



Wuthering Heights

Emily Bronte



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Emily Brontë



Notes About the Author:

Emily Brontë (1818-1848) was born to a father who was a priest in the Church of England; and they lived in a wild part of Yorkshire. Her sister Charlotte wrote the famous novel *Jane Eyre*. Emily loved the country around their home, and *Wuthering Heights*, her only novel, gives a good description of the place and the people. She also wrote poems. She died in 1848.

Introduction

(By Mr. Lockwood)

I have just moved into Thrushcross Grange, a house that I have rented in a remote part of the Yorkshire moors. I want to be on my own, and I think I have found the right place. The only house near mine belongs to my landlord, Mr. Heathcliff. Today I went to visit him, and what a cold welcome I received!

His house is called Wuthering Heights. 'Wuthering' is a local word, used to describe the wildness of the weather before a storm. It is certainly in a wild, windy place. And Heathcliff, too, has a wild appearance; he looks more like a gypsy than a farmer, though his manners and clothes are those of a gentleman. He is tall and good-looking, but he rarely smiles.

"We are not used to visitors," he said.

We sat by the fire and talked. A strange man, but intelligent, was my opinion of Heathcliff. When I thought it was time to go, it had started to snow and a four-mile walk in that weather did not inspire me.

"I don't think I can find my way home alone," I said.

Silence.

"Is there anyone who can show me the way?" I asked.

"This is a lesson to you, to make no more foolish journeys on these hills," said Heathcliff. "I suppose you'd better stay the night."

MY NOTES



What is your first impression about Heathcliff?

One day, shortly after Mrs. Earnshaw's death, the master bought a pair of horses for the boys. Heathcliff took the finer one, but it soon got something wrong with its foot.

"Give me your horse," he said to Hindley, "or I will tell your father about the three beatings you gave me last week."

Hindley knew his father would be angry with him, so he let Heathcliff have his horse.

Similar events happened all the time. Heathcliff was proud and Hindley hated him more and more.

When Hindley was old enough, Mr. Earnshaw sent him away to college. I was happy because I thought life would be more peaceful.

Cathy was a wild young girl with a mind of her own, and she was very pretty. She spent all her time with Heathcliff; they did their lessons together with their tutor and then ran off and played on the moors.

Three years later, Mr. Earnshaw died. Hindley returned for the funeral, and we were all very surprised when he arrived with a wife! We did not know who she was or where she came from.

Now, Hindley was master of the house. He immediately stopped Heathcliff's education and sent him to work with the servants.

But Cathy taught him all the things she learned and they still went to play together on the moors. She and Heathcliff were both growing up quite rude and wild, but Hindley did not seem to care as long as they kept away from him.

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Describe Hindley in one sentence.

and gave her clean clothes. Then, he went home to tell me what had happened.

“Mr. Earnshaw will be furious,” I said, and indeed he was.

“If you speak to Miss Catherine again, I will send you away,” he said.

Catherine Grows up

Cathy stayed at Thrushcross Grange for five weeks until her ankle was completely cured. In that time, she learned to have good manners, to enjoy fine clothes and to take care of her appearance. Meanwhile, Heathcliff was more **neglected** than before. He was always unwashed and in a bad mood.

When she returned to Wuthering Heights, Catherine was an attractive young lady. Heathcliff was called in to welcome her, together with the other servants.

“Oh, goodness!” laughed Cathy, when she saw him. “How dirty and **grumpy** you look!”

“Shake hands, Heathcliff,” ordered Hindley.

“I shall not. I can't stand to be laughed at.” And he marched out of the room.

Later, Catherine tried to make peace with him and they were obviously very **fond** of each other, but their worlds were growing apart. At fifteen, she was the queen of our part of the country.

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Has Cathy changed? How?



Heathcliff left. Catherine asked me to go with her upstairs.

"I'm nearly mad, Nelly," she said. "Tell Isabella to stay away from me. She is the cause of all this. And tell Edgar that I may be seriously ill. I hope so. I want to frighten him. If I can't keep Heathcliff as my friend, then I'll try to break both their hearts by breaking my own."

She then **locked** herself in her bedroom where she remained for three days and nights, refusing all offers of food.

At last, she appeared, asking for food and water as she believed she was dying.

"Where is that **dull**?" she asked.

"If you **mean** Mr. Linton," I replied, "he's in the library, reading."

"I am near death and he is reading!" she exclaimed. She went and opened the window. A cold wind blew in and she stood there, in her nightdress.

"I wish I were a girl again," she cried. "Feel that wind, Nelly. It comes straight from the moor."

"Please," I cried. "Come to bed!" But she did not move and refused to shut the window.

When Edgar Linton saw her, he immediately called the doctor. After examining her, he said,

"If she is kept absolutely quiet, then she may return to health."

But something happened which made that impossible. Isabella disappeared.

MY NOTES



"She's run away with Mr. Heathcliff," one of the servants told us. "They were seen leaving the village together."

"Must we go and look for her, Sir?" I asked.

"She went of her own free will," he answered. "Do not speak of her again. From now on, I have no sister."

The runaway couple remained absent for two months. Catherine was shattered. She developed **brain fever** and was very seriously ill; her mind wandered. Edgar watched over her day and night.

"You must take care of yourself, Mr. Linton," the doctor told him. "You are risking your own life for your wife, but she will never be the same person again."

At last, the doctor told us that the danger had passed. Her husband's joy was double because Catherine was also expecting a baby. So two lives were saved.

It was spring when a letter arrived from Isabella. It was addressed to me.

Dear Ellen,

I came last night to Wuthering Heights and heard that Catherine has been very ill. I know I must not write to her because it will upset her and my brother has never answered any of my letters. Please tell him that my heart returned to the Grange twenty-four hours after I left, but I cannot follow it. Please, Ellen, explain to me what I have married. Is Heathcliff mad or is he a devil?

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Do you think Isabella will come back? Why?

Later, I noticed a curl of fair hair on the floor near the bed. Heathcliff had removed it from the **locket** Catherine kept on a chain round her neck – it was Edgar's hair and he had replaced it with a curl of his own black hair. I took the fair curl and replaced it, twisting the two together.

The Ending

“What happened to Isabella?” asked Mr. Lockwood.

“Oh, well,” replied the old housekeeper. “She managed to run away from Heathcliff. She went to live in London, I think. No one ever saw her again. But she had a son by Heathcliff and when she died, Heathcliff got his son back. His name was Linton. Of course when his uncle Edgar died, Linton inherited Thrushcross Grange and, since he was a very weak boy, he died at the age of seventeen, and that is how Heathcliff, his father, came into possession of his enemy's house – the house of the family he had hated and envied since he was a child.”

After hearing Mrs. Dean's story, Mr. Lockwood decided not to remain at Thrushcross Grange. He returned to London. But six months later, passing through Yorkshire, he stopped to see what events had taken place during his absence.

He found Mrs. Dean living at Wuthering Heights. Cathy, now eighteen, was engaged to Hareton Earnshaw.

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Why did Mr. Lockwood leave the Grange?

Post-reading Activities

1. Choose the most appropriate adjectives from the list to describe the following.

unhappy, solitary, fearful, cold, strange, wild, tall, rude, lonely, serious, windy, remote, good-looking, rough, uninhabited

a. Heathcliff:

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b. Hareton Earnshaw:

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c. Wuthering Heights:

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d. Mr. Lockwood:

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e. The Yorkshire moors:

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f. The household at Wuthering Heights:

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Glossary

- **a mind of her own:** determined, knowing what she wanted to do
- **bit:** hurt with teeth (to bite; bit; bitten)
- **blushed:** turned red
- **brain fever:** inflammation of the brain
- **buried:** put in a grave in the ground
- **chimneys:** long, narrow funnels on roofs to let smoke out
- **convalesce:** get better
- **coward:** not a courageous person
- **degrade:** lower, put myself in a lower class or position
- **delirious:** saying things without sense
- **dull:** boring, uninteresting
- **embraced:** hugged, put their arms around
- **evil:** wicked, very bad
- **fond (to be fond of):** to love, to feel affectionate
- **grumpy:** in a bad mood, cross
- **haunt:** torment, as a ghost
- **heir:** person who inherits when someone dies
- **household:** all the people living in the house
- **implored:** asked desperately, begged, prayed
- **landlord:** owner of the house
- **lightning:** flashes of light in the sky
- **locked:** closed with the key
- **locket:** very small metal case used for keeping a memento
- **mean:** refer to
- **mockingly:** in a tone that made fun of her, teasing
- **moors:** wide areas of open, infertile, wet land
- **neglected:** forgotten, not looked after
- **panting:** making a noise because they have no breath left
- **peep:** look quickly without being seen, spy on
- **pity:** sympathy, feeling sorry for someone
- **recover:** get better, return to her normal self
- **rented:** paid to live in, without buying
- **retorted:** answered in contradiction



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