

# Ethan frome

Literature



Picture yourself, trapped in a lackluster world, where everything seems to have a shade of gray. Everyone around you seems to be moving in an excessively slow pace. Yet you're not able to leave that place, not being able to find a hint of love or joy anywhere you look. That place is called Starkfield, a place where Ethan Frome lives in the novel by Edith Wharton. Ethan is constantly held back by his wife Zeena, not being able to experience much emotion because of her, acting like a leash to a dog.

Merely waking up everyday seems like an excruciating task, draining all of the energy out of him. Zeena Frome is like the world, placed on Atlas's shoulders. Zeena is the greatest hindrance to Ethan Frome and his ability to be free and live a joyful life, bringing negativity to Ethan's life. Zeena and Ethan's marriage is a massive obstacle in Ethan's life. Ethan has married into a life where he has to face Zeena as a responsibility, not a wife.

The only reason they are still together is because of Ethan's sense of duty and how he can't live with the guilt of cheating on his wife. Zeena's so called sickness has always brought dreariness into wherever she went, thus causing Ethan to also feel gloomy, like everything in Starkfield. The love that is supposed to be in this relationship is not there, it was never there. This emptiness just sucks all of the will out of Ethan to live. Zeena is always a negative force in Ethan's life, always down and depressing.

She takes Ethan's manhood away and is "the man" in the relationship. Zeena's is a very unattractive person and lets be frank, Ethan has not have sex in a long, long time. Zeena often takes control and is very demanding, causing Ethan to feel less and less masculine. A man often has to feel

needed and wanted every once in a while, with Zeena it's the exact opposite. Instead of happy, Zeena changes the whole mood in the room and makes everyone especially Ethan's mood change from fine to plain old unhappy.

Lastly, Zeena's presence seems to always be there, coming in between Ethan and Mattie, Ethan's only source of happiness. Zeena seems to always be there, haunting Ethan once as a cat during dinner as Mattie and Ethan were alone and eating pickles and donuts. Zeena also threw Mattie out of her house when she didn't need her anymore, thus separating Ethan and Mattie even more. When Ethan and Mattie decided to die together, "Zeena's presence" seemed to be there once again, as images flashed before Ethan's eyes when the sorrel whinnied.

In the end, Zeena seemed to have won the cat and mouse chase with Mattie, as Mattie lost all of her sparkle and charm in the "smash-up." Imagine once more, but this time picture happiness, love, and marriage. Most would think that marriage is the point in life where you believe you have found happiness, being with the one you love. On the contrary, Ethan Frome has married into a not so "picture perfect life." Zeena sucks all of the life out of Ethan, much like a black hole. Having married Zeena, Ethan has lost all of the happiness, joy, and love one hope would feel.