

Conflict between john proctor and elizabeth

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"The Crucible," is a 1952 play written by Arthur Miller as an allegory of MCarthyism. The play follows a theocratic society in which the church and the state are one, and reputation plays an important role in Salem where private and public moralities are the same. In act one, the secret affair of John Proctor and Abigail Williams was revealed that led to conflict between John and his wife. Divorce was not permitted in the late 16th century, hence, the Proctors had to maintain their marriage causing discord within the Proctor household.

At the start of Act 2, Miller creates a tense atmosphere of animosity portrayed by John and Elizabeth Proctor in their lack of affection, awkwardness, appraisal and guilt leading to affliction. In the beginning of Act Two, Miller portrays the tension in the Proctors house by the awkward atmosphere between John and Elizabeth when John returns home late. John is desperately trying to maintain a light atmosphere in the house by complimenting Elizabeths cooking saying that " It's well seasoned," although we know that in fact it is John who in attempt to conceal Elizabeths bland cooking, had seasoned it himself.

The author makes the audience feel the lack of natural affection between the Proctors by their forced attempts to please each other. Throughout their conversation, John tells Elizabeth that he is planning to buy George Jacobs heifer, saying " I mean to please you Elizabeth," as he tries to mend their relationship and seek her forgiveness. However, it is obviously hard for her to welcome his attempts as he have had an affair with Abby, and her actions towards him are detached.

It is clear that the atmosphere in the house is blank and tense, by Miller's constant use of questions and short replies. In addition, the tension between John and Elizabeth Proctor is accentuated by Elizabeth's distrust and suspicion towards John, based on her knowledge of the affair between John and Abigail. Elizabeth questions John's honesty when he told her he had been alone with Abigail saying " why, then, it is not as you told me," bearing down on him for lacking to mention this part although the audience knows it was just a brief encounter.

Furthermore, Elizabeth's constant judgements lead to John's criticism of her where he cannot keep concealed his anger towards Elizabeth's judgement. After Elizabeth confronted John about still having feelings towards her, John had warned her " You will not judge me anymore Elizabeth. Let you look to your improvement before you go to judge your husband anymore. " This shows that although John is trying desperately to please Elizabeth, he cannot do so when she is constantly judging him about his affair with Abigail.

Consequently, much of the conflict between John and Elizabeth, Miller portrays through John's guilt over the affair. The audience feels that Elizabeth's knowledge of the affair, makes John feel judged. Elizabeth questions John about his feeling for Abigail saying "John, if it were not Abigail that you must go to hurt, would you falter now? " Elizabeth's judgement leads John to struggle to regain his dignity and trust before his wife.

After Elizabeth had suggested John had yet some feeling left for Abigail, John replies by saying " I come into a court everytime I come into this house. " We are shown that John feels judged by Elizabeth every time he comes home that leads to his struggle to acquire Elizabeth's forgiveness, and retain his

dignity before her. In act Two, John tells Elizabeth that " I confessed. Confessed! Some dream I had must have mistaken you for God that day," revealing that he had confessed to her about the affair and almost expects her to give him some recognition for that.

At the end of the scene, the astricted atmoshere remains within the couple when John pleads to Elizabeth, saying " Let you look sometimes for the goodness in me, and judge me not," to which she replies " I do not judge you. The magistrate sits in your heart that judges you. " By this we are displayed Elizabeth's feeling towards John's accusation towards which she reveals to John that it is not her that he is being judged by, but in fact his guilty conscience over the affair.

In Conclusion, the audince feels tension and conflict between John and Elizabeth in act two through Miller's use of scenes of frigidity, lack of natural affection, constant use of questions and short replies, Elizabeth's suspicion and distrust of John and their constant judgement of each other . This scene plays an important role to the events that were building up in Salem, as the conflict in their household can almost represent the hysteria that was building up in Salem at that time with constant suspicions, distrusts and judgement.