



*Nathaniel Hawthorne*

THE  
BIRTHMARK

*Retold by Sara Simpson*

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“Georgiana,” Aylmer said, “have you ever thought about having your birthmark removed?”

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“No,” Georgiana said, smiling. “In fact, so many people have told me it’s a good luck charm that I wouldn’t want to remove it.”

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“On different woman, the birthmark would be fine,” Aylmer said, “but you are such a beautiful woman. Your birthmark is the only thing about you that isn’t perfect.”

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“Not perfect?” cried Georgiana. He hurt her feelings badly. Her face turned red with anger, then she started to cry. “Why did you marry me, then, if you hate the way I look so much? How can you love me if you hate the way I look?”

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Aylmer and Georgiana were newlyweds, and it should have been the happiest time of their lives. But it wasn’t. Every day, Aylmer stared at her birthmark. It was all he could think about. Maybe if she hadn’t been so pretty, it wouldn’t have bothered him so much. He started to think of her birthmark as bad, and that thought was stronger than his love for her.

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Whatever they were doing, whatever they were talking about, the topic always came back to Georgiana’s birthmark. Georgiana was never the one to bring up the topic; it was always Aylmer. Day and night, he stared at her birthmark with disgust in his eyes. Georgiana started to feel ashamed every time he looked at her. When Aylmer looked at her, all the color would drain out of her face, making the birthmark stand out even more.

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One evening, Georgiana was the one to start a talk about her birthmark. The night before, Aylmer had a bad dream. He was talking in his sleep about her birthmark.

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