

***Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte**

Wuthering Heights is a Gothic novel written by Emily Bronte, first published in 1847. The novel is set on the remote Yorkshire moors, and it tells the tragic story of passionate love, revenge, and the destructive consequences of unchecked emotions. Through its intense exploration of human nature, the novel delves into themes of love, social class, vengeance, and the supernatural. The novel's structure, framed by the narration of Mr. Lockwood and the housekeeper Nelly Dean, allows for multiple perspectives on the events that unfold at *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange*. At its heart, *Wuthering Heights* is a tale of obsession and unrequited love, where the relationships between characters lead to a cycle of suffering that extends across generations. The wild, untamed setting of the moors mirrors the tempestuous nature of the characters, whose lives are shaped by their intense emotions and their inability to escape the past.

The Gothic Novel

The Gothic novel is a genre of literature that emerged in the late 18th century, characterized by its exploration of dark, mysterious, and supernatural themes. Often set in gloomy, foreboding locations such as castles, mansions, or isolated landscapes, Gothic novels are known for their atmospheric tension and their focus on human emotions such as fear, desire, and obsession. The genre combines elements of horror, romance, and the supernatural, creating a unique blend that seeks to evoke both terror and fascination in its readers.

Key Elements of the Gothic Novel

1. Atmosphere and setting
2. Supernatural elements
3. Extreme emotions
4. Conflict between good and evil
5. Damsels in Distress
6. Romanticism and the Sublime
7. Madness and Psychological Complexity

Main Characters in *Wuthering Heights*

1. Heathcliff: Heathcliff is the central character of the novel and one of the most complex figures in English literature. Introduced as an orphan adopted by the Earnshaw family, Heathcliff grows up with Catherine Earnshaw and develops a deep, all-consuming love for her. However, after being mistreated by Hindley Earnshaw and rejected by society, Heathcliff becomes vengeful and bitter. His character embodies themes of revenge, obsession, and the destructive nature of unfulfilled love. Heathcliff's relentless pursuit of vengeance against those who have wronged him, particularly Hindley and Edgar Linton, drives much of the novel's conflict. He is capable of intense love for Catherine and his inability to move past his suffering ultimately leads to his downfall.

2. Catherine Earnshaw: Catherine Earnshaw is the wild and free-spirited daughter of Mr. Earnshaw, and Heathcliff's soulmate. Her character is torn between her love for Heathcliff and her desire for social status, which leads her to marry Edgar Linton. Catherine's internal conflict and her inability to reconcile

her love for Heathcliff with her societal aspirations result in tragedy. Her declaration, "I am Heathcliff!," reveals the depth of their emotional bond, yet her decision to marry Edgar sets off a chain of events that cause suffering for everyone around her. Catherine's complex emotions and impulsive decisions reflect her struggle between passion and societal expectations.

3. Edgar Linton: Edgar Linton is the refined, gentle, and wealthy owner of Thrushcross Grange. He represents the opposite of Heathcliff in every way: where Heathcliff is wild and passionate, Edgar is calm, composed, and well-mannered. Edgar loves Catherine earnestly, but his more civilized nature is no match for the raw intensity of Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship. Although Edgar provides Catherine with social stability and comfort, she remains emotionally bound to Heathcliff. Edgar's life is one of quiet suffering, as he helplessly watches his wife remain consumed by her love for Heathcliff.

4. Isabella Linton: Isabella is Edgar's younger sister, who becomes infatuated with Heathcliff and eventually elopes with him, hoping for romance and excitement. However, she soon discovers Heathcliff's true nature and becomes a victim of his cruelty. Her marriage to Heathcliff is marked by abuse and manipulation, and she eventually escapes, bearing Heathcliff's son, Linton Heathcliff. Isabella's character represents the danger of naive infatuation and the consequences of marrying for the wrong reasons.

5. Hindley Earnshaw: Hindley is Catherine's brother, who becomes the master of Wuthering Heights after the death of their father. He despises Heathcliff, treating him cruelly after Mr. Earnshaw's death. Hindley's cruelty towards Heathcliff stems from jealousy, as he sees Heathcliff as a rival for his father's affection. After the death of his wife Frances, Hindley falls into a downward spiral of alcoholism and self-destruction, losing control of Wuthering Heights to Heathcliff, who exacts his revenge by ruining Hindley's son, Hareton.

6. Hareton Earnshaw: Hareton is Hindley's son and after his father's death, Heathcliff raised him in a manner that reflects the abuse Heathcliff himself endured as a child. Heathcliff deliberately keeps Hareton uneducated and in servitude, using him as a tool of revenge against Hindley. Despite his rough upbringing, Hareton has a strong character and ultimately forms a bond with the younger Catherine Linton. Their relationship offers a glimmer of hope and redemption in the novel, as they begin to break the cycle of vengeance that has defined their families.

7. Catherine Linton (Young Catherine): Catherine Linton, the daughter of Edgar and Catherine Earnshaw, is the second generation of the story's central characters. She inherits her mother's strong will and spirit, but is raised in a more refined and sheltered environment. Initially naive, she becomes entangled in Heathcliff's revenge scheme when she marries Linton Heathcliff. Unlike her mother, however, young Catherine is able to break free from the toxic cycle of revenge, as she and Hareton begin to build a healthier relationship by the end of the novel.

8. Linton Heathcliff: Linton is the sickly and spoiled son of Heathcliff and Isabella. He is manipulated by his father into marrying young Catherine as part of Heathcliff's plan to gain control over Thrushcross Grange. Weak and selfish, Linton serves as a tool in Heathcliff's schemes, but he ultimately dies young, leaving Cathy widowed.

9. Nelly Dean: Nelly is the primary narrator of the novel, serving as both the housekeeper at Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange and as a witness to the events that unfold. She provides a more grounded, rational perspective on the characters' passions and actions, though her own biases sometimes influence the story she tells. Nelly's loyalty, care, and insight make her a key figure in the novel, as she acts as a guide through the complex relationships of the Earnshaw and Linton families.

10. Mr. Lockwood: Mr. Lockwood is an outsider who becomes a tenant at Thrushcross Grange and serves as the frame narrator for the novel. His initial curiosity about Wuthering Heights leads him to learn the tragic history of the two families from Nelly Dean. His detached perspective provides a lens through which readers observe the intense emotions and conflicts of the characters.

Heathcliff as a Byronic Hero

Heathcliff is the main character of *Wuthering Heights*. He has a complex personality, which can be interpreted differently. Often Emily Brontë's character is referred to as a Byronic Hero. Heathcliff is a villain associated with the devil. Nevertheless, he is charming and charismatic. He is full of passion, and that attracts the reader. The idea of Byronic Hero emerged from Lord Byron's poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. Byron's character is a romantic hero who lives in an imperfect world and suffers because of it. He does bad things in the name of the greater good. With time Byronic Hero became an archetype for many literary characters. Usually, it is someone mysterious and intelligent. The character should be charismatic but cynical and selfish at the same time.

Byronic Hero is an antihero in the first place. However, his charms make him attractive to the reader. Heathcliff is the protagonist of *Wuthering Heights*. He is a complex and intriguing character that brought worldwide recognition to Brontë's novel. Through the course of the book, it becomes evident that Heathcliff is a classic Byronic Hero. At first glance, he is a prideful man who brings misfortune to those around him. Heathcliff's wife Isabella wonders if he is human at all. The man is a prisoner of the past. He holds grudges and is driven by vengeance. Heathcliff's past remains a mystery to the reader.

Heathcliff is arrogant and makes others suffer. Hareton Earnshaw is the one to suffer the most. Thanks to Heathcliff, the boy grows up in a gloomy and cruel environment. Even though he comes from a noble family, he grows up rude and does not receive a proper education. Hareton still sees Heathcliff as his father and loves him dearly. Until the end of the novel, the persona of Heathcliff is somewhat mysterious. He is an outcast, withdrawn from reality and fixed on himself. He dwells on the past and his tragic love. His love for Catherine is obsessive. Heathcliff is a Byronic Hero whose life is ruled by emotions. His passionate nature attracts the reader, but at the same time, destroys his own life.

Originally Heathcliff is more of a positive character. The young Heathcliff is different from the grown-up man he becomes. The circumstances of his birth and how the people around treated him make the boy pessimistic and gloomy. However, there are also moments when the man opens his heart and shows his vulnerable side. Heathcliff has the capacity to love with all his heart. He hides those human feelings deep inside. Were his circumstances different, Heathcliff might have been a better man. The Byronic Hero is someone who refuses to accept the cruel reality. That reality, however, shapes him and turns him into an antihero. Brontë uses a unique psychological formula to create the character of Heathcliff. Later on, this same formula is used in many famous literary works.

Synopsis of *Wuthering Heights*

The gothic novel, *Wuthering Heights*, is related as a series of narratives which are themselves told to the narrator, a gentleman named Lockwood. Lockwood rents a fine house and park called Thrushcross Grange in Yorkshire, and gradually learns more and more about the histories of two local families. This is what he learns from a housekeeper, Ellen Dean, who had been with one of the two families for all of her life. In around 1760, a gentleman-farmer named Earnshaw went from his farm, Wuthering Heights, to Liverpool on a business trip. He found there a little boy who looked like a gypsy who had apparently been abandoned on the streets, and brought the child home with him, to join his own family of his wife, his son

Hindley, his daughter Catherine, a manservant named Joseph, and Ellen, who was very young at the time and working as a maid. Earnshaw named the boy Heathcliff after a son of his who had died. All the other members of the household were opposed to the introduction of a strange boy, except for Catherine, who was a little younger than Heathcliff and became fast friends with him. Hindley in particular felt as though Heathcliff had supplanted him, although he was several years older and the true son and heir. Hindley bullied Heathcliff when he could, and Heathcliff used his influence over Earnshaw to get his way. Heathcliff was a strange, silent boy, who appeared not to mind the blows he received from Hindley, although he was in fact very vindictive. Earnshaw's wife died. Hindley was sent away to college in a last attempt to turn him into a worthy son, and to ease pressures at home.

After some years, Earnshaw's health declined and he grew increasingly alienated from his family: in his peevish old age he worried that everyone disliked Heathcliff simply because Earnshaw liked him. He did not like his daughter Catherine's charming and mischievous ways. Finally he died, and Catherine and Heathcliff were very grieved, but consoled each other with thoughts of heaven. Hindley returned, now around twenty years old. Heathcliff was about twelve and Catherine was eleven. Hindley was married to a young woman named Frances, to the surprise of everyone at Wuthering Heights. Hindley used his new power as the head of the household to reduce Heathcliff to the level of a servant, although Heathcliff and Catherine continued their intimacy. Catherine taught Heathcliff her lessons and would join him in the fields, or they would run away to the moors all day to play, never minding their punishments afterward. One day they ran down to the Grange, a more civilized house where the Lintons lived with their children Edgar, thirteen, and Isabella, eleven. Catherine and Heathcliff despised the spoiled, delicate Linton children, and made faces and yelled at them through the window. The Lintons called for help and the wilder children fled, but Catherine was caught by a bulldog and they were brought inside. When the Lintons found out that the girl was Miss Earnshaw, they took good care of her and threw Heathcliff out.

Catherine stayed at the Grange for five weeks, and came home dressed and acting like a proper young lady, to the delight of Hindley and his wife, and to Heathcliff's sorrow—he felt as though she had moved beyond him. Over the next few years, Catherine struggled to both maintain her relationship with Heathcliff, and socialize with the elegant Linton children. Frances gave birth to a son, Hareton, and died soon after of tuberculosis. Hindley gave in to wild despair and alcoholism, and the household fell into chaos. Heathcliff was harshly treated, and came to hate Hindley more and more. Edgar Linton fell in love with Catherine, who was attracted by his wealth and genteel manners, although she loved Heathcliff much more seriously. Edgar and Catherine became engaged, and Heathcliff ran away. Catherine fell ill after looking for Heathcliff all night in a storm, and went to the Grange to get better. The Linton parents caught her fever and died of it. Edgar and Catherine were married when she was 18 or 19. They lived fairly harmoniously together for almost a year—then Heathcliff returned. He had mysteriously acquired gentlemanly manners, education, and some money. Catherine was overjoyed to see him, Edgar considerably less so.

Heathcliff stayed at Wuthering Heights, where he gradually gained financial control by paying Hindley's gambling debts. Heathcliff's relationship with the Linton household became more and more strained as Edgar grew extremely unhappy with Heathcliff's relationship with Catherine. Finally there was a violent quarrel: Heathcliff left the Grange to avoid being thrown out by Edgar's servants, Catherine was angry at both of the men, and Edgar was furious at Heathcliff and displeased by his wife's behavior. Catherine shut herself in her room for several days. In the meantime, Heathcliff eloped with Isabella (who was struck by his romantic appearance) by way of revenge on Edgar. Edgar could not forgive Isabella's betrayal of him, and did not try to stop the marriage. Catherine became extremely ill, feverish and delirious, and nearly died though she was carefully tended by Edgar once he discovered her condition. A few months later, Catherine was still very delicate and looked as though she would probably die. She was pregnant. Heathcliff and Isabella returned to Wuthering Heights, and Isabella wrote to Ellen describing how brutally she was mistreated by her savage husband, and how much she regretted her marriage. Ellen went to visit them to see if she could improve Isabella's situation. She told them about Catherine's condition, and Heathcliff asked to see her.

A few days later, Heathcliff came to the Grange while Edgar was at church. He had a passionate reunion with Catherine, in which they forgave each other as much as possible for their mutual betrayals. Catherine fainted, Edgar returned, and Heathcliff left. Catherine died that night after giving birth to a daughter. Edgar was terribly grieved and Heathcliff wildly so—he begged Catherine's ghost to haunt him. A few days later, Hindley tried to murder Heathcliff, but Heathcliff almost murdered him instead. Isabella escaped from Wuthering Heights and went to live close to London, where she gave birth to a son, Linton. Hindley died a few months after his sister Catherine.

Catherine and Edgar's daughter, Cathy, grew to be a beloved and charming child. She was brought up entirely within the confines of the Grange, and was entirely unaware of the existence of Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff, or her cousin Hareton there. Once she found the farmhouse while exploring the moors, and was upset to think that such an ignorant rustic as Hareton could be related to her. Ellen ordered her not to return there and explained about Heathcliff's feud with Cathy's father, Edgar. Isabella died when Linton was about twelve years old, and Edgar went to fetch him to the Grange. Linton was a peevish and effeminate boy, but Cathy was pleased to have a playmate. That very day, however, Heathcliff sent Joseph to fetch his son to Wuthering Heights, and when Cathy woke up the next morning her cousin was gone. Though sad at first, she soon got over it, and continued her happy childhood. On her sixteenth birthday, Cathy and Ellen strayed onto Heathcliff's lands, and he invited them into Wuthering Heights to see Linton. Cathy was pleased to renew her acquaintance, and Heathcliff was eager to promote a romance between the two cousins, so as to ensure himself of Edgar's land when he died. When they returned home, Edgar forbade Cathy to continue visiting there, and said that Heathcliff was an evil man. Cathy then began a secret correspondence with Linton, which became an exchange of love letters. Ellen found out and put an end to it.

Edgar became ill. Heathcliff asked Cathy to return to Wuthering Heights because Linton was breaking his heart for her. She did so, and found Linton to be a bullying invalid, but not without charm. Ellen fell ill as well and was unable to prevent Cathy from visiting Wuthering Heights every day. Cathy felt obliged to help Linton, and despised Hareton for being clumsy and illiterate. Ellen told Edgar about the visits when she found out, and he forbade Cathy to go any more. Edgar was in poor health and didn't know about Linton's equally bad health and bad character, so he thought it would be good for Cathy to marry him—since Linton and not Cathy would most likely inherit the Grange. A system was fixed up in which Linton and Cathy met outside. Linton was increasingly ill, and seemed to be terrified of something—as it turned out, his father was forcing him to court Cathy. Heathcliff feared Linton would die before Edgar did, so eventually he all but kidnapped Cathy and Ellen, and told them Cathy couldn't go home to see her dying father until she married Linton. Cathy did marry Linton, and escaped in time to see Edgar before he died.

After Edgar's funeral (he was buried next to his wife) Heathcliff fetched Cathy to Wuthering Heights to take care of Linton, who was dying, and to free up the Grange so he could rent it out (to Lockwood, in fact). Heathcliff told Ellen that he was still obsessed by his beloved Catherine, and had gone to gaze at her long-dead body when her coffin was uncovered by the digging of Edgar's grave. Cathy had to care for Linton alone, and when he died, she maintained an unfriendly attitude to the household: Heathcliff, Hareton (who was in love with her), Joseph, and Zillah, the housekeeper. As time passed, however, she became lonely enough to seek Hareton's company, and began teaching him to read. This is around the time of Lockwood's time at the Grange. He leaves the area for several months, and when he returns, he learns that while he was gone. Heathcliff began to act more and more strangely, and became incapable of concentrating on the world around him, as though Catherine's ghost wouldn't let him. He all but stopped eating and sleeping, and Ellen found him dead one morning, with a savage smile on his face. He was buried next to Catherine, as he had wished. Hareton grieved for him, but was too happy with the younger Cathy to be inconsolable. When the novel ends, Hareton and Cathy plan to marry and move to the Grange.

Chapter 1:

Mr. Lockwood, the new tenant at Thrushcross Grange, decides to visit his landlord, Heathcliff, who lives at Wuthering Heights. Lockwood describes Wuthering Heights as desolate, isolated place with a gloomy atmosphere. He meets the grim servant Joseph and the housekeeper Zillah. Heathcliff himself is a mysterious, brooding figure. Lockwood is curious about his landlord's antisocial behavior. This chapter introduces the Gothic setting of the novel. The bleakness of Wuthering Heights reflects the cold, harsh personalities of its inhabitants. Heathcliff's initial portrayal as a rough, unwelcoming man sets the stage for the reader to explore his complex character later in the novel. Lockwood's role as an outsider and unreliable narrator adds a layer of ambiguity to the story.

“A perfect misanthropist's Heaven: and Mr. Heathcliff and I are such a suitable pair to divide the desolation between us!”- This statement by Lockwood highlights his initial impression of Heathcliff as a misanthropic figure, content with his isolation. It foreshadows the darker and destructive themes that will unfold throughout the novel. In this quotation, Lockwood, the narrator reflects on his first impression of Heathcliff and their shared sense of misanthropy and isolation. By calling the setting "a perfect misanthropist's Heaven," Lockwood highlights the bleak, desolate environment of Wuthering Heights, which seems suited for someone who prefers solitude and rejects society. The phrase also suggests that Lockwood initially sees himself as similar to Heathcliff, believing they both find comfort in such isolation.

Chapter 2:

Lockwood returns to Wuthering Heights the next day and encounters more of its residents: a young woman who is later revealed to be Catherine Linton, and a surly young man, Hareton Earnshaw. Lockwood mistakenly believes that Catherine is Heathcliff's wife and that Hareton is a servant. The interactions between the inhabitants are tense and hostile. This chapter emphasizes the tension and dysfunction within Wuthering Heights. The relationships between the characters are strained and marked by bitterness, hinting at a troubled past. Lockwood's confusion about their identities reflects the tangled nature of the family connections in the novel.

“Guests are so exceedingly rare in this house that I and my dogs, I am willing to own, hardly know how to receive them.” - Heathcliff's remark about the rarity of visitors suggests his preference for isolation, as well as the inhospitable environment of Wuthering Heights. This reinforces the sense of estrangement between the residents and the outside world. In this quotation, Heathcliff's remark emphasizes both his personal preference for isolation and the overall inhospitable atmosphere of Wuthering Heights. By stating that guests are "exceedingly rare" and that even his dogs do not know how to welcome visitors, Heathcliff conveys a sense of estrangement from the outside world. His home is not a place of warmth or hospitality but one of seclusion and hostility.

Chapter 3:

Lockwood spends the night at Wuthering Heights and experiences a disturbing series of dreams. In one, he encounters the ghost of Catherine Earnshaw, who pleads to be let inside the house. Terrified, Lockwood wakes up screaming, which alarms Heathcliff. Heathcliff, overcome with emotion, calls out to Catherine's spirit, indicating that she holds significant importance to him. The supernatural element is introduced in this chapter, with Catherine's ghost symbolizing the unresolved tension between the living and the dead. Heathcliff's reaction to the mention of Catherine reveals his deep, lingering grief and obsession with her. This chapter also sets up the tragic love story at the heart of the novel.

“Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest as long as I am living!”- Heathcliff's plea to Catherine's spirit illustrates his inability to let go of her memory. It encapsulates his desire for eternal connection, even though suffering, and sets the tone for his later actions driven by vengeance and love.

Chapter 4:

Lockwood becomes curious about the history of the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights. Nelly Dean, the housekeeper at Thrushcross Grange, begins narrating the story of the Earnshaw family. Mr. Earnshaw, the former owner of Wuthering Heights, adopts a young orphan named Heathcliff, who becomes a favorite of Earnshaw's daughter, Catherine. However, Earnshaw's son, Hindley, despises Heathcliff and treats him poorly. Nelly's narration introduces the backstory of Heathcliff and the Earnshaw family, which is central to understanding the novel's complex relationships. Heathcliff's status as an outsider and the favoritism shown by Mr. Earnshaw creates early conflict, particularly with Hindley, whose resentment shapes much of the story's subsequent events. “We don't in general take to foreigners here, Mr. Lockwood, unless they take to us first.” - This remark from Nelly hints at the social and cultural isolation of Wuthering Heights and the surrounding community. Heathcliff, as "foreigner," is marked as an outsider, setting the stage for his future struggles for acceptance and revenge. In this quotation, Nelly's remark about how the local community at Wuthering Heights and its surroundings treat "foreigners" highlights the strong sense of social and cultural isolation in the area. The statement reflects a deep-seated insularity and suspicion of outsiders, suggesting that the people of this community are closed off and resistant to forming connections unless someone makes an effort to gain their acceptance first. Heathcliff, as a "foreigner" or outsider, is the prime example of this theme. Though not literally foreign, Heathcliff's ambiguous origins and lower social status cause him to be treated as an alien figure within the household and the broader social structure. This marks him as an outsider from the start, setting the stage for his future struggles for acceptance, love, and social standing. His sense of being excluded fuels his growing resentment and desire for revenge against those who have wronged or rejected him.

Chapter 5:

Mr. Earnshaw's health declines, and he eventually dies. After his death, Hindley inherits Wuthering Heights and immediately begins to mistreat Heathcliff, reducing him to the status of a servant. Catherine and Heathcliff continue to grow close, but their bond is tested by the increasingly harsh conditions at Wuthering Heights. Hindley's cruelty toward Heathcliff begins to be increased in this chapter, laying the foundation for Heathcliff's later desire for revenge. Despite the oppression, Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship strengthens, though it is clear that they both face significant obstacles to their happiness. **“Hindley became tyrannical... and grew bitter on feeling that his authority was usurped by his father.”**- Hindley's bitterness stems from jealousy over his father's favoritism of Heathcliff. His tyrannical behavior reflects the theme of power dynamics and social hierarchy within the novel. In this quotation, Hindley's bitterness and tyrannical behavior are a direct result of the jealousy he feels over his father's clear favoritism toward Heathcliff. This moment highlights the shifting power dynamics and the theme of social hierarchy that play a significant role throughout Wuthering Heights. Hindley, as the legitimate son and heir, feels that his rightful position of authority in the household has been undermined or "usurped" by Heathcliff, an adopted outsider of uncertain origin.

Chapter 6:

Catherine and Heathcliff sneak over to Thrushcross Grange, where they observe the refined Linton family. When Catherine is bitten by a dog, she is taken in by the Lintons to recover. During her stay, she is influenced by their genteel manners and appearance, while Heathcliff remains an outsider. This chapter introduces the Lintons and emphasizes the contrast between the rough, wild nature of Wuthering Heights and the more civilized, polished environment of Thrushcross Grange. Catherine begins to be torn between these two worlds, symbolized by her relationships with Heathcliff and Edgar Linton.

“I shall be as dirty as I please, and I like to be dirty, and I will be dirty.”- Heathcliff's defiance highlights his rejection of societal norms and his refusal to conform to the expectations of the Lintons. It also reinforces his wild, untamed nature in contrast to Edgar's refinement. This moment reinforces the contrast between Heathcliff and Edgar. Whereas Edgar represents civilization and social order, Heathcliff embodies a raw, untamed energy that defies these conventions. Heathcliff's refusal to be "cleaned up" or civilized suggests his disdain for the superficial trappings of class and culture, further highlighting his role as an outsider. Heathcliff's statement also speaks to a larger theme in *Wuthering Heights* which is the clash between nature and culture, or untamed passion versus social constraint. His defiance reflects his deeper, instinctual nature, one that refuses to be molded by societal expectations or influenced by the more refined, structured world of the Lintons. This defiance is central to Heathcliff's character and fuels much of the conflict and emotional intensity throughout the novel.

Chapter 7:

Catherine returns to Wuthering Heights after her stay at Thrushcross Grange, now transformed into a more refined young lady. Heathcliff becomes jealous of Edgar Linton's growing affection for Catherine and begins to feel self-conscious about his own appearance and manners. Catherine's transformation after staying with the Lintons reflects the broader theme of social class and how it affects relationships. Heathcliff's increasing awareness of his own social inferiority fuels his resentment and sets the stage for his eventual quest for revenge. The love triangle between Catherine, Heathcliff, and Edgar becomes more pronounced.

"I wish I had light hair and a fair skin, and was dressed and behaved as well, and had a chance of being as rich as he will be!" – Heathcliff's envy of Edgar's wealth and status highlights the novel's focus on social class and the impact of material wealth on personal relationships. In this quotation, Heathcliff's open expression of envy towards Edgar Linton highlights the deep social divide between the two characters and emphasizes the novel's exploration of class and material wealth. Heathcliff longs for Edgar's "light hair and fair skin," which are markers of social privilege, refinement, and wealth. His desire to have these physical traits, along with Edgar's "chance of being rich," reflects his awareness of how these external factors-wealth, appearance, and social status-affect one's place in society and the opportunities available. The quotation also underscores the novel's broader themes of inequality and the ways in which social status shapes identity and relationships. Heathcliff's resentment of Edgar's privilege speaks to the rigid class structure that dominates the world of Wuthering Heights, where wealth and appearance dictate one's value and opportunities.

Chapter 8:

Nelly continues her narration. Catherine is torn between her love for Heathcliff and her growing attraction to Edgar Linton. Meanwhile, Hindley's wife, Frances, gives birth to a son named Hareton but dies shortly afterward. Hindley, devastated by her death, spirals into alcoholism and increasingly abuses Heathcliff, who becomes more resentful. Catherine's internal conflict becomes more pronounced as she feels the pull between the wildness of Heathcliff and the refined life that Edgar offers. This chapter marks a turning point in the lives of the characters. Frances' death accelerates Hindley's decline, which directly affects Heathcliff's treatment and drives his desire for revenge. Catherine's growing emotional conflict reveals the key tension in the novel: the clash between passionate, natural love (represented by Heathcliff) and the appeal of social status and stability (represented by Edgar).

“It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now; so he shall never know how I love him.” - This is a pivotal moment in the novel. Catherine reveals that while she deeply loves Heathcliff, she feels unable to marry him due to his lower social standing. This internal conflict between love and societal expectations forms the core of the tragedy that follows. In this pivotal quotation, Catherine reveals the intense internal conflict that lies at the heart of Wuthering Heights. She admits that while she loves Heathcliff deeply, she feels it would "degrade" her to marry him due to his lower social standing. This moment encapsulates the tension between her personal desires and the rigid expectations of the social hierarchy that governs her world.

Catherine's struggle between her love for Heathcliff and her desire for status and security represents the novel's central tragedy. Though she recognizes Heathcliff as her soulmate, she cannot ignore the societal pressures that dictate she marry someone of higher status, like Edgar Linton, who offers her wealth and respectability. Her statement that **“Heathcliff shall never know how I love him”** demonstrates the painful choice she feels forced to scarify her true love in order to avoid the social degradation that would come with marrying someone of Heathcliff's lower class.

Chapter 9:

Catherine accepts Edgar's proposal but confesses to Nelly that her true love is Heathcliff. Heathcliff overhears part of this conversation, but not the part where Catherine says she loves him. Misunderstanding her feelings, Heathcliff leaves Wuthering Heights without a word, Catherine becomes hysterical after his departure and falls ill. Meanwhile, Edgar and Catherine marry, though her heart remains divided. This chapter sets the stage for Heathcliff's transformation and revenge plot later in the novel. Heathcliff's departure marks the beginning of a long period of separation, and Catherine's illness foreshadows the tragic end of her life. Her choice to marry Edgar, despite loving Heathcliff, highlights the novel's central theme of the tension between passionate love and societal expectations.

"I am Heathcliff" – This is one of the most iconic and powerful lines that is said by Catherine. It reflects Catherine's deep emotional connection to Heathcliff. It emphasizes that their identities and souls are intertwined, even if they are separated by circumstances and social norms. This statement reveals that Catherine does not merely love Heathcliff in a conventional sense; instead, she sees their souls and identities as inseparably intertwined. To her, they are not two distinct individuals, but rather two parts of the same whole. This sense of unity transcends physical and societal boundaries, highlighting the intensity and depth of their bond. Catherine's declaration emphasizes the idea that her very essence is tied to Heathcliff. In saying "I am Heathcliff," she expresses that her identity is so closely bound to his that she cannot imagine herself apart from him. It underscores the notion that their love is beyond mere romantic attachment; it is a reflection of shared pain, passion, and existence. However, despite this emotional and spiritual connection, Catherine's choice to marry Edgar Linton instead of Heathcliff demonstrates the novel's central conflict between personal desires and societal expectations.

Chapter 10:

Heathcliff returns to Wuthering Heights after a three-year absence, having mysteriously acquired wealth. His appearance and manners are much improved, but his intentions are darker. He immediately begins his plan of revenge, starting by gambling with Hindley, who is now deeply in debt. Heathcliff also rekindles his relationship with Catherine, which causes tension between her and Edgar. Heathcliff's return marks a shift in the power dynamics at Wuthering Heights. His transformation into a wealthy, vengeful figure sets the stage for his calculated destruction of those who wronged him. The tension between Catherine, Edgar, and Heathcliff escalates, as Heathcliff's presence disrupts the fragile stability of their marriage.

Chapter 11:

Heathcliff's revenge continues as he begins courting Isabella Linton, Edgar's sister, solely to provoke Edgar and cause Catherine distress. Despite knowing Heathcliff's intentions, Isabella falls for him. Catherine confronts Heathcliff about his treatment of Isabella, leading to a heated argument between Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar. Heathcliff's manipulation of Isabella reveals his willingness to use others as pawns in his revenge against Edgar and Catherine. His treatment of Isabella highlights the darker side of his character, as he cares little for her feelings. The argument between the three main characters intensifies the emotional conflict and foreshadows further tragedy.

“If he loved with all the powers of his puny being, he couldn't love as much in eighty years as I could in a day.”- Heathcliff's declaration to Catherine emphasizes the depth and intensity of his feelings for her. He sees his love as superior to Edgar's, both in its passion and its endurance. In this declaration, Heathcliff expresses the overwhelming intensity and depth of his love for Catherine, contrasting it sharply with what he perceives as Edgar Linton's more superficial and inadequate affection. By claiming that even if Edgar loved with all his being for "eighty years," it could never match the depth of Heathcliff's love in a single day, Heathcliff underscores the profound emotional connection he feels with Catherine. He sees his love as boundless, eternal, and all-consuming-- qualities that make it far superior to Edgar's, which he dismisses as “puny.” Heathcliff's statement emphasizes both his obsession with revenge and his inability to let go of Catherine, even after her death. The quote also highlights the theme of love as a destructive and overwhelming force in *Wuthering Heights*.

Chapter 12:

Catherine's mental and physical health deteriorates as she struggles with her feelings for both Heathcliff and Edgar. She locks herself in her room for several days, during which she experiences hallucinations and memories of her childhood at Wuthering Heights. Edgar, concerned for her health, tends to her, but her condition worsens. Catherine's illness symbolizes the destructive nature of her internal conflict. Her longing for her lost connection with Heathcliff and her inability to reconcile her feelings lead to her physical and emotional breakdown. This chapter also highlights the theme of isolation, as Catherine withdraws from the world around her.

“I wish were a girl again, half savage and hardy, and free.”- This quote reflects Catherine's desire to return to the innocence and freedom of her childhood, when she and Heathcliff were inseparable. Her longing for the past contrasts with the constraints of her present life. In this quote, Catherine expresses a deep yearning to return to the freedom and innocence of her childhood, when she and Heathcliff were inseparable and their bond was unburdened by the complexities of social expectations, marriage, and class divisions. This quote encapsulates the broader theme of lost innocence and the conflict between desire and duty in *Wuthering Heights*. Catherine's longing to be "free" once again illustrates the pain and regret she feels as a result of her decisions, especially her choice to marry Edgar for social status and security, which has distanced her from the true emotional freedom she experienced with Heathcliff. It also highlights the tragic nature of her character—caught between her heart's desires and the rigid constraints of the world she inhabits.

Chapter 13:

Isabella elopes with Heathcliff, much to Edgar's dismay. After they leave, Catherine's health continues to decline. Nelly reveals that Isabella has sent a letter describing the abuse and cruelty she suffers at the hands of Heathcliff. Isabella realizes that Heathcliff married her only to seek revenge on Edgar. This chapter underscores Heathcliff's cruelty, particularly toward Isabella, who becomes a victim in his revenge plot. Her elopement with Heathcliff is a pivotal moment in the novel, as it further fractures the relationships between the characters. The theme of vengeance is reinforced, as Heathcliff shows no remorse for using Isabella to achieve his goals.

“He’s not a human being,... And he has no claim on my charity.” - Isabella's realization of Heathcliff's inhumanity reflects his transformation into a figure of pure vengeance. Her words highlight the consequences of Heathcliff's obsessive desire for revenge, which dehumanizes him.

Chapter 14:

Nelly visits Wuthering Heights to check on Isabella and finds her miserable and living in fear of Heathcliff. Heathcliff asks Nelly about Catherine's condition, revealing that he still loves her. He asks Nelly to deliver a message to Catherine, hoping to see her before she dies. This chapter highlights the complexity of Heathcliff's character. While he is brutal and vengeful toward Isabella, his love for Catherine remains a central, driving force in his life. His desire to see her again, despite the damage he has caused, shows the depth of his unresolved feelings.

Chapter 15:

Heathcliff visits Catherine at Thrushcross Grange, despite Edgar's objections. The two have an emotional reunion, during which Catherine accuses Heathcliff of killing her with his behavior. Heathcliff is overcome with guilt but remains unable to let go of his obsessive love for her. Their meeting is filled with intense passion and regret. This chapter represents the climax of Catherine and Heathcliff's relationship. Their reunion is both tragic and emotionally charged, as they express their mutual love but also acknowledge the pain they have caused each other. Catherine's accusation that Heathcliff has killed her highlights the destructive nature of their relationship.

“I cannot live without my soul!” - Heathcliff's declaration reveals the depth of his attachment to Catherine. He sees her as his very soul, and her impending death leaves him devastated. This quote underscores the theme of identity and how Heathcliff and Catherine's lives are inextricably linked. In this powerful and heartbreaking declaration, Heathcliff expresses the depth of his attachment to Catherine, revealing that he perceives her as the very essence of his being-his “soul.” His statement reflects the idea that their identities are intertwined to the point where one cannot exist without the other. For Heathcliff, Catherine is more than just the object of his love; she is a fundamental part of his existence, and her impending death devastates him because it signifies the loss of a part of himself. Moreover, this quote emphasizes how Heathcliff and Catherine's fates are inextricably linked, even in death.

Chapter 16:

Catherine gives birth to a daughter, also named Catherine (Cathy), shortly before dying. Edgar is devastated by her death, and Nelly, who witnesses the event, describes Catherine's passing as peaceful but emotionally charged. Heathcliff, upon learning of her death, reacts with overwhelming grief and anger. He curses her for leaving him but also pleads for her to haunt him for the rest of his life. Catherine's death is a pivotal moment in *Wuthering Heights*, marking the tragic end of her and Heathcliff's tumultuous relationship. Her passing doesn't offer closure to Heathcliff; instead, it deepens his obsession and sets him on a path of vengeance against those he believes wronged them both. Heathcliff's plea to be haunted by Catherine reflects his refusal to let go of their connection, even after death.

“I cannot live without my soul! I cannot live without my life!” - Heathcliff's reaction to Catherine's death emphasizes his view of their love as inseparable from his own identity. This line highlights the central theme of the novel: Heathcliff and Catherine's destructive love, which consumes both of them even after death. In this intense and anguished line, her death is not just a loss for him-it is the obliteration of his own sense of self, as he feels he cannot live without the person who embodies his very being. Their relationship transcends mere romantic attachment, becoming a force that dominates their lives and identities.

Chapter 17:

Isabella escapes from Wuthering Heights, leaving behind her abusive marriage to Heathcliff. She flees to the south of England, where she gives birth to Heathcliff's son, Linton. Hindley, unable to cope with his grief over Frances' death and Heathcliff's dominance, dies, leaving Wuthering Heights in Heathcliff's control. Heathcliff claims Hareton, Hindley's son, as his ward and begins raising him as a servant, repeating the cycle of abuse he suffered as a child. Isabella's escape from Heathcliff marks a brief moment of liberation, though her son Linton becomes another pawn in Heathcliff's revenge plan. Hindley's death further consolidates Heathcliff's power, and his treatment of Hareton mirrors the abuse he endured from Hindley. This repetition of cruelty shows how vengeance and bitterness perpetuate cycles of suffering within families.

Chapter 18:

As time passes, young Cathy grows up at Thrushcross Grange, unaware of the dark history of Wuthering Heights. Edgar raises her in isolation, trying to shield her from the grim realities of her family's past. One day, Cathy ventures onto the moors and meets Hareton, though she mistakenly believes him to be a servant. They form an uneasy relationship, though Cathy's privileged upbringing leads her to condescend to Hareton. This chapter introduces the younger generation and sets the stage for the next phase of the novel's plot. Cathy's innocence and ignorance of her family's past create a sense of impending tragedy, as she is unknowingly drawn into the same conflicts that plagued her parents. The contrast between Cathy and Hareton mirrors the earlier relationship between Catherine and Heathcliff, with class and social standing once again serving as a source of tension.

“She was the most winning thing that ever brought sunshine into a desolate house.”- Nelly's description of Cathy contrasts sharply with the dark atmosphere of Wuthering Heights. Cathy's innocence and brightness provide a moment of hope in the novel, though this is soon overshadowed by the legacy of vengeance and hatred.

Chapter 19:

Isabella dies, and her son Linton is sent to live with Edgar at Thrushcross Grange. However, Heathcliff soon demands that Linton be brought to Wuthering Heights, claiming his parental rights. Linton is sickly and weak, and it becomes clear that Heathcliff sees him as nothing more than a tool to further his plan for revenge against Edgar and the Lintons. Linton's arrival at Wuthering Heights introduces a new layer to Heathcliff's revenge scheme. He plans to marry Linton to young Cathy in order to gain control of both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. This chapter highlights the theme of manipulation and control, as Heathcliff uses his own son as a pawn to achieve his goals, continuing the cycle of cruelty that defines the novel.

“He'll do to toil day and night for his bread: and he 'll find damnation in it.”- Heathcliff's harsh treatment of Hareton shows how he relishes the opportunity to repeat the abuse he suffered at Hindley's hands. This quote underscores Heathcliff's desire to exact revenge by inflicting suffering on the next generation.

Chapter 20:

Linton is taken to Wuthering Heights, where he is treated with indifference by Heathcliff and disdain by Hareton. Linton's weak and petulant nature contrasts with Hareton's rough and unrefined personality, further illustrating the divisions between the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff begins to groom Linton for his role in the plan to marry Cathy, knowing that Linton's frailty makes him dependent on others. Linton's arrival deepens the theme of generational conflict, as Heathcliff manipulates the younger generation to achieve his revenge. Linton's weakness and selfishness make him an ideal tool for Heathcliff, who has no real affection for his son. This chapter highlights the tragic consequences of the

older generation's unresolved grievances, as the children are drawn into the same patterns of hatred and suffering.

Chapter 21:

Young Cathy begins corresponding with Linton, unaware of Heathcliff's manipulations. Nelly tries to prevent the relationship, but Cathy's curiosity and determination lead her to visit Linton at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff encourages the relationship, knowing that Cathy's attachment to Linton will serve his plan to unite the two estates. Cathy's relationship with Linton is based on deception and manipulation, as she is drawn into Heathcliff's schemes without fully understanding the consequences. This chapter emphasizes the theme of innocence being corrupted by the vengeful actions of others. Heathcliff's control over the younger generation mirrors his earlier manipulation of Isabella, further illustrating the cyclical nature of cruelty in the novel.

“I shall be the greatest woman of the neighborhood, and I shall be proud to show you I can behave in your absence quite as elegantly as if you were there.”- Cathy's naïve aspirations contrast with the darker motives at play. Her desire to marry Linton is motivated by youthful fantasies of love and status, unaware of Heathcliff's sinister intentions.

Chapter 22:

Cathy continues her secret visits to Wuthering Heights, though her interactions with Linton become increasingly strained due to his poor health and demanding nature. Edgar, unaware of the full extent of Cathy's involvement with Linton, tries to keep her away from Wuthering Heights but his own declining health limits his ability to control the situation. Edgar's weakening health parallels Linton's frailty, symbolizing the decline of the Linton family in the face of Heathcliff's growing power. Cathy's innocence is gradually eroded as she becomes more entangled in the toxic environment of Wuthering Heights. The novel's focus on generational conflict continues, as the younger characters are caught in the web of old grievances and power struggles.

Chapter 23:

Cathy continues visiting Linton in secret, and although Linton becomes increasingly weak and irritable. Cathy believes she can care for him and is convinced that they will be happy together. Meanwhile, Edgar's health deteriorates, and he becomes more concerned about his daughter's future. Cathy's innocence and naivety are evident in her belief that she can help and care for Linton, despite his selfishness and illness. Her desire to nurture Linton reflects her compassionate nature, but she is unaware of how Heathcliff is using Linton to manipulate her. The growing tension between Cathy's world at Thrushcross Grange and the toxic environment at Wuthering Heights highlights the novel's exploration of innocence being corrupted by cruelty.

Chapter 24:

Nelly discovers Cathy's continued visits to Wuthering Heights and confronts her about the relationship with Linton. Cathy admits that Linton has been pressuring her to visit more often, despite his poor health, and that she feels a sense of duty to him. Edgar remains unaware of Cathy's visits, and Nelly worries about the potential consequences of the relationship. This chapter highlights Cathy's growing sense of responsibility toward Linton, which contrasts with Linton's selfish and manipulative behavior. Cathy's determination to help Linton reflects her compassionate nature, but her naivety makes her vulnerable to manipulation.

Chapter 25:

Edgar, now gravely ill, makes plans for Cathy's future. He wishes for Cathy to marry Linton, believing it will provide her with security, but is unaware of Heathcliff's manipulations. Cathy continues to visit Linton, but his health worsens, and their relationship becomes more strained. Heathcliff, meanwhile, tightens his control over both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. This chapter underscores Edgar's tragic lack of knowledge about the true situation at Wuthering Heights.

Chapter 26:

Cathy and Linton's relationship deteriorates as Linton becomes more demanding and selfish. Cathy's attempts to care for him are met with ingratitude, and she begins to feel trapped by her sense of duty. Despite her growing frustrations, Cathy continues to visit Wuthering Heights, unaware that Heathcliff is using Linton to manipulate her into a marriage that will give him control over both estates. The inevitability of Cathy's fate becomes clearer, as she is drawn further into the toxic environment of Wuthering Heights.

Chapter 27:

Heathcliff forces Cathy to marry Linton, revealing his ultimate goal of gaining control of Thrushcross Grange. Linton, who is on the brink of death, reluctantly goes along with the marriage. Cathy is heartbroken by Linton's betrayal, but she is trapped in the situation. Edgar dies shortly after the wedding, leaving Thrushcross Grange to Cathy and, through her, to Heathcliff. This chapter marks the culmination of Heathcliff's revenge plan, as he finally gains control over both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. The marriage between Cathy and Linton is a tragic replay of the earlier relationships in the novel, with Cathy's fate mirroring that of her mother. Heathcliff's victory is complete, but it is hollow, as his pursuit of vengeance has destroyed the lives of everyone around him, including his own son.

“have a strong faith in ghosts: I have a conviction that they can, and do, exist among us!”—Heathcliff's belief in ghosts reflects his obsession with the past, particularly his enduring connection to the late Catherine Earnshaw. This quote reinforces the supernatural element of the novel, as Heathcliff remains haunted by his love for Catherine even as he achieves his earthly revenge. His faith in the existence of ghosts symbolizes his inability to let go of the past and his longing for Catherine, even after her death. This belief reinforces the supernatural element that runs throughout Wuthering Heights. The idea of ghosts serves as a metaphor for the emotional haunting that Heathcliff endures. His belief in her continued existence as a ghost shows how deeply he is consumed by his love and his unresolved grief, emphasizing the idea that their love transcends physical death. This supernatural aspect also aligns with the novel's exploration of themes such as memory, loss, and the inescapability of the past. Heathcliff's conviction that ghosts "exist among us" can be seen as a reflection of his emotional state: he is haunted not only by Catherine's memory but also by his own inability to move forward without her.

Chapter 28:

Linton dies shortly after the marriage, leaving Cathy alone at Wuthering Heights under Heathcliff's control. Nelly, horrified by the turn of events, brings Lockwood up to date on the story. Lockwood, repulsed by the atmosphere at Wuthering Heights, decides to leave Thrushcross Grange and return to London.

Chapter 29:

Heathcliff reveals to Nelly that he has been tormented by the ghost of Catherine since her death, and his obsession with her has only grown stronger over time. He admits that he is still haunted by her presence and plans to reunite with her in death. Heathcliff's mental state deteriorates, and he becomes increasingly consumed by thoughts of Catherine and the afterlife. The novel's Gothic elements are reinforced through Heathcliff's belief in the supernatural and his desire to be reunited with Catherine in the afterlife.

“I cannot look down to this floor, but her features are shaped on the flags!”- Heathcliff’s haunting visions of Catherine underscore his psychological torment. His obsession with her transcends the boundaries of life and death, reflecting the novel's theme of eternal love and the power of the past to shape the present.

Chapter 30:

Nelly continues to care for Cathy at Wuthering Heights, though the atmosphere remains oppressive. Heathcliff's health begins to decline as his obsession with Catherine consumes him. He spends more and more time wandering the moors, seemingly preparing for his own death. Heathcliff's physical and mental deterioration reflects the emptiness of his victory. Having destroyed the lives of those around him, he is left with nothing but his obsession with Catherine. His decline serves as a final commentary on the destructive nature of revenge, as it consumes the avenger just as much as the victims.

“I have nearly attained my heaven; and that of others is altogether unvalued and uncoveted by me!”- Heathcliff’s declaration reveals his singular focus on reuniting with Catherine in death. His desire for revenge has been replaced by a longing for death, as he sees it as the only way to be with her again.

Chapter 31:

Lockwood returns to Wuthering Heights after several months and finds that little has changed. Heathcliff's health continues to decline, and Cathy and Hareton have begun to form a tentative bond. Lockwood, disturbed by the grim atmosphere, decides to leave the area permanently. The growing connection between Cathy and Hareton offers a glimmer of hope for the future, suggesting that the cycle of revenge and suffering may finally be broken. However, the shadow of Heathcliff's influence still looms over Wuthering Heights, as he remains fixated on his reunion with Catherine in death.

Chapter 32-34:

In September, eight months after leaving, Lockwood finds himself back in the area and decides to stay at Thrushcross Grange (since his tenancy is still valid until October). He finds that Ellen is now living at Wuthering Heights. He makes his way there and she fills in the rest of the story. Ellen had moved to the Heights soon after Lockwood had left to replace the housekeeper who had departed. In March, Hareton had had an accident and been confined to the farmhouse. During this time, a friendship had developed between Cathy and Hareton. This continues into April when Heathcliff begins to act very strangely, seeing visions of Catherine. After not eating for four days, he is found dead in his room. He is buried next to Catherine. Lockwood departs but, before he leaves, he hears that Hareton and Cathy plan to marry on New Year's Day.

Main Themes in *Wuthering Heights*

1.Revenge

Nearly all of the action in *Wuthering Heights* results from one or another character's desire for revenge. The result is a cycle of revenge that seems to be endlessly repeated. Hindley takes revenge on Heathcliff for taking his place at Wuthering Heights by denying him an education, and in the process separates Heathcliff and Catherine. Heathcliff then takes revenge upon Hindley by, first, dispossessing Hindley of Wuthering Heights and by denying an education to Hareton, Hindley's son. Heathcliff also seeks revenge on Edgar for marrying Catherine by marrying Cathy to Linton.

Yet while Heathcliff's revenge is effective, it seems to bring him little joy. Late in the novel, Cathy sees this, and tells Heathcliff that her revenge on him, no matter how miserable he makes her, is to know that he, Heathcliff, is more miserable. And it is instructive that only when Heathcliff loses his desire for revenge is he able to finally reconnect with Catherine in death, and to allow Cathy and Hareton, who are so similar to Heathcliff and Catherine, to find love and marry.

2. Class

Understanding the importance of class in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain is essential to understanding *Wuthering Heights*. Generally, at the time, people were born into a class and stayed there: if your parents were rich and respected (like Edgar's), you would be, too; if your parents were servants (like Nelly Dean's), you probably would be too. Social mobility—the idea that you can change your class status (usually for the better)—was not commonplace and not acceptable.

In Brontë's novel, however, class distinctions are constantly changing, much to the confusion of the characters. There are two primary examples of this: Heathcliff and Hareton. Because no one knows anything about Heathcliff's background, they all treat him differently. Mr. Earnshaw adopts him and treats him like a son, but the snobby Lintons refuse to socialize with him. When he disappears for a few years and comes back rich, the characters struggle even more over how to approach him—he now has money and land, but many of them still consider him a farm boy. Likewise, Hareton has a hard time gaining respect. The son of Hindley, Hareton should be the heir to *Wuthering Heights*. With land and standing, he ought to be a gentleman. However, Heathcliff refuses to educate him, and everyone else mostly ignores him, so his manners (a very important indicator of class status) are rough and gruff. Only when young Cathy helps educate him does he achieve the class standing to which he was born.

3. Masculinity

Written when gender roles were far more rigid and defined than they are now, *Wuthering Heights* examines stereotypes of masculinity and femininity. Emily Brontë constantly contrasts masculinity and femininity, but not all of the comparisons are simple; sometimes boys act like girls and girls act like boys. Edgar Linton and Linton Heathcliff, for instance, are men, but Brontë frequently describes them as having the looks and attributes of women. Likewise, Catherine Earnshaw has many masculine characteristics; even though she is outrageously beautiful, she loves rough, outdoor play and can hold her own in any fight. She is a complex mix of hyper-feminine grace and loveliness and ultra-masculine anger and recklessness. Heathcliff, with his physical and mental toughness, has no such ambiguities—he is exaggeratedly masculine and scorns his wife Isabella for her overblown femininity. Emily Brontë seems to favor masculinity over femininity, even in her women. In general, she portrays weak, delicate characters with contempt, while she treats strong and rugged characters like Heathcliff, both Catherines, and Hareton, with compassion and admiration, despite their flaws.

4. Love

Wuthering Heights explores a variety of kinds of love. Loves on display in the novel include Heathcliff and Catherine's all-consuming passion for each other, which while noble in its purity, is also terribly destructive. In contrast, the love between Catherine and Edgar is proper and civilized rather than passionate. Theirs is a love of peace and comfort, a socially acceptable love, but it can't stand in the way of Heathcliff and Catherine's more profound (and more violent) connection.

The love between Cathy and Linton is a grotesque exaggeration of that between Catherine and Edgar. While Catherine always seems just a bit too strong for Edgar, Cathy and Linton's love is *founded* on Linton's weakness—Linton gets Cathy to love him by playing on her desire to protect and mother him. Finally, there's the love between Cathy and Hareton, which seems to balance the traits of the other loves on display. They have the passion of Catherine and Heathcliff without the destructiveness, and the gentleness shared by Edgar and Catherine without the dullness or inequality in power.