

Word Count: 499

If I look through the perspective of Eliza's mother *The Coquette* will look like a story parents won't want their daughters to repeat. We get this by excavating some details about Eliza's mother and determining what roles she played in Eliza's life as seen through these letters. First we notice that she mourned Eliza's absence as much as her husband's death (p. 40). It was Eliza's future and her promise to come home that brought Eliza's mother out of her despair (p. 41).

Eliza's mother generally agreed with Eliza (p. 6), maybe because she knew her all too well (p. 106), and didn't like disagreeing with her (p. 39). This enabled her to have great feelings with, and towards, Eliza that got compounded with her unexpected death, especially given how it was publicized (p. 161). We see a foreshadowing of this since one of the few places Eliza's mother would be truly happy is in Eliza's presence (p. 67), and with how apologetic she always was towards Eliza (p. 113). Eliza's mother managed to stay attentive to her daughter while at the same time was respectful of her (p. 89).

That's some basic information about Eliza's mother, but what are the roles we can determine that she played in her daughter's life? Throughout all the letters exchanged between mother and daughter we get the sense that Eliza was using her mother as a sounding board for her internal thoughts (p. 39). This is a natural role all parents play with their children. Eliza's mother constantly agreeing and encouraging Eliza is evidence that another role of her's was as a sympathizer, maybe one of just a few, in Eliza's support chain. We also see Eliza still using her mother in the natural parental role of being a role model (p. 39). In the last section of this book we see Eliza's mother sharing in the caregiver role with Julia Granby. Each of these roles holds immense importance for how to interpret this book from the perspective of Eliza's mother.

The importance of Eliza's mother doesn't come into clarity until the latter portion of the novel when Eliza's health starts diminishing. The major scenes of the novel flip from being in a separate town from Eliza's mother to her neighborhood at this time. Her attitudes towards the other key characters get more important here, as does her actions.

So how does this shape my view of the novel through this perspective? We can look at this story as a mold for how life might go. If we do that, then all the information excavated on Eliza's mother paints the picture of a parent whose only strands of happiness were cut off by the dominos of the tragic happenings of Eliza. This interpretation of the story is an emotional one packed with all the worst nightmares of any parents, and the very definition of love gone wrong. That, of course, is all based on my personal interpretation of this Eliza's abstract character.