

Character traits of elizabeth proctor



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In the late sixteen hundreds, the fear of witchcraft was a major concern amongst New Englanders. Arthur Miller's book, *The Crucible*, tells the story of a town's obsession with accusing innocent people of witchcraft. All the accusers were young females who claimed they were attacked by demonic specters. Members of the community supposedly sent out these evil spirits, but in reality, the girls were doing it as sport. One such person accused was Elizabeth Proctor, wife of John Proctor, known throughout the community to be a noble woman. Throughout the book Elizabeth proves to be honest, untrusting of others, and determined.

Elizabeth's honesty proves to be an important factor all through the book. This honest woman only lies once throughout the entire book. She tells this lie to Danforth in order to protect her husband's reputation from being blackened in the village. Her honesty proves true when she is sent to jail for witchcraft, and she discovers she is pregnant. When she tells Danforth he says " There be no sign of it- we have examined her body" (92). In the last act, while talking to her husband, he asks " The child?" She then replies, " It grows" (134). This proves she was being honest while in jail. Another instance of her honesty is when she is charged with being a witch. Although the punishment was less severe for admitting to being a witch rather than claiming to be innocent, she will not lie. It was this sense of honesty that helped to keep her out of harms way.

Elizabeth was untrusting to the people who had wronged her. She knew of John's lechery with Abigail, who was their servant at the time, while she was sick. She came not to trust John while being sick, so she put Abigail on the highroad. " And being what she is, a lump of vanity, sir-"(110) states Proctor.

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One reason she distrusts John, is that he has claimed he was not alone with her. He later says that he was, in fact, alone with her for a short while. It was this distrust that made John believe she kept a cold house.

Another strong character trait of Elizabeth was her determination in what she believed. She was a Christian woman who was tied to her beliefs. She stated this about witchcraft to Hale " I cannot think the Devil may own a woman's soul, Mr. Hale, when she keeps an upright way, as I have. I am a good woman, I know it; and if you believe I may do only good work in the world, and yet be secretly bound to Satan, then I must tell you, sir, I do not believe it" (70). Even after John's lechery, she believed that he was a good man and was truly sorry for what he had done. Her determination kept her strong throughout the ordeal.

Some important character traits of Elizabeth were that she was honest, untrusting, and determined. It was through these strengths that Elizabeth was able to survive the Salem witch-hunts. Soon after Elizabeth stood up for her innocence, other women followed her example. Among the last three people to be hanged was her husband, who verbally confessed to being a witch. When told to sign the confession, he refused because he did not want to taint his family's name.