, sentimental  
thought, is it not?

Giovanni!

Giovanni!

Giovanni,  
I must talk to you.

Please, come down.

I'll open the gate.

Giovanni,

I had to talk to you.  
Let's talk in town.

They'll be celebrating  
for the holidays.  
No. I can't go.  
There's no place  
I can go.  
Haven't you realized  
that by now?  
This isn't a prison,  
Beatrice.  
That gate is open.  
Oh Giovanni,  
if it were only true.  
That's why I must  
talk to you.  
Forget me, Giovanni.  
Forget you  
ever saw me.  
Is that why you  
called me down here?  
To tell me  
to forget you?  
Why should I? I couldn't  
forget you if I wanted to.  
We must both forget,  
Giovanni.  
Beatrice, I don't--  
No further.  
Listen to me.  
You must listen.  
You saw the butterfly die  
when it touched  
that plant.  
Yes.  
You would die  
if you touched me.  
What kind  
of nonsense is that?  
Why should you  
and that plant--  
This is what  
you must understand.  
Do you expect me to believe  
such ridiculous--  
It's the truth.

Let my hand  
touch yours.  
Will I die?  
Are you telling me  
that if I should kiss you,  
I'd fall dead,  
as that butterfly did?  
Yes. As air is your life,  
so is poison mine.  
This is the way I've been  
ever since I was born.  
Since my father  
made me what I am.  
Your father?  
We're both his creations,  
the plant and I.  
He used its poisons to change  
the chemistry of my blood.  
I refuse  
to accept such a--  
Oh.  
How can I make  
you understand?  
Wait.  
Wait.  
See that lizard,  
Giovanni?  
Watch it.  
Watch that  
poor creature die.  
Do you still want me,  
Giovanni?  
Does it still seem so pleasant  
to want me in your arms?  
In god's name,  
why has your father  
done this?  
So that I can never sin,  
as my mother did.  
So that no man can ever  
touch me with evil.  
Now you know.  
Beatrice!  
Beatrice.



Beatrice.  
No! No!  
Beatrice!  
You tried to kill yourself.  
You tried  
to take your own life.  
Oh!  
I want to die.  
Oh, please, let me die!  
Beatrice, child, I only wanted  
to protect you from trouble.  
I never wanted  
to see you hurt.  
Did you think  
I would never need  
a man's love,  
or his strength?  
But all these years  
we've had together,  
it can't be ended  
because of that boy.  
You blame him?  
Are you so insane  
that you don't know  
what you've done?  
But to take your own life  
because of him?  
Do you think  
I won't try again?  
You won't always be  
around to stop me.  
It was right to  
awaken me, Giovanni.  
Never have I seen  
anything like this.  
The acid has  
eaten away  
every organ  
of the lizard's body.  
What kind of a monster  
is this Rappaccini?  
Is this what he has come  
to call science?  
He tried to warn me,

to keep me away.  
How can I help her?  
Perhaps it's impossible.  
Patience, Patience,  
Giovanni.  
There are many things  
I can try.  
It will take time.  
Now go home,  
try to get some sleep.  
No.  
Please. There is nothing  
you can do here.  
If there's  
any hope at all--  
I'll let you know  
at once.  
Yes, sir.  
And so, unfortunately,  
Beatrice couldn't be here.  
She was quite upset  
by what happened.  
I had to give her something  
to make her sleep.  
But then perhaps  
it's just as well  
that we talk  
by ourselves.  
When I realized  
how serious things were  
between the two of you,  
I wanted you  
to have an explanation.  
An explanation,  
or a hopeless apology  
for what you've  
done to her?  
You think my knowledge  
is so little  
that I cannot undo  
what I have done?  
Do you think I would have  
brought you here  
to offer my daughter's

hand in marriage  
if I did not think  
you could be married?  
If that is the truth--  
Beatrice wants you.  
Her happiness  
is my only concern.  
Sir, it is mine, too.  
Good. Then shall  
we drink on that?  
Are you sure  
Beatrice will be  
all right, sir?  
Yes.  
I don't know what  
your experiments were,  
but if it had to do with  
making her immune to poison--  
You need not  
concern yourself.  
The greater feat,  
Giovanni,  
would have been  
to make the human mind  
immune to the poison of evil,  
rather than  
the poison of chemistry.  
To the only two men  
who will ever be  
in my daughter's life.  
Sir,  
an hour ago,  
I felt as if the world  
had been pulled out  
from under me.  
Now the world is back  
where it should be.  
Whatever else  
you learn in your life,

**remember this:**

There is no more  
potent force,  
nothing can drive a man

harder or faster  
to success  
or destruction,  
than the love  
of a woman.  
I think I...  
I didn't get  
much sleep last...  
What is this thing?  
What are you doing?  
It's already done.  
What?  
You wanted Beatrice,  
didn't you?  
You can have her now.  
Do you understand that?  
As long as you  
both shall live,  
there can never be  
anyone else  
for either of you.  
There will be no evil  
in your lives, no sin.  
What are you saying?  
Go to her, Giovanni.  
Touch her.  
Take her in your arms.  
Kiss her.  
Make her your wife.  
Make her your wife.  
Nothing can harm you now.  
You changed me.  
You stand alone,  
the two of you,  
against all of the foul  
things in this world.  
Why don't you  
thank me?  
Or are you speechless  
with happiness?  
You've made me  
the same thing she is.  
That's what you wanted,  
didn't you?

Holy wedlock that no man  
could put asunder?  
You're out of your mind,  
insane.  
You had no right!  
You had no right!  
You'll come back,  
Giovanni.  
There's nowhere else  
you can go.  
You'll have  
to come back.  
There's no place  
you can go.  
You'll come back.  
This terrible thing  
that Rappaccini  
has done to you  
and his daughter...  
Why, it's so complex.  
Are you telling me  
that you cannot help us?  
I'm not sure.  
I have said the problem  
is complex.  
What Rappaccini has  
succeeded in doing,  
is converting the poisonous  
China tree of India,  
so that the plant's  
own juices manufacture  
a strange solution  
of hydrocyanic acid.  
That's what  
my blood has become?  
That is what  
I hope it has become.  
What do you mean?  
We know that to touch  
the plant means death.  
However, I have managed  
to find an antidote  
which will destroy all effects  
of the acid's radiation.

Professor!  
Under a microscope.  
But how do I know  
what it will do to you?  
It would take years  
of testing  
to find the result  
on the human system.  
Years?  
Every hour  
is a thousand years.  
Beatrice and I  
have no time.  
Give it to me.  
Giovanni,  
can my conscience  
let you have it?  
Can your conscience  
refuse me?  
No, please,  
put it there.  
Whatever happens, sir,  
we will always be  
in your debt.  
May god go with you.  
Beatrice!  
Beatrice!  
Beatrice.  
There's no need to stay away  
from me now.  
What are you saying?  
You still don't know  
what happened last night?  
You see,  
I'm still alive.  
Giovanni.  
That was your  
father's answer to us.  
He couldn't change you,  
so he changed me.  
Oh, no.  
Giovanni,  
I didn't want that.  
If I'd known...

Now we're both locked in.  
We're both prisoners.  
No, we can escape.  
Professor Baglioni  
made this.  
It's an antidote.  
He said it could  
counteract the poison.  
If it will  
really free us...  
Pray, Beatrice.  
No!  
Quickly, give it to me.  
No, wait.  
Giovanni!  
Beatrice!  
Oh, Giovanni!  
Oh!  
Oh!  
The fool.  
Poison was his life,  
like yours.  
It could only kill him.  
You've murdered him.  
But you wanted him.  
I gave him to you.  
You could have  
been together.  
Then, we will be.  
Beatrice.  
Beatrice.  
Beatrice.  
Beatrice,  
Beatrice, child,  
I only wanted  
to give you happiness.  
How could  
you give me something  
you don't have yourself?  
You could  
only give me hate.  
Giovanni.  
Giovanni.  
Wait for me.

I'll always love you,  
wherever I...  
Giovanni.  
Where does evil begin,  
and where does it end?  
Can the eye of man  
discern the fine line  
that separates  
sanity from madness?  
If not, can there be  
a judge so wise  
that he can measure  
a man's reasons  
for the sins he commits?  
The House of the Seven Gables  
began its existence  
in a year of terror.  
It was in 1691  
that mass hysteria  
gripped New England,  
and innocent people  
were executed as witches.  
Yes, it was a time  
of horror and blood,  
and left a mark on the house  
that was not to be forgotten  
for more than 150 years.  
So you've finally  
dared to come back.  
This is my wife Alice.  
My sister Hannah.  
Gerald, are you sure  
we have a right to intrude?  
Intrude?  
This is as much my house  
as it is my sister's.  
Is that not so,  
Hannah?  
Your absence of 17 years  
makes me question that right.  
Would you please  
take these up  
to the second floor?  
My feet took me



this far.  
But they're  
not taking me  
one step further  
into this house.  
Why did he say that?  
The man's an idiot.  
It means nothing.  
I wouldn't be  
too sure, Gerald.  
Don't you think  
the whole town knows  
a male Pyncheon  
has returned?  
I'm afraid we'll have to  
carry these up ourselves.  
You will occupy  
your old room?  
Yes.  
If it's possible,  
two rooms might be better.  
Gerald is  
a light sleeper.  
He doesn't like  
to disturb me.  
Very well.  
You may have  
the guest room,  
next to mine.  
Hannah,  
if our being here  
is a great  
inconvenience to you--  
I can only say,  
my brother made  
a great mistake  
in returning.  
Hannah.  
Yes?  
May I ask why?  
You really don't know,  
do you?  
Whatever  
Gerald's reason

for coming here to live,  
the decision was his.  
It isn't the first  
of his mistakes  
I've had to accept.  
What is it?  
Oh,  
I feel cold suddenly.  
There's no draft here.  
It's a strange kind  
of cold.  
I think I'll feel better  
in the morning  
when I can look out  
the window  
and see the garden,  
the arbor,  
the old well.  
How did you know  
what's outside that window?  
The garden is there,  
isn't it?  
Yes, it's there.  
I don't know how I knew  
about the garden.  
Gerald never told me.  
Hannah, how could...  
Afraid of a  
bloodstained chair, Gerald?  
Or does it hold  
too much knowledge  
of our illustrious male  
ancestors who died in it?  
Don't look forward  
to my early death, Hannah.  
I have no intention  
of honoring the chair  
with my corpse.  
He didn't either.  
You're a fool.  
Has any man in our family  
ever died otherwise?  
Then, I shall be  
the first not to.

I will not  
be frightened away.  
When I get what I want  
from this house,  
then I'll leave,  
and not before.  
Do you think  
you can outwit a ghost?  
Are you  
so immune to death  
that you can defy a curse  
that has ruined this family?  
I'll stay alive  
as long as is necessary.  
You don't have a choice.  
The man buried under  
this house won't wait.  
Go back to your books  
of demons and witchcraft.  
They're your  
only companions.  
Why not?  
It wasn't the dead  
who gambled away  
the family fortunes.  
Now that you've  
bankrupted us,  
you think you can take  
what is rightfully mine?  
Yours?  
You assume a great deal,  
my dear sister.  
You'll never find  
that vault.  
I've searched this house  
from top to bottom,  
just as every Pyncheon  
has searched it  
for 150 years.  
The ghost won't  
let you find it.  
It isn't where  
you look for it.  
It's how.

Now let us see  
if a dead man can stop me.  
Where's Gerald going?  
He didn't say.  
But if you want  
Gerald to live,  
get him out  
of this house.  
To live?  
Do you see  
those bloodstains?  
That was his blood.  
It ran from his lips.  
The date is  
on his gravestone:  
March 17th, 1691,  
the very first night  
he lived in this house.  
The Pyncheons  
are cursed.  
Every male member  
of the family  
has died the same way.  
And unless  
Gerald leaves,  
he too will die  
with blood on his lips.  
Since we both  
live here now,  
you can at least tell me  
who's coming tonight.  
You'll find out  
when he gets here.  
What are you hiding,  
Gerald?  
I saw you run out of  
the house this afternoon.  
If it's about  
finding the vault,  
I'm entitled to know.  
Are you entitled to meddle  
in my private affairs?  
You had no right  
to tell Alice

about the bloodstains  
on the chair.  
How long  
do you think  
you can hold back  
the truth?  
Perhaps your visitor  
isn't coming.  
The time is long past  
when the Pyncheons  
could give orders  
and everyone  
had to obey.  
You finally  
decided to join us.  
Is your  
empty room  
so much  
better company?  
Somebody's coming.  
What are you saying?  
There's no one out there.  
His name  
is Jonathan Maule.  
Jonathan Maule?  
Is he the one  
you expect?  
Yes. And if you have  
any objections,  
I don't care  
to hear them.  
Who told you Jonathan Maule  
was coming here tonight?  
Nobody told me.  
He's here.  
Jonathan Maule  
has come.  
She's right.  
He's here.  
How could you know  
about a man named  
Jonathan Maule?  
Have you ever met him?  
No, I haven't.

Hannah, how could I know  
he was coming?

How?

You couldn't know,  
unless something  
in this house  
Made you know.

Mr. Pyncheon?

Yes, you got my note?

I returned home  
late from my business.

I heard music outside.

Yes, my wife was playing.

We can talk  
in the study,

Mr. Maule.

Mrs. Pyncheon,  
that music,  
where did you learn it?

I...

I never played it before.

I never even  
heard it before.

Mr. Maule?

I'm sorry.

Forgive me for  
barging in this way.

I was just surprised.

We can talk now,

Mr. Maule.

Miss Pyncheon.

I never expected  
to see you in this house.

I never expected  
to be invited.

Have a seat,

Mr. Maule.

I am not disregarding  
the long unpleasantness  
that has existed  
between our families, sir.

But I always say  
that good whiskey  
is better than oil

to toss on troubled waters.  
And so,  
your health, sir.  
It's not like a Pyncheon  
to ask a Maule to  
pass the time of day.  
No, of course not,  
not unless they both  
had something to gain.  
Our ancestors  
would say  
the Pyncheons  
did all the gaining.  
We live in an enlightened  
age, Mr. Maule.  
A family feud  
that began in 1690  
can scarcely  
affect us.  
What is it you want,  
Pyncheon?  
I would like to make  
a trade with you, sir.  
For generations,  
your family has been  
in possession  
of certain information.  
Are you referring  
to the vault  
hidden in this house?  
Precisely, sir.  
Your ancestor was  
the architect of this place.  
He would've known  
where the vault is.  
Didn't your sister  
tell you  
that she tried to find out  
what I know 10 years ago?  
I presumed she had.  
But I have a different  
proposition to make, sir:  
The House of the Seven Gables,  
for your information.

What are you offering me,  
Pyncheon?

A decayed tomb,  
built on land that was stolen  
from my ancestors?

The courts settled that  
issue 150 years ago, sir.

Courts that  
the Pyncheons  
controlled.

If I did know  
where the vault is,  
you couldn't get it out  
of me at any price.

My family has  
suffered enough  
from the curse that was  
put on them by a Maule.  
Have you explained that  
to the man buried  
in your cellar?

I say that the curse  
is finished.

The past stays  
in the past.

Does it?

The curse said  
that the Pyncheons  
would have  
blood to drink.

Are you so sure now  
that the past  
stays in the past?

Mrs. Pyncheon.

Mr. Maule, please.

You seemed to  
understand something  
about the music

I was playing tonight,  
more than

I understand myself.

The music is very old.

The only time

I ever heard it



was when I was a child  
and my grandmother played it.  
And still, I know it.  
I seem to know many things  
I shouldn't know,  
and always when a  
strange, cold chill  
comes over me,  
as if it was  
possessing me.  
I knew your name  
before I heard it.  
I could sense  
that you were  
at the door  
before you knocked.  
Then, what you  
want from me  
is an explanation.  
Mr. Maule,  
if there is one,  
please, I must know.  
How can I explain  
my own impressions tonight?  
When I got  
your husband's note,  
I wasn't going to come.  
But something  
kept coming to my mind,  
compelling me to come.  
I swear that while I was  
still in my own home,  
I could see you  
playing that music.  
It was your face,  
the very dress  
you're wearing,  
the way your hands  
moved the keys.  
I knew you as though  
I'd known you  
since I was born,  
or even before that.  
Yes, I think I felt

the same way myself.  
But we never met  
before tonight.  
What's happening to us,  
Mr. Maule?  
You know, there is  
a curse against this house.  
Hannah told me  
something.  
Did she also tell  
you that the man  
who spoke that curse  
against the Pyncheons,  
Matthew Maule,  
was buried  
under the house?  
Last night,  
my door opened,  
but there was nobody there,  
and yet someone, or something,  
came into my room.  
I could feel  
that it was there.  
And when it was gone,  
I found this,  
this locket.  
This painting, it's of you.  
No.  
I don't know  
who she is,  
and I don't know  
what the locket means.  
I wasn't going to meet you  
out here like this,  
but something  
drove me to it  
so I could  
give it to you.  
Then, perhaps  
it has the answer for us.  
I don't know what  
that answer can be.  
I'm not so sure  
that I want to know.

I'm going to leave here.

I'm going to forget

that the house of seven

gables ever existed.

Alice!

Alice?

Alice!

Alice, I want to talk to you.

Gerald, we have nothing

to talk about.

All I want to do

is get out of this house.

You'll leave

when I tell you.

Gerald, I can't

stand anymore.

I feel as if

I'm losing my mind.

Please don't try

to stop me.

I'm going to leave

first thing in the morning.

Alice, you are my wife.

You'll do as I--

Nora.

Nora.

Nora.

Nora.

Matthew,

you've come,

after all these years

of waiting.

Nora.

You called

me Matthew.

Why, there...

There was

another man here.

He...

He had a leather apron

of a blacksmith.

Matthew Maule had

his blacksmith's forge here,

near this well,

before the House  
of the Seven Gables  
was built.  
What did he  
want of me?  
Why did he have me  
come down to the garden?  
Perhaps because  
he knew I'd be here.  
I said to you that I felt  
as if I might have known  
you before I was born.  
Now I think it was  
long before that.  
I think what we feel  
might have begun  
150 years ago.  
Was the locket  
supposed to tell us that?  
I believe so.  
Alice,  
was your grandmother's  
name Holbrook,  
Deborah Holbrook?  
Oh.  
How did you know that?  
I've been going  
through old papers  
and records since  
you gave me the locket.  
Alice, the girl  
in the locket  
is Nora Holbrook.  
Matthew called me Nora.  
Nora Holbrook  
was the girl  
Matthew was to marry  
before he was hanged.  
He was condemned  
as a witch  
by colonel  
Jeffrey Pyncheon,  
because Pyncheon  
wanted this land,

the land we're on  
right now.  
Then, why is  
Matthew's grave there?  
When Pyncheon wanted  
the house built,  
he was forced to use  
the only architect in town,  
Matthew's brother.  
Oh, these were  
superstitious times, Alice.  
Pyncheon defied  
Matthew's curse,  
despite the brother  
wanting to make  
it come true.  
The curse  
has come true.  
Alice, that music  
you played.  
Yes?  
It was music Nora Holbrook  
wrote for Matthew.  
Can't you understand?  
Matthew was hanged  
before he and Nora  
could realize their love.  
But that love  
didn't die with Matthew.  
He wants it to live again,  
through us.  
Jonathan,  
we can't have that love.  
Then, why have we been  
drawn together this way  
if we are supposed  
to love each other?  
Are you about to do  
something you'll regret?  
Get out of my way.  
I saw them  
from my window.  
Then you know why I'm  
going to kill Maule.

Kill the one  
chance you have  
of finding the vault?  
Can you be so blind  
that you haven't realized  
that they are  
the key?  
They? You're insane.  
I want my share  
of the money.  
I'll not let you spoil it.  
Am I supposed to let him  
take away my wife?  
You can't eat pride.  
When you find the vault,  
then you can do  
whatever you want.  
Not now.  
Jonathan.  
I'm still  
Gerald's wife.  
Please leave now.  
Alice--  
We won't see  
each other again.  
All right.  
I only wish  
that I had the right  
to speak  
for my own love,  
not Matthew's.  
Nora.  
Nora.  
Nora.  
Why did you  
come down here?  
I can't tell you.  
Why not?  
Did Jonathan Maule  
send you down here?  
No.  
Don't lie.  
He told you where  
he vault is.

Why, that's not true.  
Shall I force you  
to tell me the truth?  
What is it?  
Are you ready to open  
doors to Jonathan  
that you've kept  
locked from me?  
Gerald!  
Ah!  
Who can be  
in the house?  
What is it, Alice?  
The ghost  
of Matthew Maule?  
Why?  
Has he been conjured up  
out of his grave  
by Jonathan to come  
between you and me?  
Is that what he wants?  
I told you  
to leave this house.  
You brought back  
Matthew Maule,  
you and no one else.  
If I'm the one  
you want, Maule,  
then here I am.  
I'm waiting.  
Destroy me  
if you can.  
Because if you don't,  
I'll get what I want,  
and then you  
will have lost.  
Get some water,  
Gerald.  
It is blood.  
Some water!  
What did you expect?  
The water is  
from Maule's well.  
The plaster in the walls

is mixed with it.  
Did you expect  
anything else  
but blood from  
Matthew Maule?  
But I'm still here,  
Hannah.  
And I haven't  
tasted blood yet.  
If this is the extent  
of Maule's revenge,  
then he can't stop me  
from finding that vault.  
It's moving.  
Do you mind if I watch?  
Then I can be sure  
we'll share whatever you find.  
If that old deed to the land  
in Maine is in the vault,  
it'll be worth millions.  
More than enough  
for both of us.  
His arm,  
it's gone.  
Matthew Maule  
was a blacksmith,  
a man with two arms.  
Jonathan sent  
Alice down here.  
The secret to the vault  
must be in the grave.  
The portrait in the study.  
And this arrow,  
it could mean a lever  
was concealed there.  
You were right.  
Jonathan Maule and  
my wife were the key.  
They wanted the  
deed for themselves.  
Are you satisfied now?  
A Pyncheon has  
outlasted the Maules.  
Are you sure you will



be that Pyncheon?  
This says that I will.  
Or do you have some  
ambitious notion  
concerning yourself?  
The power of the curse  
was never directed  
against  
a Pyncheon woman.  
I shall be  
quite content  
to share the new  
fortune with you,  
as long as you live.  
You seem very confident,  
my dear sister.  
It was you who told me  
my natural companions  
are witches and demons.  
What do I have to fear?  
Shall we go upstairs  
and share our victory?  
Why not? It's a night  
for celebration.  
But I intend  
to celebrate it alone.  
You killed her!  
Your own sister,  
in god's name!  
Where would you run,  
to the police?  
You want me hanged  
as a murderer  
so that you can  
go to Jonathan,  
is that it?  
He told me not to come  
back in this house.  
He knew it was evil.  
He told me  
what was here.  
Let me go!  
Yes, of course,  
my dear wife.

I'll let you go  
to Jonathan.  
On second thought,  
suppose we compromise,  
and I give you to  
a different Maule?

Gerald!

Gerald!

Aagh!

Aagh!

Aagh!

Alice.

Alice!

Alice!

Alice!

Alice!

Alice!

The last Pyncheon  
has died.

The curse is ended.

Thus did the House  
of the Seven Gables

**come to its end:**

destroyed by the decay  
of greed and hate  
that had corroded  
its very foundations.

It was a time now  
for Matthew Maule  
to find peace.