

Ethan frome's limitations



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Throughout *Ethan Frome*, there is a consistent feel of limitation on Ethan, Zeena, and Mattie. The author, Edith Wharton, creates many restrictions that limits how much the characters do. There are many different scenarios of limitations such as the shortness of money that the Frome's have, Zeena's sickness and depression, the marriage of Ethan and Zeena, and Ethan and Mattie's love that they share.

In all of these scenarios, there isn't much interaction with each other which proves the limitation that happens in the book. Limitation is important in the book because it shows how little is done between the characters and how controlling they are of one another.

Shortness of money is the first example of limitation. With the shortness of money that the Fromes have, Ethan has to work a lot, such as hauling wood for Andrew Hale. They have a trouble making a living out of their family farm. Zeena could be healthier if they had enough money for the doctor. If they leave Starkfield for another town, the climate would be better because Starkfield is cold and snowy. Unfortunately, Zeena didn't want to move to the city because she didn't want people looking down on her. It would also be good because there may be better job opportunities to make a living out of. Another reason why the Frome's money is limited is because Ethan wants to run away with Mattie, but they don't have enough money. If Ethan and Mattie do run away together, then they wouldn't have a house or food because of the lack of money they have. Final reason is Zeena sends Mattie away to make room for the new house girl because Mattie isn't doing a good job.

Zeena's sickness is a limitation because she can't move or work that much. When Zeena goes to see her doctor, he explains to Zeena that she should get a housekeeper because Mattie isn't good at cleaning the house, and Zeena can rest as her doctor tells her to. Ethan usually wakes up early to clean the house so Mattie doesn't get in trouble with Zeena. Zeena also doesn't leave the house much and she's controlling of Ethan. She tells Ethan what he can and can't do which prevents him from doing what he wants to do.

The final limitation is Ethan's marriage. In chapter 3, Zeena says, The doctor says it'll be my death if I go on slaving the way I've had to. He doesn't understand how I've stood it as long as I have, (Wharton 98). This happens after Zeena comes back from seeing her doctor and explains that Zeena is controlling in their marriage and Ethan doesn't have much of a say. Ethan and Mattie's relationship is unnoticeable to Zeena because they're afraid of how she'll react and what she'll do to them. This shows that Ethan and Zeena don't have a secure marriage and they don't interact with each other much.

In conclusion, limits are consistent throughout the book; the Frome's shortness on money, Zeena's sickness in health, Starkfields climate, Ethan's marriage with Zeena, and Ethan's love for Mattie. All of these limits are pressurized onto Ethan because he has a relationship with Zeena and Mattie which puts him in the center of all of the chaos.