

The sea, deep enough to tolerate all the unfares, furious enough to destroy all that he detests.

This comparison consists in two parts, the similarities and differences between the protagonists in *The Scarlet Letter* and *Moby Dick*.

Before analyzing the instinctive differences between the protagonists in the two great works, Hester and Ahab, it is important to mention something similar in their own destinies.

Hester, a insignificant woman suffered a tragical destiny: The grievous news of her husband's death, a pure love which challenged the unfair worldly consciousness, a serious condemnation of jail with an innocent babe; The tolerant woman wept in the walls, and her lover, the poor young pastor could do nothing but fretting himself secretly out of prison; The ugly trauma of the sick society concentrated on the scarlet A on the suffering woman, which means living under the contempt of the whole world; The appearance of the missing husband did not bring her any comfort but intensified the dark and suffocative atmosphere. The vulnerability of the humanity was exposed in all directions from the beginning to the end. How can it be possible for a single and poor woman to support so much?

Ahab, a weird old captain, with an age of 58, including a career of whaling for 40 years, he had only stayed on land for merely 4 years, and all the rest of his life was floating on the unstable ocean. He never got a home until in his 50s, but the second day after the bitter wedding, his bride just became a widow, with tears wetting the sheet. He had been onboard ever since 18 years old, and attended in whaling for thousands of times even at the price of his leg. Until the last minutes of his life, he was ejected the little wood, still he groaned till dead. He lost everything he owned in whaling, his fortune, his crew and his life.

In front of the miserable destiny, they all made their own choice, and both lived a respectable life.

It is never too much to appreciate Hester with tenacity and greatness. Just like the metaphor reveals, Hester lived like an inimitable ocean, she suffered all the heavy surges, but never emitted even a single suppression, just like the sea who comprehended everything and finally returned to serenity. Hester rode a boat for months to a totally unfamiliar region to restart her broken life, lonely, she bought land, arranged the home, employed staffs, cultivated farmland and continued her embroidery. Any of these should never be supported by a weak woman, not to say the special views of the mass (even she tried to work hard, to help other who can be living better than her, to atone for the crimes, people always got some discrimination for her). But finally, she still accepted it, believed that she was the violator, and most impressively, lived with the scarlet A naturally and even proudly. She never spoke, but everyone knew her.

Compared with Hester, Ahab is more like an exasperated sea with its surges to destroy everything on its way. The ocean is so vast, but still could not contain Ahab's hatred, his fury and his oath. *Moby Dick* was terrified, but compared with Ahab, it was nothing. Ahab, too, followed the principles of a beast: kill the one who tears his body, conquer the one who ruins his dignity, find the one who tries to escape from his palm. He would ask every ship in his version, have you met *Moby Dick*? No matter it was a boat of triumph, of tears or anything else. I will find you, finally.

Many readers like to put together the two great authors, but do not forget their characters can be the example most vivid of their writing style, even the frozen and boundless sea can be expressed in different ways.