

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte Plot Summary

when Lockwood has rented Thrushcross Grange. Lockwood goes back to London. As a matter of surprise to everyone, Cathy and Hareton have fallen in love. Heathcliff sees a strong similarity in both Hareton and Cathy with his love story and hence no longer he feels the need for revenge. Heathcliff dies and is buried beside Catherine on opposite side of Edgar. At last Cathy and Hareton are free of interfering adults and thus plan to marry and move to Thrushcross Grange.

THEMES IN *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* BY EMILY BRONTE

LOVE:

One of the themes explored in the novel is love. Loves in the novel comes in different forms. There is undying love as displayed by Heathcliff to Catherine. Both develop love feelings for each other when they were young. This feeling progress even into adulthood and even in death. In fact, they are finally united in death as both are buried side by side. In reality, the portrayal of this kind of love borders on the unrealistic. Although they never got married or consummate the love at any point when they were alive, it is clear that they shared an unbreakable bond that is not put apart by death. Although Cathy ends up marrying Edgar, her heart is always with Heathcliff. The marriage between Cathy and Edgar highlights another kind of love-that based on selfishness. On the other hand, the love between Heathcliff and Isabella is love based on infatuation. Infatuation on the part of Isabella. Similarly, Catherine Linton becomes infatuated with her cousin to whom she is later married. Later, she develops yet another kind of love for Hareton-true love, this forms of love also play out daily in every human society.

Deceit and betrayal:

This theme runs throughout the novel. As it were, Heathcliff is the king of deceit and betrayal. He appears as helpless and harmless and plays his way into the heart of kind Earnshaw who takes off the street and brings him home, defending him against injustices of any kind whether perceived or real. All this eventually counts for nothing as Heathcliff uses trickery and blackmail to take all that belongs to his benefactor after his death. First, he blackmails Hindley and drives him to untimely death, next, he concocts to drive a wedge between Cathy and her husband. Then he deceives Catherine to marry his son in order to harvest their inheritance. When his deceptions are found out by Edgar who is on his deathbed, he prevents any action from being taken by bribing the lawyer so that he does not heed the summons to come and have the will changed.

Revenge and retribution:

Revenge is also one of the major themes in the book. A maze of vengeful and retributive action are interwoven in the novel. Directly or indirectly, Heathcliff is at the end of it all. His natural inclinations as a misanthropist i.e. a hater of mankind fuels revenge and results in retributions. Hindley's unkind actions towards the adopted orphan triggers the chain of revenge. When he grows up and have some measures of

influence, he returns to exact his revenge on Hindley and extends it to Hindley's son, Hareton. He also takes out his revenge on Cathy because he feels cheated when she marries Edgar who is from a higher class, instead of a nameless street urchin like him. He nurses this grudge for about three years before systematically executing his revenge plans which later involves his marrying Edgar's sister, Isabella and mortifying her in the matrimony. The result for both Catherine and Isabella is untimely death. But he does not stop at that. He continues to fight Edgar subtly and openly after causing the deaths of his wife and sister. This too hastens Edgar's death. When he begins to pride himself and reap from his dark achievements in defeating his enemies and appropriating their wealth, he comes down with a strange illness that sends him to an early grave. Already Cathy has placed a curse on him for destroying her life and he suffers torments and sleepless nights for eighteen years. Thus his revenge results in retributions. In the same vein, those who revel in and received illicit gains by causing others pain never go unpunished.

Benevolence:

This theme is highlighted by the actions of old Earnshaw who opened his heart and home to the orphan boy called Heathcliff even when foster care or an orphanage is an option. Till he dies, he gives everything he owns his biological child and even more to the adopted child leaving a model of philanthropy worthy of emulation. Also Catherine Heathcliff and her nanny mentor, Mrs. Dean also demonstrated this attribute going out of their ways to bring peace, joy and relief to the lives of those around them. Catherine sends books to her cousin to enrich his reading experience and assist him to cope with his content health issues. She teaches Hareton to read and write. She readily foregoes her inheritance to prolong the lives of her father and her cousin husband, even though her sacrifice comes at the cost of adjusting to the life of a mere servant who is deprived of freedom and necessities required by a woman. The actions of Mrs. Dean reflect a dedication to benevolence too. She nurses Mr. Lockwood to health and returns happily to Wuthering Heights to continue to provide care and guidance for both Hareton and Catherine, children she played with and played the nanny to when their mother died at their birth.

Religious hypocrisy:

This theme has contemporary relevance. Joseph, the house help gives the impression of someone pious but possess no trace of piety beyond his penchant to use the scriptures to browbeat and call evil on anyone who crosses his path. Every single action of his belies the practice of Christianity which is based on love and forgiveness. He is unforgiving, overbearing and sanctimoniously hypocritical. Reverend Braderham's sermon too is cold, distant and loveless. It is meant to fulfill all righteousness, leaving more of the congregation more weary than uplifted. Such is the case with many church leaders who fleece the flocks and tear them down with financial burdens and woes of lurking evils that needs

to be exorcised. The members lived in fears of their own shadows including close members of their families.

Loyalty and disloyalty:

The subtheme of loyalty is demonstrated in the life of Hereton in particular. Though maltreated by his foster father, he remains loyal to him, having an uncomplaining attitude regardless of the duties and responsibilities he is given, often out in the cold and demanding physical exertion of the most strenuous type. His being denied of the inheritance and privilege of being educated never stirs up in him a feeling of revenge, another of the theme developed in the text. The issue of disloyalty is seen in the conduct of Nelly Dean with regards to the instructions given to her by her employer, Mr. Edgar Linton, from time to time, we see her go contrary to her master's instructions and serve the interest of his enemy. Mr. Heathcliff, even when not forced to do so. Sometimes, she keeps vital information from her master and abets Heathcliff in his machinations.

Good versus evil:

The age old issue of the struggle between good and evil is also explored in the novel. While some of characters in the story are inclined to do good, others take delight in doing evil. Mr. Earnshaw is simple being good when he decides to bring the orphaned boy, Heathcliff home to care for him. Unfortunately, this gesture provokes ill will in Hindley, who displaced in his father love. Heathcliff assumes the embodiment of evil as he grows the negative emotions of jealousy, envy and vindictiveness. He is unable to overcome his evil instinct until he is about to die, having destroyed many things, interestingly, a character like Hareton is able to overcome tendencies for evil and pays evil with good.

LANGUAGE AND STYLE IN *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* BY EMILY BRONTE

USE OF SYMBOLISM:

The novel makes use of symbolism in many ways. There is symbolism in the setting of the story, in the climatic conditions depicted, in the characters represented and in sundry objects seen in the novel. The story setting is the countryside where moors dominated the landscape. The moors where Catherine and Heathcliff love to play, as an uncultivated upland, represented the barrenness of the relationship. It also symbolizes the wildness of their characters. *Wuthering Heights* represent the dark side of man, as well as the wild and less cultured class of the society, while *Thrush Cross Grange* represent utopia as well as gentry. The wild weather frequently seen at the heights represent the wildness of its inhabitants. The key Catherine threw into the fire while Heathcliff and Edgar fight represent her dismissal of them both from her heart. Characters such as Edgar and Heathcliff are also symbolic, the former represents social

refinement and elitist manners while the latter represent the working class or commoners values.

USE OF CONTRAST:

Beginning with the two houses and families, contrast saturates the novel. In terms of characterization, there is contrast between Heathcliff and Edgar, between Catherine and Isabella and between Linton and Hareton. Thematically, we see contrast of good and evil, passion and rationality, chaos and order, nature and culture, health and sickness, division and reconciliation, and revenge and forgiveness.

NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE:

The novel makes use of multiple narrators. The main narrators are Mr. Lockwood and Mrs. Nelly Dean, the former being the primary narrators while the latter is the secondary narrator. Mr. Lockwood begins the story and ends the narrative but Mrs. Nelly narrates the better part of the story. These narrators are also uses first person narrative technique as they are involve in the events in the story. A close attention to their narration however reveals element of subjectivity especially on the part of secondary narrator through whose perspective we see most of events in the story. The plot does not follow a chronological or linear order as the story start in the middle and using flashback brings in the past and then reconnects with the present where the story ends.

USE OF IRONY:

Both in verbal and dramatic forms, irony is used in the story. A number of instances would serve to illustrate. There ids dramatic irony when Heathcliff eavesdrops on the conversation between Catherine and nelly about Edgar's proposal and Catherine decision not to marry Heathcliff because he had been downgraded. Despite Catherine decision, she admits that she loves Heathcliff very much and that he is her soulmate. Instead of waiting to hear Catherine through .he leaves as soon as she declared that she cannot marry him due to his being degraded. He does not wait to hear her true confession of love for him. If he had perhaps he would have waited to persuade her against her the decision. While he leaves ignorant of her love for him. The reader is aware of this fact. When Isabella considers Heathcliff as 'a rough diamond- a pearl containing oyster of a rustic', the readers and the Catherine and nelly knew the opposite was the case. It is also ironical that Heathcliff's obsession with taking over the heights and the grange and making them his fails and both eventually return to the rightful inheritors. Hareton, Hindley's son and Catherine, Edgar's daughter eventually becomes the owners of the two houses.