

# The crucible: elizabeth proctor

[Literature](#), [Books](#)



How and why does the relationship between John and Elizabeth Proctor change over the course of *The Crucible*? In Arthur Miller's play *The Crucible*, John and Elizabeth Proctor are introduced as a young, married couple whose relationship had a tense undercurrent. Their actions and reactions towards one another prove that they are at odds with each other. John and Elizabeth seem to be trying to smooth out the bumps in their relationship, but they only seem to succeed in driving themselves further apart. Now at a time when communication is crucial, John and Elizabeth learn the mistake they made is not getting to know each other better.

Act two is when Elizabeth is introduced properly in the crucible. Elizabeth and Proctor have what seems to be an awkward conversation with no sentence lasting more than a few words. The short sentences Miller uses to create the conversation between Elizabeth and Proctor such as "What keeps you so late? It's almost dark." And "Aye, the farm is seeded. The boys asleep?" use lots of questions adding suspicion mainly seen in Elizabeth's speech. This shows the reader there is a lack of honesty in their relationship because if they had complete honesty in the relationship there would be no need for questions.

The questions might be a way of them trying to smooth the bumps out in their relationship, attempting to bring honesty back in but neither of them seem to be opening fully, shown by the short sentences. Any attempt to open up to the other person is quickly stopped by some sort of interruption "Now look you –" "I see what I see John." Elizabeth suspects a lack of honesty "John, you are not open with me" however Proctor continues to

deny it. This all builds up tension and bottles up feelings in the relationship implying that they will burst out later on in the play.

This makes the reader feel sympathy for Proctor and Elizabeth because on one hand Elizabeth simply just wants to know the truth so they can get on with their lives and on the other Proctor doesn't want to hurt Elizabeth's feelings by telling the truth. Elizabeth is accused of being a witch. It is believed Abigail accused her so as to get to John. Hale is introduced into Proctors house. He has come in search of evidence to back up the accusation. Hale asks a series of questions involving religious references and also asks Proctor to recite the Ten Commandments.

Hale being in the Proctor's house seems to create tension in the house. When faced with the proposition of being questioned about the Christian faith Proctor answers " Why, we – have no fear of questions sir. " This seems quite a shy answer. It lacks confidence and almost seems as though he is nervous about answering or he may even fear the questions about to come before him. This creates sympathy for Proctor by the reader because he is trying to patch up his relationship and now has to deal with accusations of being a witch on top of everything else. Elizabeth is taken to court due to her accusation and is then taken to jail.

After months in jail, Elizabeth Proctor was called into the courtroom to answer a series of questions that could determine the fate of her husband, herself, and Abigail Williams. Elizabeth Proctor was asked to accuse her husband of lechery. The hesitation in Elizabeth's response to this question was not a surprise. She was fighting a battle inside of herself that only she

knew the depth of. It was up to her to make a decision that she knows would change her life and the lives of others. To the question of lechery put before her, Elizabeth Proctor chose to answer " no".

Elizabeth answered " no" for a number of reasons. The biggest was the respect she had for her husband. She wanted John to reveal his sin on his own. She felt it wasn't her place to reveal the wrong in his life. Elizabeth also believed that she was part of the reason John chose to have an affair with Abigail. Before John was to sign his confession, Elizabeth asked him to forgive her for being a cold wife. Elizabeth truly believed she was the reason behind John's affair with Abigail. This proves that Elizabeth really did love John although there were times when it wasn't evident in her words and actions.

She respected and trusted him to such an extent that she allowed him to decide when he would let the community know of his sin. John Proctor also loves his wife deeply. This is shown through his actions at the end of the play. With the decision he is about to make at hand, he asks Elizabeth " what would you have me do? " It is her desires that he is concerned about because he realizes this decision will affect her too. After ripping up his confession, John grabs Elizabeth and gives her the last kiss of his life. It was not passion that drove him but pure love.

Through this kiss he let Elizabeth know everything that he had been keeping in his heart during his time in jail in more. Through this kiss, Elizabeth knows that John loved her and cherished her more than before. It is evident throughout the play that displays of affection aren't very common in the

Proctor household. That is common in many marriages and households today. It is also common that it isn't until something drastic happens that those who love each other find out how much they really mean to each other. This is what happened in the Proctor's situation.

John and Elizabeth didn't realize what they meant to each other until they were thrown into jail and John was on the verge of losing his life. John and Elizabeth Proctor realize their love for each other at the end of the play. Although they both realize they won't be able to share it, they are overjoyed with this new discovery. Elizabeth realizes that John loves her and John realizes that Elizabeth loves him and that he does indeed have her forgiveness. This gives him the push he needs to make the right decision. In the time when John and Elizabeth's relationship must be strong, they pull through and come out the victors.