

# ETHAN FROME: MOVIE VERSION

**Study Guide compares the book *Ethan Frome* by Edith Wharton to the movie *Ethan Frome* (1993) starring Liam Neeson, Joan Allen, and Patricia Arquette. Directed by John Madden.  
A Miramax Films Picture.**



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**SAMPLE ETHAN FROME: MOVIE VERSION**

**THE MOVIE VERSION OF *ETHAN FROME*  
IS NOT LIKE THE BOOK** by Edith Wharton

**RECOMMENDED MOVIE:** *Ethan Frome* (1993) starring Liam Neeson, Joan Allen, and Patricia Arquette. Directed by John Madden. A Miramax Films Picture. This is the ONLY film of the book. The movie adds some characters and changes the plot a little, but Liam Neeson is perfect as Frome.

**HOW ACCURATE IS THE MOVIE VERSION OF THE BOOK?**

Plot: ★★☆☆☆ Characters: ★★★☆☆ Setting: ★★★★★

Structure: ★☆☆☆☆ Symbols: ★★★☆☆ Theme: ★★★★★

**WHAT'S IN THE BOOK THAT'S NOT IN THE MOVIE?**

the engineer . . . the graveyard . . . the suicide pact . . . Ethan's red scar . . .  
Mattie's red hair ribbon . . . the church picnic . . . the pillow . . . Ethan's study . . .  
the shaving scene . . . Ethan's letter to Zeena . . . Mattie's note to Ethan . . .

**WHAT'S IN THE MOVIE THAT'S NOT IN THE BOOK?**

Reverend Smith . . . Ruth as narrator . . . the pump scene . . . the love scenes . . .  
the fox . . . the poison . . . the gift from Denis . . . the comb . . . Mattie's singing . . .

**WHAT'S THE SAME?**

the dance . . . the search for the key . . . Zeena's trip to the doctor . . . the pickle  
dish . . . the sawmill . . . the smash-up . . .

## **SAMPLE ETHAN FROME: MOVIE VERSION**

### **THE MOVIE: SUMMARY**

The following is a scene-by-scene comparison of the movie to the corresponding chapters in the book.

### **THE MOVIE: PROLOGUE/INTRODUCTION**

**OPENING SCENE:** The new minister arrives in Starkfield, Massachusetts on a train. (**ERROR:** *This character is not in the book. In the book the narrator is an engineer*) As he rides into town on a sleigh he sees a crippled Ethan Frome walking along the side of the road (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*)

Ned Hale meets Reverend Smith at the train. (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) They drive off in a horse-drawn buggy. As they pass Ethan, Rev. Smith says “shouldn’t we give him a ride?” Hale says, “Naw – he wouldn’t take it.” (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*)

Rev. Smith attends a party hosted by his new congregation. (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) The next day Rev. Smith goes to the general store/Post Office. (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) A man named Harlan Gow observes: “Most of the smart ones get away.” (**ACCURATE QUOTE** *but Gow says it to the engineer*) Rev. Smith sees Ethan Frome at the Post Office window and walks over and introduces himself. Ethan replies “Frome.” (**ERROR:** *Not in the book*) Frome is a tall, muscular man who is severely crippled on his right side. (**ACCURATE**)

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