

*Ethan Frome* includes a "frame narrative" or, a story within a story, so we have two initial situations. In the Prologue, the narrator introduces us to the figure that has captured his curiosity and imagination, Ethan Frome. Have you ever seen someone with an obvious physical problem (be it burn scars or a broken leg) and desired to know his or her story? Something like that is going on with the narrator. Something about Ethan immediately strikes the narrator, and the more he sees of Ethan and the more he learns of Ethan, the more curious the narrator becomes. So that's the initial situation of the Prologue: we meet two mysterious men, the narrator and Ethan Frome.

In Chapter 1 of *Ethan Frome* we are sent back in time about 24 years, and we find "Young Ethan Frome" walking on a snowy, moonless night to some mysterious purpose (1.1). The space between the 52-year-old Ethan of the Prologue and the 28-year-old Ethan of Chapter 1 is waiting to be filled in by the rest of the story.

I