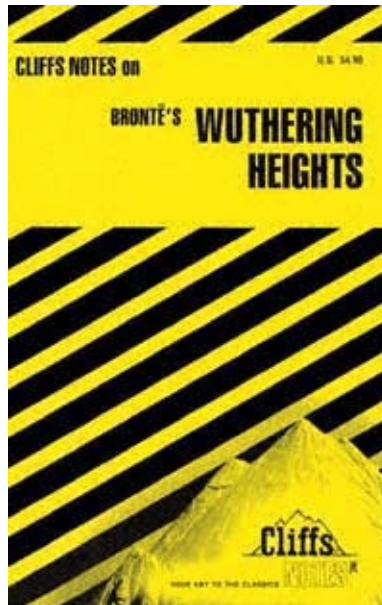




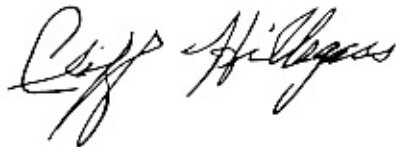
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A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Cliff Hillman". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned at the bottom right of the text area.

Wuthering Heights

Notes

by Janet C. James, Ph.D.
University of York,
Hesslington, England

including
Life of the Author
Brief Summary of the Novel
Charlotte Brontë's Preface
List of Characters
Genealogical Table of the Principal Characters
Summaries and Commentaries
Character Analyses
Theme, Style, and Structure
Questions for Review
Selected Bibliography



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Life of the Author

"Stronger than a man, simpler than a child." These are the words Charlotte Brontë used to describe her sister Emily Jane, author of *Wuthering Heights*, a strange and powerful book, said by many to be the finest novel in the English language.

Emily, the truly "free spirit" of her family, one who could not live away from her beloved moors, was the fifth child of Reverend Patrick Brontë and Maria Branwell Brontë. She was born in Thornton, Yorkshire, in 1818; Charlotte, Anne, and Branwell were also born there, while Elizabeth and Maria were born in Hartshead. When Emily was two years old, the family moved to the parsonage at Haworth. The moors, part of the Pennine chain of mountains sometimes called The Backbone of England swept bleakly and magnificently right to their door. This was to be her home until she died in December, 1848, at the age of thirty.

There were many conflicting influences that shaped the Brontë character and genius. Patrick Brontë, the father, was of Irish stock and was known for his picturesque, free-flowing speech, poetry, and imagination. He was born in northern Ireland in 1777, the eldest of ten children. Patrick, a brilliant young lad, attracted the attention of a Methodist clergyman, who financed his education. At sixteen he became schoolmaster of a Presbyterian church school. Through the kind offices of an Anglican minister, he entered Cambridge, where he took his degree and was ordained into the Church of England in 1806.

Maria Branwell was a Methodist from Cornwall. She had literary leanings, having published an essay entitled "On the Advantages of Poverty in Religious Concerns." Patrick, himself, wrote four books

and also some poetry. His last book, *The Maid of Killarney*, was published in 1818. None of these literary attempts was successful, but we can see that the urge for written expression was present in both Maria and Patrick Brontë.

In 1821, a year after arriving at Haworth, Mrs. Brontë died of cancer, leaving the six children motherless. Her sister, Elizabeth Branwell, came from Cornwall to act as housekeeper, and it was she who trained the girls meticulously in all the household arts. Mr. Brontë retreated to his study after the death of his wife, emerging only to fulfill his pastoral duties and to tutor his brilliant young children.

These, then, were the parental influences that helped to mold Emily's character, and those of her sisters and brother: the temperament of the Irishmelancholy, passionate, proud, restless, eloquent, and wittyand the Methodist religious fervor and enthusiasm shown by the followers of John Wesley.

Environment also played its part in creating the uniqueness of Emily Brontë. The village of Haworth was very isolated and intensely Yorkshire, and the people living there were in strong contrast to the Celtic temperament. They were blunt, practical, stubborn, sparing of speech, vigorous, and harsh to the point of brutality. "Hear all, see all, and say nothing. Eat all, drink all, and pay nothing. And if you do anything for nothing, do it for yourself." This is said to be the Yorkshire creed, and a reverence for money, or "brass," as they call it, is deeply embedded in the Yorkshire soul. These people, then, were the product of the moorsthose tracts of rocky land, where the north wind shrieks mercilessly, and the only softening influence is the sheep, the purple heather, and the ferny bracken. It was these moors that exalted the spirit of the Brontës and filled their souls with the love of liberty. This was particularly true of Emily.

In 1824 the four eldest girls were sent to Cowan Bridge School, a school for the daughters of impoverished clergymen. Conditions there were frightful, and as a result Maria and Elizabeth died and Charlotte became very ill. Maria was twelve and Elizabeth was eleven. All the Brontë children were delicate, with a tendency toward consumption.

Mr. Brontë brought Emily and Charlotte home, and it was about this time that Branwell received a box of twelve soldiers. These inspired the children to begin writing what they called "Young Men" plays. These had extremely involved plots which eventually turned into the tales of Angria and Gondal, which were chronicled in tiny books (now

on display at the Brontë museum). The four young writers worked on these serial stories until they were in their twenties, developing many ideas, characters, and plot lines that appeared in their later works. Charlotte and Branwell wrote the history of the Angrians, while Emily and Anne wrote the *Gondal Chronicle*. Many of Emily's finest poems were incorporated in these stories.

When Charlotte was fifteen she was sent to school at Roe Head, and when she returned she acted as a tutor to Emily and Anne. In 1835 she returned to Roe Head as a teacher and took Emily with her as a student. But Emily could not live away from her beloved moors. She became violently homesick and returned to Haworth Parsonage. Apart from a six-month period of teaching in Halifax, in 1837³⁸, and an eight-month stay with

Charlotte at school in Brussels (Pensionnat Heger) in 1842⁴³, Emily remained happily in the seclusion of the parsonage and the wild and lonely moors.

Emily was passionately fond of nature and animals and could be seen striding through the heather and bracken with her bulldog, Keeper. At fifteen, she was described as being tall and slight, with a slouchy, loose-jointed gait like that of a boy. She had a pale complexion, dark, beautiful hair, and lovely hazel eyes. Her features were irregular and she had a large mouth. All her life she persisted in wearing clothes that were completely outmoded.

She was strongly opposed to formal religion, possibly because of Aunt Branwell's fanaticism, and seldom attended church; but her writings suggest that she may have had a mystical experience which had a profound effect on her work, especially her poetry. Although she is best known for her fiction, Emily was essentially a poet, and her "Remembrance," "The Old Stoic," and "Last Lines" are considered excellent poetry.

While keeping house, Emily worked on her poetry in secret. One day in 1845, Charlotte discovered some of her poems and revealed that she had also written some verse. Anne shyly produced some of her work. Together, they had enough poetry for a small book. Knowing the prejudice against women writers, the girls had their poems published at their own expense under the title *Poems by Currer* [Charlotte], *Ellis* [Emily], and *Acton* [Anne] *Bell*. Only two copies were sold, none being bought by the publisher. Undeterred by this failure, all three started work on novels: Emily on *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte on *Jane Eyre*, and Anne on *Agnes Grey*.

While Charlotte's and Anne's writings were in a more conventional vein, Emily's masterpiece showed her to be a complete individualist.

She used the stark Yorkshire setting, not to create suspense and horror, as in the typical Gothic novel, but as a natural part of her story. All her characters were human they had good and bad qualities. They could hate and love with equal intensity. The plot was completely different from any that had been created before.

The publishing firm of Smith, Elder had previously rejected a book called *The Professor*, which Charlotte had written, but they accepted *Jane Eyre* and published it in 1847. It was an immediate success. Emily's *Wuthering Heights* and Anne's *Agnes Grey* were published in 1848 by another firm. Another novel by Anne, *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, was published in the same year.

Wuthering Heights went almost unnoticed. Anyone who did read it was repulsed by the brutality and violence of the characters and by the fact

that it differed so much from the romantic novels of the day. They did not want realism as Emily depicted it, and they did not want wild, fierce anti-heroes like Heathcliff who was more like a villain or willful, passionate heroines like Catherine.

During this period Branwell had fallen prey to drink and drugs and was dying. Emily, who had always been closest to him, was the only one who withheld judgment and tried to help him. It was Emily who beat out the flames with her bare hands when he wrapped himself in a sheet when drunk and deliberately set himself afire. It was Emily who mourned Branwell most when he died in September, 1848, at the age of thirty.

Emily caught cold at Branwell's funeral and never left the house again. Failing visibly every day, she insisted on keeping up her regular round of duties, although Charlotte and Anne knew she was dying. She died on December 19, 1848, at the age of thirty. She knew nothing of the success which was to be finally accorded *Wuthering Heights*.

Brief Summary of the Novel

Mr. Earnshaw, a brusque Yorkshire farmer and owner of Wuthering Heights on the moors, brings home a waif from Liverpool. The boy is given the name Heathcliff and is brought up with the Earnshaw children, Catherine and Hindley. Catherine loves Heathcliff but Hindley hates the stranger for supplanting him in his father's affection. After the death of Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw, Hindley subjects Heathcliff to every indignity, and Heathcliff becomes brutal and morose. Despite the love that still persists between her and Heathcliff, Catherine turns to Edgar Linton, a young gentleman who lives in Thrushcross Grange

in the valley.

Catherine marries Edgar Linton, and Heathcliff leaves Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff returns, rich and looking like a gentleman. His return, and Edgar's jealousy, make Catherine distracted. She and Heathcliff are more madly in love than ever. She gives birth to Edgar's child, Cathy, and dies. Heathcliff is determined to be avenged on Hindley Earnshaw and Edgar Linton. He marries Edgar's sister Isabella and turns Hindley into a drunkard and a gambler, winning all his property from him; as a result, Hindley's son Hareton becomes a pauper. Isabella has a weakling son, Linton, and after her death Heathcliff marries Linton off to Cathy. His plans are thwarted, however, as Linton dies and Cathy falls in love with and marries Hareton.

Charlotte Brontë's Preface to the Second Edition of *Wuthering Heights*

I have just read over *Wuthering Heights*, and, for the first time, have obtained a clear glimpse of what are termed (and, perhaps, really are) its faults; have gained a definite notion of how it appears to other people to strangers who knew nothing of the author; who are unacquainted with the locality where the scenes of the story are laid; to whom the inhabitants, the customs, the natural characteristics of the outlying hills and hamlets in the West Riding of Yorkshire are things alien and unfamiliar.

To all such, *Wuthering Heights* must appear a rude and strange production. The wild moors of the north of England can for them have no interest; the language, the manners, the very dwellings and household customs of the scattered inhabitants of those districts, must be to such readers in a great measure unintelligible, and where intelligible repulsive. Men and women who, perhaps naturally very calm, and with feelings moderate in degree, and little marked in kind, have been trained from their cradle to observe the utmost evenness of manner and guardedness of language, will hardly know what to make of the rough, strong utterance, the harshly manifested passions, the unbridled aversions and headlong partialities of unlettered moorland hinds and rugged moorland squires, who have grown up untaught and unchecked, except by mentors as harsh as themselves. A large class of readers, likewise, will suffer greatly from the introduction into the pages of this work of words printed with all their letters, which it has become the custom to represent by the initial and final letter only a blank line filling the interval. I may as well say at once that, for this circumstance, it is out of my power to apologise; deeming it, myself, a

rational plan to write words at full length. The practice of hinting by single letters those expletives with which profane and violent persons are wont to garnish their discourse, strikes me as a proceeding which, however well meant, is weak and futile; I cannot tell what good it does what feeling it spares what horror it conceals.

With regard to the rusticity of *Wuthering Heights*, I admit the charge, for I feel the quality. It is rustic all through. It is moorish, and wild, and knotty as a root of heath. Nor was it natural that it should be otherwise; the author being herself a native and nursling of the moors. Doubtless, had her lot been cast in a town, her writings, if she had written at all, would have possessed another character. Even had chance or taste led her to choose a similar subject, she would have treated it otherwise. Had Ellis Bell been a

lady or gentleman accustomed to what is called "the world," her view of a remote and unreclaimed region, as well as of the dwellers therein, would have differed greatly from that actually taken by the homebred country girl. Doubtless it would have been widemore comprehensive: whether it would have been more original or more truthful is not so certain. As far as the scenery and locality are concerned, it could scarcely have been so sympathetic: Ellis Bell did not describe as one whose eye and taste alone found pleasure in the prospect; her native hills were far more to her than a spectacle; they were what she lived in, and by, as much as the wild birds, their tenants, or as the heather, their produce. Her descriptions, then, of natural scenery, are what they should be, and all they should be.

Where delineation of human character is concerned, the case is different. I am bound to avow that she had scarcely more practical knowledge of the peasantry amongst whom she lived, than a nun has of the country people who sometimes pass her convent gates. My sister's disposition was not naturally gregarious; circumstances favoured and fostered her tendency to seclusion; except to go to church or take a walk on the hills, she rarely crossed the threshold of home. Though her feeling for the people round was benevolent, intercourse with them she never sought; nor, with very few exceptions, ever experienced. And yet she knew them: knew their ways, their language, their family histories; she could hear of them with interest, and talk of them with detail, minute, graphic, and accurate; but *with* them, she rarely exchanged a word. Hence it ensued that what her mind had gathered of the real concerning them, was too exclusively confined to those tragic and terrible traits of which, in listening to the secret annals of every rude vicinage, the memory is sometimes compelled to receive the impress. Her imagination, which was a spirit more sombre than sunny, more powerful than sportive,

found in such traits material whence it wrought creations like Heathcliff, like Earnshaw, like Catherine. Having formed these beings she did not know what she had done. If the auditor of her work when read in manuscript, shuddered under the grinding influence of natures so relentless and implacable, of spirits so lost and fallen; if it was complained that the mere hearing of certain vivid and fearful scenes banished sleep by night, and disturbed mental peace by day, Ellis Bell would wonder what was meant, and suspect the complainant of affectation. Had she but lived, her mind would of itself have grown like a strong tree, loftier, straighter, wider-spreading, and its matured fruits would have attained a mellower ripeness and sunnier bloom; but on that mind time and experience alone could work: to the influence of other intellects, it was not amenable.

Having avowed that over much of *Wuthering Heights* there broods "a horror of great darkness"; that, in its storm-heated and electrical atmosphere, we seem at time to breathe lightning, let me point to those spots where clouded daylight and the eclipsed sun still attest their existence. For a specimen of true benevolence and homely fidelity, look at the character of Nelly Dean; for an example of constancy and tenderness, remark that of Edgar Linton. (Some people will think these qualities do not shine so well incarnate in a man as they would do in a woman, but Ellis Bell could never be brought to comprehend this notion: nothing moved her more than any insinuation that the faithfulness and clemency, the long-suffering and loving-kindness which are esteemed virtues in the daughters of Eve, become foibles in the sons of Adam. She held that mercy and forgiveness are the divinest attributes of the Great Being who made both man and woman, and that what clothes the Godhead in glory, can disgrace no form of feeble humanity.) There is a dry saturnine humour in the delineation of old Joseph, and some glimpses of grace and gaiety animate the younger Catherine. Nor is even the first heroine of the name destitute of the certain strange beauty in her fierceness, or of honesty in the midst of perverted passion and passionate perversity.

Heathcliff, indeed, stands unredeemed; never once swerving in his arrow-straight course of perdition, from the time when "the little blackhaired swarthy thing, as dark as if it came from the Devil," was first unrolled out of the bundle and set on its feet in the farmhouse kitchen, to the hour when Nelly Dean found the grim, stalwart corpse laid on its back in the panel-enclosed bed, with wide-gazing eyes that seemed "to sneer at her attempt to close them, and parted lips and sharp white teeth that sneered too. "

Heathcliff betrays one solitary human feeling, and that is *not* his love for Catherine; which is a sentiment fierce and inhuman; a passion

such as might boil and glow in the bad essence of some evil genius; a fire that might form the tormented centre the ever-suffering soul of a magnate of the infernal world; and by its quenchless and ceaseless ravage effect the execution of the decree which dooms him to carry Hell with him wherever he wanders. No; the single link that connects Heathcliff with humanity is his rudely-confessed regard for Hareton Earnshaw the young man whom he has ruined; and then his half-implicit esteem for Nelly Dean. These solitary traits omitted, we should say he was child neither of Lascar nor gipsy, but a man's shape animated by demon life a Ghoul an Afreet.

Whether it is right or advisable to create beings like Heathcliff, I do not know: I scarcely think it is. But this I know: the writer who possesses

the creative gift owns something of which he is not always master something that, at times, strangely wills and works for itself. He may lay down rules and devise principles, and to rules and principles it will perhaps for years lie in subjection; and then, haply without any warning of revolt, there comes a time when it will no longer consent to "harrow the valleys, or be bound with a band in the furrow" when it "laughs at the multitude of the city, and regards not the crying of the driver" when, refusing absolutely to make ropes out of sea-sand any longer, it sets to work on statue-hewing, and you have a Pluto or a Jove, a Tisiphone or a Psyche, a Mermaid or a Madonna, as Fate or Inspiration direct. Be the work grim or glorious, dread or divine, you have little choice left but quiescent adoption. As for you the nominal artist your share in it has been to work passively under dictates you neither delivered nor could question that would not be uttered at your prayer, nor suppressed nor changed at your caprice. If the result be attractive, the World will praise you, who little deserve praise; if it be repulsive, the same World will blame you, who almost as little deserve blame.

Wuthering Heights was hewn in a wild workshop, with simple tools, out of homely materials. The statuary found a granite block on a solitary moor; gazing thereon, he saw how from the crag might be elicited a head, savage, swart, sinister; a form moulded with at least one element of grandeur power. He wrought with a rude chisel, and from no model but the vision of his meditations. With time and labour, the crag took human shape; and there it stands colossal, dark, and frowning, half statue, half rock: in the former sense, terrible and goblin-like; in the latter, almost beautiful, for its colouring is of mellow grey, and moorland moss clothes it; and health, with its blooming bells and balmy fragrance, grows faithfully close to the giant's foot.

List of Characters

Mr. Earnshaw

He discovers a young waif, takes a fancy to him, and thus Heathcliff is introduced into the Earnshaw family. Being a kind man, he dotes on the unfortunate Heathcliff, eventually to the detriment of his own son.

Mrs. Earnshaw

We know little about her, except that she is not fond of Heathcliff.

Hindley Earnshaw

From the beginning, Hindley hates Heathcliff because he is an intruder; furthermore, Hindley loses both his father's love and his sister's to the dark and sullen waif. When he is finally able to claim the family estate, he sets out to brutalize and demean Heathcliff.

Frances Earnshaw

Hindley's wife is a sickly, rather silly woman. She dies after Hareton is born; because Hindley is so grief-stricken, he allows himself to be manipulated and ruined by Heathcliff's schemes.

Hareton Earnshaw

Hindley and Frances's only son is reared by Heathcliff as part of his plan to punish the Earnshaws. Hareton reflects Heathcliff's cruel nature, but when he has the chance to better himself, he tries to learn to read and express affection for others.

Catherine Earnshaw

As a child, she could "ride any horse in the stable"; she is a wild, impetuous, arrogant girl. Despite her feelings for Heathcliff, she decides to marry Edgar, knowing full well that "I am Heathcliff's; he's always in my mind." Before she dies, she says that she wants both Edgar and Heathcliff to suffer Edgar, because he never understood her affection for Heathcliff, and Heathcliff, because he never understood why she married Edgar.

Heathcliff

An adopted member of the Earnshaw family. As a child, he was sullen and impatient; as a young man, he is sullen, impatient, vengeful and cruel. He has an all-engrossing passion for Catherine Earnshaw, and when she marries Edgar Linton, he spends the remainder of his life in spiritual torment.

Linton Heathcliff

The son of Heathcliff and Isabella Linton. He is sickly and unmanly.
His death is hastened because of Heathcliff's neglect.

Mr. and Mrs. Linton

We know little about them; they seem to be kindly people who die shortly after Catherine convalesces at their home.

Edgar Linton

A devoted suitor of Catherine, he becomes a recluse after her death. He develops a fondness for young Cathy, but he is no match for Heathcliff, who is determined to make Cathy pay for her mother's caprices.

Cathy Linton

Edgar's darling; she inherits her mother's pride and determination and outwits Heathcliff; she also accomplishes a happy marriage with young Hareton.

Isabella Linton

Heathcliff's insubstantial wife who shows surprising spunk when she leaves her husband and tries to raise their child alone in a strange city.

Nelly Dean

The faithful, devoted servant at the Grange; as a narrator, she is sensible and usually reliable.

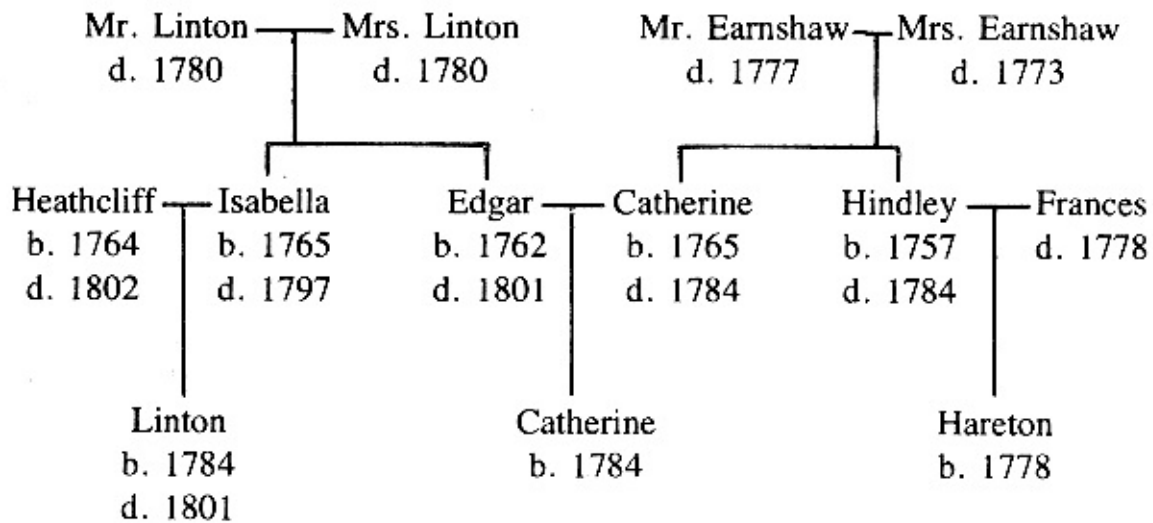
Joseph

Nelly characterizes him as being wearisome and self-righteous; her assessment is accurate. He is a fit companion and loyal servant for Heathcliff.

Zillah

The "lusty dame" who fills Nelly's position at Wuthering Heights.

Genealogical Table of the Principal Characters in *Wuthering Heights*



Summaries and Commentaries

Chapter 1

Summary

Mr. Lockwood, a minor character, tells of his visit to Wuthering Heights, a weatherbeaten farm on the windswept moors, the previous day, to introduce himself to his landlord, Heathcliff.

The setting is the wild Yorkshire moors, to which Mr. Lockwood has retreated from "the social stir" of London for a year. The time is the year 1801. He has rented Thrushcross Grange, situated in the valley. His curiosity is aroused by the brooding quality and crumbling, menacing appearance of Wuthering Heights and by the inscription over the door the date "1500" and the name "Hareton Earnshaw." He would like to ask his landlord about this, but Heathcliff proves to be unsociable, inhospitable, and brusque. After unlocking the gate,

Heathcliff grudgingly tells him to "walk in." This greeting does not disturb Mr. Lockwood, who enjoys solitude himself and feels his host is reserved rather than proud, as he might first appear.

Mr. Lockwood is confused by the furnishings of the home and the appearance of Heathcliff. The furniture is suitable for a farmhouse, and Heathcliff is a strange mixture of the refined and uncouth: slovenly, yet "in

dress and manner a gentleman." Dark and gypsy-looking, he is handsome in a repellent way.

The place is overrun by a pack of ferocious dogs. When Heathcliff descends to the cellar to find out why Joseph, the old servant, has not brought the wine he ordered, Mr. Lockwood amuses himself by winking and making faces at the animals. They attack in a mass, and, barricading himself behind a table, he yells for help. Neither Heathcliff nor Joseph comes to his aid, but a "lusty dame" appears from the kitchen and beats them off with a frying pan.

Mr. Lockwood's spirited account of the attack amuses Heathcliff, who unbends a little and proves an entertaining and intelligent host over the bottle of wine. Mr. Lockwood then invites himself back the following day and although he is aware that Heathcliff will not welcome the intrusion, he realizes that he is looking forward to his second visit to Wuthering Heights.

Commentary

Mr. Lockwood is the narrator and recounts this chapter in diary form several years after the most dramatic events of the story have taken place. This flashback gives a tantalizing glimpse of the strange passions governing the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights, and there are only suggestions here of the violent forces about to be unleashed.

The first chapter is a blending of the dominant elements in the book: setting, atmosphere, character, mystery, passion, and violence.

Wuthering Heights, in particular, is vividly described. Only its rugged structure has insured its survival against the onslaught of the incessant winds that have twisted and stunted the surrounding trees.

"Wuthering" is a Yorkshire word for "weathering" and therefore is an appropriate name for the house, which is situated on the wild moors.

Thrushcross Grange is also mentioned. By contrast, it is nestled in a sheltered valley. The description of the house was drawn from Ponden House, which was owned by the Heatons, a prominent family living in the district at the time of Mr. Brontë's appointment to Haworth. The young Heatons and the young Brontës became friends, and Emily drew on her intimate knowledge of the interior of the house for her description of the Grange, the library particularly. The bookshelves still stand along one wall of the room.

The entire action of the story takes place within the two houses and on the moors which lie between. The principal character, Heathcliff, around whom all the action revolves, emerges as starkly as Wuthering Heights. He

may be thought of as the personification of the house. There is an analogy between his appearance and his character and that of the Heights itself.

A few skillful references expose Joseph as a grumbling, complaining, Bible-quoting retainer, who performs his duties grudgingly, and who, in common with Heathcliff, is suspicious of strangers.

Mr. Lockwood, the narrator, reveals himself to be a bachelor, who, while interested in the fair sex, retreats when a young lady shows signs of returning his affection. Although declaring himself antisocial, curiosity about Wuthering Heights and its occupants make him ignore Heathcliff's abruptness. He is a stranger on the scene and is shown as shallow, somewhat pompous, fascinated by his own wit, and merely *playing* the role of a misanthrope. He immediately identifies himself with Heathcliff, of whom he knows nothing. Possibly he is modeling himself on the melancholy hero often found in the Gothic novels so popular in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Chapter 2

Summary

The following day, despite some rain, Mr. Lockwood walks the four miles to Wuthering Heights. As he reaches the house, the rain turns to snow. Only the dogs respond to his insistent knocking. Sour-faced Joseph sticks his face out of the barn and informs him there is nobody home except "t' missis," and she won't open the door even if he knocks all night.

A rustic, sullen young man appears and shows Mr. Lockwood in through the back door. A huge fire is burning in the fireplace in the parlor and a lovely young lady is sitting there. She is "t' missis." She ignores Mr. Lockwood's presence, and when he comments on the bad

weather she retorts he should not have come out. Mr. Lockwood is drawn to her beauty. He wonders where the young man fits in the household; while he is rough in dress and speech, his bearing is haughty and it is obvious that he is no common laborer. He also shows no deference to the young woman.

Heathcliff enters and, commenting on the weather, says a person might get lost in the snowstorm which has now developed. Mr. Lockwood asks for a guide when he returns to the Grange. Heathcliff bluntly refuses and ferociously commands the girl to make tea. Mr. Lockwood decides he isn't such a "capital fellow" after all. He then compliments Heathcliff on his beautiful wife. Heathcliff states rudely that his wife is dead and that the girl is his daughter-in-law. In his confusion, Mr. Lockwood makes another

mistake, referring to the young man as Heathcliff's son, and the girl as the young man's wife. Heathcliff corrects him by saying the girl was married to his son who is now dead. The crude youth is called Hareton Earnshaw.

Mr. Lockwood is shocked at the hatred evident between Heathcliff and his daughter-in-law. While Heathcliff is out of the room, Mr. Lockwood again asks for help in returning to the Grange. No one bothers to make any suggestions. Mrs. Heathcliff reveals she is not allowed off the property.

Joseph appears, and Mr. Lockwood is astounded when he chides the young Mrs. Heathcliff for being idle, saying she will never mend her evil ways and will go right to the devil like her mother. The girl terrifies him by saying she has been practicing the Black Art and threatens to make a wax and clay model of him.

Heathcliff re-enters and Mr. Lockwood says he will have to stay the night at Wuthering Heights. He is told by Heathcliff there is no accommodation for guests and he will have to sleep with Hareton or Joseph. Angered and insulted, Mr. Lockwood rushes out into the yard, seizes a lantern from Joseph and says that he will return in the morning. Joseph immediately sets the dogs on him, saying he is stealing the lantern. In his rage, Mr. Lockwood develops a violent nosebleed and Zillah, the housekeeper, pours a pint of icy water down his neck. Heathcliff reluctantly agrees to let Mr. Lockwood spend the night, as he can see his guest is sick and dizzy. He instructs Zillah to show him to his bed.

Commentary

Additional characters are introduced in this chapter, and Mr. Lockwood learns the relationships of those living at Wuthering

Heights. Early in the chapter mention is made of Mr. Lockwood's housekeeper at the Grange "a matronly lady." Her name is not given at this point, but she is identified as Nelly Dean in Chapter 4, in which she takes over the part of Mr. Lockwood as narrator.

Once again Mr. Lockwood is made forcibly aware of old Joseph's animosity, and two new characters appear: Hareton Earnshaw (the identical name to that which is chiseled above the door of Wuthering Heights) and young Mrs. Heathcliff. We do know her name at this point in the story, but we are intrigued by her beauty and defiant manner.

It is established in this chapter that Heathcliff is a widower, and that he has also lost his son who was married to young Mrs. Heathcliff. The position of Hareton Earnshaw in the household is still a mystery.

Despite his religious cantings, Joseph is shown to be superstitious, for he is terrified when Mrs. Heathcliff speaks of the Black Artwitchcraft, casting spells, and the evil eye. She also hints about making wax models of victims and willing them to die. Joseph's character is further defined by his Yorkshire dialect, and this also adds local color. The dialect constitutes almost a foreign language. For example, when he refers to Mrs. Heathcliff as a "a nowt," he means she is "a nothing." Additional translations are: *un war* and worse; *nobbut* no one else; *flaysome din* terrifying noises; *t' laith* the barn. The word "the" is always contracted to "t." His rudeness to the lady of the house seems very peculiar in a servant.

Heathcliff's blighting influence has left its mark on the loutish Hareton, on the beautiful but surly Mrs. Heathcliff, and has even inspired a viciousness in the dogs, who bear the names of Gnasher and Wolf.

Chapter 3

Summary

Leading Mr. Lockwood to his room, Zillah cautions him to hide a candle and make no noise, because her master would never permit anyone to stay in this particular room. Mr. Lockwood finds the bed is hidden behind panels, forming a type of closet. The candle discloses the names of Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Heathcliff, and Catherine Linton, scratched on the wood, over and over again. A number of old books are there, including a Testament, all bearing the name of Catherine Earnshaw.

Mr. Lockwood passes the time by glancing through the books and reading the notations written in the margins and fly leaves. There are also caricatures and notes in diary form. One notation reads, "I wish

my father were back again. Hindley is a detestable substitute his conduct to Heathcliff is atrocious. . . ." Later, the diary tells of Joseph's having prayer meetings, three hours long in the attic, and of Hindley no longer allowing Heathcliff to be part of the family and threatening to turn him out of the house.

Mr. Lockwood falls asleep and has two nightmares. Awakened the first time, he hears the sound of tapping on the casement window. He sleepily decides it is a branch of a fir tree whipped by the gale and goes back to sleep.

In his second nightmare, he dreams that he is again awakened by the same sound and tries to open the window and break off the offending branch. He cannot do this and, breaking the glass, reaches for the branch.

To his horror, he finds himself clutching a little ice-cold hand, and "a most melancholy voice" sobs, "Let me in! let me in!" Beside himself with terror, Mr. Lockwood asks who is there, and the reply comes, "Catherine Linton, I'm home; I'd lost my way on the moor!" In his terror Mr. Lockwood agrees to let the apparition in if she will just let go of his wrist. She does so, and he piles books against the window in order to keep her out. The books seem about to topple, and Mr. Lockwood screams and awakens.

Bursting into the room, Heathcliff demands to know, who is there and what is happening. When Mr. Lockwood reveals himself, Heathcliff, extremely agitated, asks who put him in that room. Mr. Lockwood tells him of his nightmare, of the tapping, and the voice pleading with him. Heathcliff reacts violently and seems on the point of collapse.

Declaring that the room is haunted, Mr. Lockwood decides to spend the rest of the night elsewhere. As he is about to leave the room, he pauses and sees Heathcliff wrench open the window and hears him cry, in a passion of tears, "Come in! come in! Cathy, do come. Oh *doonce* more! Oh! my heart's darling, hear me *this* time Catherine, at last!"

Descending to the kitchen, Mr. Lockwood encounters the surly Joseph. Later, Hareton Earnshaw conducts him into the living room, where Heathcliff and his daughter-in-law are having a violent quarrel. Mr. Lockwood does not wait. He has had enough of this peculiar household.

Accompanied by Heathcliff for some distance, he finally makes his way back to the Grange. He is soaked and chilled to the bone. It has taken him exactly one hour to go each mile. His housekeeper and the other servants greet him joyfully. They feared he had perished in the storm.

Commentary

The name Catherine is mentioned for the first time, linked with the names Earnshaw, Heathcliff, and Linton. The "Catherine Linton" in this chapter is the mother of Catherine Linton who, we find in Chapter 4, now lives in the house. She is also the heroine of the first half of the principal narrative.

The diary entry regarding the degrading life Heathcliff was forced to live by Hindley throws some light on the character of Heathcliff as Mr. Lockwood now finds him. For the first time we actively sympathize with Heathcliff in his anguish, although we are still ignorant as to its cause. Heathcliff has been revealed as a man capable of great emotion, as well as cruelty.

Nowhere else in the book is Emily Brontë's genius so vividly revealed as in this chapter. Here, past and present, dream and reality, are melded into a coherent whole. All references tie in together: the books Lockwood finds and reads in the bedroom, the names that are mentioned, and, finally, Lockwood's unbelievably vivid dreams. It is here that Emily introduces the supernatural into the story. Catherine is only a ghost in Mr. Lockwood's nightmare. Yet Heathcliff is alarmed when he hears that she has appeared to Lockwood; obviously, he believes that her spirit haunts Wuthering Heights and is trying to come to him from beyond the grave. This element, in addition to the unusual characters described thus far, and Zillah's reference to "queer goings on" all arouse the interest and curiosity of the reader. The chapter is a masterpiece of suspense.

Chapter 4

Summary

That evening, while recovering from his trip in the storm, Mr. Lockwood plies his housekeeper, Mrs. Dean, with questions about the people at Wuthering Heights. He is particularly interested in Heathcliff and the pretty young widow.

Nelly Dean proves an entertaining and penetrating storyteller. She has been in the service of the family for eighteen years, coming to the Grange when her mistress married (Chapter 9) and staying there until she died (Chapter 16), after which the master retained her as a housekeeper. Mr. Lockwood questions her about the young widow, Mrs. Heathcliff, and Mrs. Dean says she was Catherine Linton, and Mr. Lockwood learns "Linton" was the name of the previous owner of the Grange. In reply to his questions about Hareton Earnshaw, whom he met at Wuthering Heights, Mrs. Dean discloses that he is the late Mrs. Linton's nephew and that he is a cousin to the young Mrs.

Catherine Heathcliff: Heathcliff was married to Mr. Linton's sister, Isabella. Mrs. Dean remarks that Hareton is the last Earnshaw and Catherine is the last Linton. She hints that Hareton Earnshaw has been cheated out of his inheritance and that he is the only one who does not realize it. Although it is late in the evening, Mr. Lockwood begs Mrs. Dean to continue with her story. This she does, and it is at this point in the book that Nelly Dean takes over as narrator.

Nelly Dean informs Mr. Lockwood that she has lived practically all her life at Wuthering Heights. Her mother nursed Mr. Hindley Earnshaw, who was Hareton's father. She relates how, when a child, she worked on

the farm and played with the Earnshaw children, Hindley and Catherine.

She tells of Mr. Earnshaw, the old master, picking up a waif on the streets of Liverpool and bringing him home "a dirty, ragged, blackhaired child." Hindley hated the boy on sight and Catherine spat on him. Neither of the children would let the newcomer share either their room or bed, and Nelly placed him on the landing of the stairs in the hope that he would be gone by morning. Infuriated at the treatment of his protégé, Mr. Earnshaw fired Nelly. Her banishment did not last, however, and when she returned she found the boy had been christened "Heathcliff," after a child of the Earnshaws who had died. The name was to serve him as both Christian and surname.

While Hindley continued to hate Heathcliff, Catherine grew to love him, and Mr. Earnshaw was strongly drawn to Heathcliff and favored him over his own son. Two years later Mrs. Earnshaw died. She had been Hindley's champion, and he now regarded his father as a tyrant and Heathcliff as an interloper.

Commentary

With Nelly Dean as narrator, the story gathers interest and momentum. This is on-the-spot reporting and, as an outsider, Nelly tries to see everything objectively. Her own Yorkshire background is evident as she considers Heathcliff's endurance a virtue. She admires those who can "take it."

In this chapter, Heathcliff, the disrupting element, is introduced into the comfortable, peaceful Earnshaw household. Characters are set at odds with each other because of differences in background and temperament. Various conflicts are brought about: Hindley with his father over Heathcliff; Hindley with Heathcliff; Heathcliff with

Hindley and with the troublemaking servant, Joseph. Catherine is drawn to Heathcliff and away from her brother. She recognizes a kindred, willful spirit and becomes a fellow-conspirator against anyone who would keep her and Heathcliff apart.

The foundation is laid for the distortion of Heathcliff's personality. Arriving at Wuthering Heights, he apparently is prepared to give his affection to those living there, but he is felt to be an alien presence. Mrs. Earnshaw ignores him, Hindley bullies him, and Nelly Dean merely tolerates him. She feels a foundling is beneath her socially. Only Mr. Earnshaw and Catherine return his affection. There are indications at this point that Heathcliff is inclined to be brooding, sullen, and capable of vindictiveness.

The warm, independent, and devoted nature of Catherine is underlined, and the affinity between her and Heathcliff is established here, in their childhood. On the negative side, there are indications that, when crossed, Catherine can be defiant, headstrong, and actually cruel. Hindley's subsequent weakness and cruelty are foreshadowed when he torments and humiliates Heathcliff and "blubbers like a baby" when he cannot have his own way.

Chapter 5

Summary

Time passes and Mr. Earnshaw begins to fail. Growing irritable, he fixes all his affections on Heathcliff and resents any word of censure against him. This encourages Heathcliff's pride, increases his black moods and does not endear him to Hindley and the servants. Soon Hindley is sent away to school at the suggestion of the curate. He has been enraging his sick father by constantly antagonizing Heathcliff.

With Hindley out of the house, Nelly hopes peace will reign, but Catherine and Joseph are doing constant battle. Taking advantage of Mr. Earnshaw's illness, Joseph urges him to worry about his soul and constantly fills his ears with lies, tales, and grievances about Catherine and Heathcliff. Knowing Mr. Earnshaw favors Heathcliff, he craftily lays most of the blame on Catherine. She likes to tease her father not realizing how sick he is by boasting of her power over Heathcliff and saying that Heathcliff obeys *him* only when he feels like it. This so annoys her father that he pushes her aside when she tries to show her affection and tells her she is worse than Hindley. Like Joseph, he urges her to say her prayers and ask God's pardon. At first this treatment wounds her, but she gradually becomes defiant and laughs at these sanctimonious suggestions.

One evening in October, in the midst of a happy family scene, Mr. Earnshaw dozes off and dies. When Joseph realizes that Mr. Earnshaw is dead, he tells the children to go up to bed. Catherine runs to hug her father goodnight, then screams, "Oh, he's dead, Heathcliff! he's dead!" and they both set up a heartbreaking cry. Going to the children's room later, Nelly finds them comforting each other better than anyone else could have done. As she listens and sobs, Nelly wishes they were all safely dead together.

Commentary

When Mr. Earnshaw dies there is a touching and beautiful scene in which Heathcliff and Catherine comfort one another; it seems that there is still a chance of Heathcliff's being redeemed. We are now moving closer to the heart of the novel and the events described by Catherine in her diary in Chapter 3, when Hindley returns home as master of Wuthering Heights.

Chapter 6

Summary

When Hindley Earnshaw returns for his father's funeral, he brings with him a young wife, Frances, of whom nothing is known. She is thin, with a lovely complexion. Nelly notices that her eyes are exceptionally bright and that she breathes very quickly when mounting the stairs. Although childishly delighted with everything she finds at Wuthering Heights, Frances confesses to Nelly her mortal fear of death. While she cannot understand this, Nelly thinks of the shortness of breath and the cough that occasionally bother the girl.

Hindley has changed during the past three years. He is thin and bitter and banishes Nelly and Joseph to the kitchen. Frances attaches herself to Catherine but her affections soon tire. When she indicates to Hindley that she does not like Heathcliff, it is an excuse for him to dismiss Heathcliff to the servants's quarters, forbid him to continue studying with the curate, and send him out to work in the fields like a common laborer.

Catherine teaches Heathcliff what she learns in class, but as no one cares where they are or what they do, they are turning into little savages. When they disappear on Sunday evening, Hindley bars the door against them, but Nelly sits up waiting to let them in. Heathcliff

arrives alone, soaking wet from the rain. He says that Catherine is staying at Thrushcross Grange.

He and Catherine had gone to the Grange to see how people like the Lintons lived. Peering in at the windows they saw the Linton children, Edgar and Isabella, screaming and crying, having almost pulled a pet dog apart in their efforts to possess him. Heathcliff says he has nothing but contempt for this kind of conduct and existence. He would rather live at Wuthering Heights with all its hardships than live as the Lintons do.

When the Linton children saw them peering in, they screamed and someone sent a bulldog, Skulker, after them as they ran away. It caught Catherine by the ankle and she fainted. A servant carried her into the house. Heathcliff was given a lantern and told to go home, while Catherine was "feted like a queen at the Grange." Nelly warns Heathcliff that Hindley will now take prompt action. Next morning Mr. Linton calls and takes Hindley to task for not looking after his sister properly. Hindley vows to throw Heathcliff out of the house the next time he speaks a word to Catherine. He instructs Frances to watch Catherine when she returns home, but to be diplomatic, fearing that she might rebel.

Commentary

Much of the wildness in the natures of Heathcliff and Catherine can be traced to this period when they ran free upon the moors. The contrast is drawn between the rough but free existence at Wuthering Heights and the hothouse atmosphere of the Grange. The Lintons and their home are viewed with contempt by Heathcliff, as he can see through their pleasant but shallow existence. Once more we see him as an outsider as he again meets with rejection, this time from the Lintons, and his contempt and hatred for Edgar Linton stems from this first encounter. Catherine, on the other hand, is drawn toward the luxury and gentility which she sees there. It is symbolic on this first visit to Thrushcross Grange that Heathcliff is turned out while Catherine remains as an honored guest.

Chapter 7

Summary

Catherine stays at Thrushcross Grange for five weeks until Christmas. She comes under the influence of the fashionable Mrs. Linton, and

when she returns, her wild hair is groomed and she is attired in a riding habit. The inhabitants of Wuthering Heights scarcely recognize her.

Hindley forces Heathcliff to come forward and greet her, as befits a servant. She showers him with kisses, at the same time upbraiding him for his dirty and slovenly appearance. Already she compares him with the elegant Edgar Linton. Heathcliff is deeply hurt by her criticism. When she asks Heathcliff if he has missed her, he refuses to answer. When Hindley tells him to shake hands with her, he refuses to do this also, saying he will not be laughed at. He dashes from the room.

The two young Lintons arrive by carriage, and Nelly urges Heathcliff to greet them pleasantly. Heathcliff agrees to do this, but leaving the kitchen he bumps into Hindley, who tells Joseph to keep him out of the room and to send him to the attic until dinner is over. Nelly defends Heathcliff, while Hindley insults the boy about his appearance. Edgar Linton appears and joins in the insults. Heathcliff immediately throws a tureen of hot applesauce in his face.

Catherine is furious with Edgar for getting Heathcliff into trouble. Later in the evening she and Nelly slip away, and Catherine speaks to Heathcliff through the locked attic door. Later, Nelly finds that Catherine has crept along the roof, through the window, and into his room. Nelly allows Heathcliff to come down to the kitchen for something to eat but Heathcliff is sick and can eat very little and he horrifies Nelly by saying, "I'm trying to settle how I shall pay Hindley back. I don't care how long I wait, if I can only do it at last. I hope he will not die before I do!" Nelly is aghast at such wickedness and tells him to leave Hindley's punishment to God and to learn to forgive. "No, God won't have the satisfaction that I shall," he answers. "I only wish I knew the best way! Let me alone, and I'll plan it out: while I'm thinking of that, I don't feel pain."

Commentary

Catherine's visit to the Grange has brought about changes in her that affect the course of all their lives, both present and future. Some of the Lintons's worldliness and superficiality have rubbed off on her, and she is conscious of the social gulf between herself and Heathcliff for the first time. Thus, with the differences between the two households brought into focus and, with the first visit of the Linton children to Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff has further reason to hate Hindley and Edgar Linton. For the first time he mentions paying Hindley back, and

his emotions are understandable.

Nelly Dean's evaluation of the situation tends to make the reader feel she is not as perceptive and unbiased as she imagines herself to be, and this further elicits the reader's sympathy on Heathcliff's behalf.

When Nelly interrupts her tale at the end of this chapter and apologizes for the late hour, Lockwood compliments her on her "leisurely method" of narration and insists that she finish "in the same style." This gives us a moment of intermission and also allows the author the opportunity to explain Nelly's skill as a storyteller. She is not, Mr. Lockwood learns, like the "generality of servants" that is, she is a "reasonable

kind of a body" who has undergone sharp discipline, which has taught her wisdom. She has read widely, she adds, and profited by her reading. She then prepares to continue her tale, beginning with the summer of 1778, nearly twenty-three years ago.

Chapter 8

Summary

One June morning in the year 1778, Nelly is summoned from the fields by the doctor. Frances, Hindley's wife, has given birth to a son and is not expected to live, as she has been suffering from consumption for some time. Neither Hindley nor Frances believes she is dying. They support one another in this belief, but a week later Frances dies in Hindley's arms. The baby, Hareton, is given into Nelly's complete charge.

Hindley does not accept his wife's death. Cursing man and God, he turns to every dissipation to drown his sorrow. Nelly and Joseph are the only servants who remain: Nelly, because of Hareton, and Joseph, because he now has some authority over the tenants and can tyrannize them.

As Hindley sinks lower and lower into reckless dissolution, he becomes increasingly cruel to Heathcliff. Instead of rebelling, Heathcliff delights in seeing Hindley become degraded beyond redemption. Even the curate stops calling at the Heights.

Occasionally Edgar Linton calls on Cathy, now fifteen and queen of the countryside. Haughty and arrogant, she is still steadfast in her devotion to Heathcliff, and Edgar finds it hard to make a good impression on her. He is terrified of Hindley, and Catherine does not encourage him to call. One day when Hindley is away, however, Catherine does invite Edgar to call. Heathcliff has decided to give

himself a holiday and asks Catherine to share it with him. She makes the excuse that Joseph would tell Hindley, but then confesses that Edgar and Isabella Linton might call. Heathcliff shows her a calendar on which he has marked how much time she has given to the Lintons and how little to him. Catherine loses patience and tells him he can no longer keep her amused.

When Edgar arrives, Catherine is conscious of the difference between her two friends: "The contrast resembled what you see in exchanging a bleak, hilly, coal country for a beautiful fertile valley," according to Nelly.

When Nelly refuses to leave her and Edgar in the room alone, Catherine tries to push her out of the room and pinches her arm, leaving an

ugly mark. When the baby Hareton complains about "wicked Aunt Cathy," Catherine shakes him until his teeth rattle, and Edgar tries to intervene. Catherine denies she pinched Nelly, but Nelly shows Edgar the mark. Livid with fury, Catherine boxes Edgar's ears. Edgar is horrified to see this other side of Catherine, capable of telling lies and becoming violent. He prepares to leave. When she commands him to stay, he confesses she has made him feel afraid and ashamed of her. Nelly advises him he would do well to ride off home because "Miss is dreadfully wayward, sir As bad as any marred child." Edgar gets as far as the courtyard, but catching a glimpse of Catherine's face through the window, he hastens back.

Hindley arrives home drunk, and when Nelly goes to warn Catherine and Edgar of his return, she can see the young couple are now sweethearts. Edgar leaves, and Catherine goes to her room. Nelly tries to hide little Hareton and then takes the shot out of Hindley's fowling-piece because when he is drunk he enjoys playing with firearms.

Commentary

With the birth of his son Hareton and the death of his wife Frances. Hindley's final disintegration commences. This is consistent with the moral weakness he has shown previously. He concentrates his venom on Heathcliff, whom he brutalizes and in whom he tries to stamp out the feeling of worthiness that old Mr. Earnshaw had engendered. Heathcliff, in turn, delights in seeing his enemy destroy himself. It is consistent with Heathcliff's nature that he encourages his enemies to destroy themselves by their own inner flaws. It is at this time that a breach appears between Catherine and Heathcliff when she encourages Edgar Linton as a suitor. The reader anticipates conflict and trouble in the future.

Chapter 9

Summary

In a drunken rage, Hindley accidentally drops Hareton over the bannister. Heathcliff, passing below, catches him and Nelly takes the baby to the kitchen. Heathcliff enters and sits hidden in a corner. Thinking Nelly alone, Catherine tells her that Edgar Linton has proposed and that she has accepted him. Catherine declares that in her heart and soul she knows she is doing the wrong thing. She recounts a dream in which she thought she was

in heaven, but was so miserable the angels threw her down upon the moors, where she awoke, completely happy. "I've no more business marrying Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven." She says Hindley has degraded Heathcliff so much she cannot marry him.

Nelly is aware that Heathcliff has slipped from the room and that he has not heard the conclusion of Catherine's remarks that she loves him: "Not because he's handsome, Nelly, but because he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same; and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire."

When Heathcliff cannot be found on the premises, Nelly tells Catherine he probably heard everything she said. Catherine waits until midnight in the pouring rain for Heathcliff to return, but he does not. In the morning she has a bad chill. Joseph tells Hindley she has been out all night with Heathcliff and also that Edgar Linton has called on her. Hindley vows to throw Heathcliff out of the house. Meanwhile, Catherine is delirious. She has caught a fever and almost dies. The Lintons insist she convalesce at Thrushcross Grange. This she does, but Mr. and Mrs. Linton catch the fever and die.

On returning to Wuthering Heights, Catherine is "saucier, and more passionate, and haughtier than ever." She becomes increasingly willful as the doctor has said she is not to be crossed, and she flies into a rage if anyone dares to disagree with her. Nothing more is heard of Heathcliff at this time, nor is there until three years pass. Meanwhile, Catherine and Edgar are married in Gimmerton Chapel after the death of Edgar's parents. Although she has become very much attached to five-year-old Hareton, Nelly is forced to leave him at Wuthering Heights with his father and accompany Catherine to Thrushcross Grange.

At this point Mrs. Dean breaks off her narrative.

Commentary

This is one of the most dramatic and important chapters in the book. The spiritual bond between Catherine and Heathcliff is clearly shown. Despite this, she is prepared to betray Heathcliff and her own nature by accepting the superficial values of the Lintons. The dual sides of her nature are clearly exposed.

Catherine's illness and the doctor's advice that she is never to be upset indicate the beginning of the breakdown of her constitution. We are aware of her terrible inner conflict.

Nelly Dean's practical nature, her literal explanation of things, and

her lack of understanding of Catherine's volatile character are shown very clearly. In this chapter we see that Catherine's arrival at Thrushcross Grange causes as much havoc and turmoil as Heathcliff's did when he was brought to Wuthering Heights. She is an alien influence and, symbolically, it is through her that Mr. and Mrs. Linton die. She is now out of her natural element.

Chapter 10

Summary

After her marriage, Catherine is on her good behavior for some time. Edgar insists that everyone defer to her, including Nelly. As she is never crossed, it is easy for her to keep in good humor. She seems almost overfond of Edgar and Isabella. While she has her moods of depression, she and Edgar appear ideally happy. This peace lasts for six months.

One evening in September, Heathcliff appears at the door of the Grange. Nelly is startled by the visitor and notices he is greatly changed. He is thinner, calmer, and more subdued, and has all the outward appearances of a gentleman. He asks about Catherine and demands that Nelly fetch her immediately. Nelly is loath to disturb the serenity of the Grange, but Heathcliff urges her, saying "Go, and carry my message. I'm in hell till you do!"

Nelly tells Catherine merely that she has a visitor from Gimmerton. When Catherine leaves the room, Edgar inquires who the visitor might be and Nelly tells him. Edgar refers to Heathcliff as a gypsy and a ploughboy and, calling through the window, he suggests that Catherine entertain Heathcliff in the kitchen. Furious, Catherine orders that two tables be set up in the parlor, one for Edgar and Isabella and the other for Heathcliff and herself. Although Catherine

insists that the two men shake hands, the enmity between them is very apparent. Heathcliff and Catherine are so happy in each other's company it is an embarrassment to those watching, and Edgar grows white with anger at their evident love for each other.

Heathcliff tells Catherine he went away to improve himself for her and he dreamed of coming back and avenging himself on Hindley and then killing himself. Having seen her once again, however, he knows he can do nothing to hurt her and is abandoning his vow of revenge. He also says he will not be driven away again. Heathcliff also tells Nelly he will be staying at Wuthering Heights on the invitation of Hindley. This development makes Nelly very uneasy.

From then on Catherine and Isabella often visit the Heights, and Heathcliff pays calls on Thrushcross Grange. Then, something unexpected happens: suddenly, Isabella becomes infatuated with Heathcliff. At this time she is "a charming young lady of eighteen; infantile in manners, though possessed of keen wit, keen feelings, and a keen temper, too, if irritated." She refuses to heed the warnings of Catherine and Nelly. While Heathcliff has nothing but contempt for the silly, shallow Isabella, he is interested in the fact that she is her brother's heir. Edgar is appalled at Isabella's infatuation and fears that the Grange might fall into Heathcliff's hands if his sister marries him.

Commentary

While on the surface Catherine and Edgar appear to be happy, when Heathcliff reappears her behavior indicates that she is bored with the placid existence at the Grange. Edgar displays his snobbishness when he suggests that Heathcliff be entertained in the kitchen. The jealousy between Edgar and Heathcliff is now out in the open.

Despite outward appearances, it is apparent that Heathcliff has not really changed, and while he says he has abandoned his plan for revenge, it seems strange he should accept Hindley's invitation to stay at Wuthering Heights. In addition, Hindley has already begun to lose money to the sharper-witted Heathcliff. The latter seems ever alert to Hindley's weaknesses.

In an effort to disillusion Isabella about Heathcliff, Nelly asks her if she knows how Heathcliff has been living, how he has become wealthy, and why he is staying with Hindley, whom he hates. She tells Isabella the two men sit up all night playing cards together and that Hindley has been borrowing money from Heathcliff, using the Heights as security.

Chapter 11

Summary

Thinking she might show Hindley where his evil ways are leading him, Nelly pays a visit to the Heights. Seeing little Hareton outside the gates, she identifies herself and says she has called to see his father, Hindley. Hareton does not recognize her as his former nurse and greets her with a hail of stones and curses. Nelly asks him who taught him such things and he answers "Devil daddy." He says his father cannot abide him be-

cause he [Hareton] swears at him. He says the curate no longer comes to teach him, and it is Heathcliff, whom he loves, who has taught him to swear. Heathcliff appears, and Nelly, badly frightened, leaves without seeing Hindley.

The next day Heathcliff calls at Thrushcross Grange, and Nelly sees him and Isabella embracing, although he has professed to hate "that mawkish, waxen face." When Catherine later confronts him with this, he tells her that she is not his wife and he will do as he pleases.

Nelly tells Edgar about Heathcliff and Isabella, and he blames Catherine for encouraging Heathcliff to come to the house. As Heathcliff and Catherine are still in the kitchen, Edgar enters and confronts him. Catherine accuses him of listening at the door, and both she and Heathcliff treat him with contempt. When Heathcliff refuses to leave, Edgar, beside himself with rage, is about to call the servants to throw his unwelcome visitor out. Catherine locks the door so there will be a fair fight between the two men. When Edgar tries to wrest the key from her, she throws it in the fire. Overcome by anger, Edgar clumps into a chair, and Catherine and Heathcliff taunt him for his cowardice. Edgar springs up and hits Heathcliff in the throat. By the time Heathcliff has recovered, Edgar has left the room. In a passion, Heathcliff declares he will "crush his ribs like a rotten hazelnut."

Edgar confronts Catherine, telling her she must choose between him and Heathcliff. She flies into a rage, throwing herself about in a kind of fit. Dashing to her room, as if completely mad, she locks the door and for two days she remains there, touching no food. Thinking she is dramatizing herself and not realizing she is starving herself, Edgar leaves her alone. He then counsels Isabella about her relationship with Heathcliff and vows that if she continues to encourage him, he will no

longer consider her his sister.

Commentary

Heathcliff's evil influence is felt at Wuthering Heights. He is turning little Hareton into a brute with no love or respect for his father, and he has ended his education just as Hindley did to him. He is deliberately encouraging Isabella's infatuation (with the intention of acquiring the Linton property from which he was so cruelly banished as a child), and this has caused trouble between Edgar and Isabella and between Edgar and Catherine.

Catherine's appalling hysteria and her refusal to eat suggest a further onslaught on her delicate constitution. This determination to refuse food is

duplicated later by Heathcliff. Metaphorically, both feel actual food does not nourish them, that they must consume one another's souls for sustenance. Catherine's madness here is the beginning of the illness which eventually results in her death in Chapter 16.

Chapter 12

Summary

While Catherine keeps to her room, Isabella mopes in the garden and Edgar broods in his study. At the end of three days, Catherine asks for water and gruel, saying she is dying. Nelly does not take her seriously. Catherine says she is determined either to starve or to leave the country. She believes Edgar to be completely heartless because he has not come to her on his knees, and she says she would kill *herself* if she thought her action would kill *him*. She visualizes herself dead and Edgar and Isabella giving prayers of thanks because she is gone and the Grange peaceful once more. Picking holes in her pillow, she identifies the various feathers which she pulls out by the handful. They remind her of the days spent with Heathcliff on the moors. In a type of trance she imagines Nelly as an old witch in a cave on Peniston Crag, brewing evil potions. Then she imagines a clothes press (cupboard) in the room. By this time Nelly is beginning to feel frightened. Catherine insists she sees a face in the mirror, and Nelly assures her it is her own reflection. To pacify her, she throws a shawl over the glass. As the clock strikes twelve, the shawl falls from the mirror and Catherine shrieks that it is an omen of death. She insists on the window being opened so that the cold air can rush over her. Reviving, she asks Nelly how long she has been in her room. She commands her to tell Edgar to make his peace with her because she is burning with fever. Flinging the window open, she leans out into the bitter air. She imagines she is with Heathcliff at Gimmerton kirkyard,

summoning up ghosts. Addressing herself to Heathcliff, she tells him that when she is dead she will never lie in peace: "I'll not lie there by myself; they may bury me twelve feet deep, and throw the church down over me, but I won't rest till you are with me. I never will!"

Edgar appears just as Nelly is about to call him. He is horrified at Catherine's changed appearance and upbraids Nelly for not telling him how sick she is. On her own responsibility, Nelly goes for medical aid. On the way she finds Isabella's dog, Fanny, hanging suspended by a handkerchief. She rescues the dog and wonders who did such an evil thing.

Mr. Kenneth, the doctor, says he does not think Catherine will survive this illness. Next morning one of the servants tells Edgar that Isabella has run off with Heathcliff. They stopped to have a horseshoe fastened near Gimmerton, just past midnight, and the blacksmith's daughter recognized them and spread the gossip all over the village. Edgar says that from then on Isabella will be his sister in name only not because *he* has disowned *her* but because *she* has disowned *him*. He instructs Nelly to send Isabella's property to her new home, when she knows where that will be.

Commentary

There are many vivid and harrowing scenes in this chapter, particularly Catherine's delirium. It is evident that her health is damaged beyond repair and that she has become dedicated to the destruction of both herself and Heathcliff.

Now that Isabella has run off with Heathcliff, what Edgar has feared has come to pass: Isabella is now in Heathcliff's power, and, through her, the Linton property may fall into his hands.

The scene of Catherine's delirium is one of the high points in English literature. It breaks away from the conventional ideas of time and presents the unique idea that only by giving and receiving pain can Catherine and Heathcliff express their love. In addition, it contains the prophetic statement about Catherine's impending death; the reader is alerted for rapid developments in the following chapters. Also, when Catherine says that not even death will separate her from Heathcliff, she prepares us for the appearance of her ghost at Wuthering Heights and the final fate of Heathcliff himself. Finally, Catherine's cruelty to Edgar, to Heathcliff, and to herself is not an isolated phenomenon; the hanging of Isabella's dog is one of the most shocking revelations of Heathcliff's cruelty in the novel.

Chapter 13

Summary

Heathcliff and Isabella remain away for two months. Meanwhile, with Edgar's tender care, Catherine grows stronger, but despite this the doctor knows her health is ruined, and he feels that Edgar's health and strength are being sacrificed to preserve a mere ruin. To complicate matters further, Catherine is expecting a child, and the delighted Edgar hopes it will be a

son and heirthen, in the event of his death, Thrushcross Grange would pass into the hands of his son, rather than to Isabella and Heathcliff.

Six weeks after the elopement, Isabella writes Edgar, announcing her marriage and begging his forgiveness. Edgar does not reply. Then the desperately unhappy Isabella sends a letter to Nelly. She says they are at Wuthering Heights, and she now wonders if Heathcliff is man or devil. She beseeches Nelly to visit her and bring a token of forgiveness from Edgar. She speaks of her meeting with the unkempt little Hareton, who behaves like a fiend and threatens to set Throtter, one of the dogs, on her. The surly Joseph pretends he cannot understand what she is talking about. Walking across the yard she knocked at a door which was opened by a gaunt, slovenly man whom she finally recognized as Hindley, Catherine's brother. Stepping into the room she introduced herself as the former Isabella Linton, now Mrs. Heathcliff. Hindley closed the door so she could not leave.

For several hours Hindley kept her imprisoned in his apartment while he paced to and fro. When she started crying, Hindley said there was no maid servant in the house, but that Joseph would show her to Heathcliff's quarters. He told her to be sure to lock and bolt her door at night. He produced a pistol with a double-edged spring knife attached to the handle and admitted he hoped to find Heathcliff's door open some night so that he could kill him. Isabella wishes she possessed such a weapon herself.

Isabella escaped to the kitchen; there, Joseph threatened to leave when she insisted on making the porridge. Isabella forced Joseph to show her through the house, looking for a parlor or a decent place where she could sleep. When he finally showed her Heathcliff's room, she found the door locked. While she wept with frustration, Joseph took the candle and left her alone in the dark. The dog, Throtter, crept in and

made friends with her.

Hearing Hindley stumbling along the passage, she fled to another room which turned out to be Hareton's. When Joseph brought Hareton up to bed, he told her she could have the house all to herself because Heathcliff had gone out. Flinging herself into a chair she slept until rudely awakened by Heathcliff. She explained she could not get into their room because he had the key. Using foul and abusive language, Heathcliff told her about Catherine's illness and blamed Edgar for causing it. He said he would make her suffer until he could take his revenge on Edgar.

Isabella's letter closes with the confession that she hates Heathcliff, that she is wretched, and has been a fool. She tells Nelly not to disappoint her she will be waiting for her visit every day.

Commentary

While Catherine's health seems to be improving, she has no will to live. She has become morbid and even the expectation of a child does nothing to arouse her from her lethargy. Once more we are warned of her approaching death.

Edgar's excitement at the prospect of an heir is understandable. He remains a kind but ineffectual character, in contrast to the wild, savage personalities of Catherine and Heathcliff.

Emily Brontë uses Isabella's letter to Nelly to let us know about the state of affairs at Wuthering Heights and about Heathcliff's abusive treatment of Isabella. Isabella has no friends or allies at the Heights; even Hareton, her own nephew, is hateful and threatens to set one of the dogs on her. Madness has infected the place, and Isabella can find no one she can trust, not even the man she married.

Chapter 14

Summary

Edgar refuses to make peace with Isabella, saying she is responsible for their estrangement, but he gives Nelly permission to visit the Heights. Nelly is horrified at the condition of the house and the change in Isabella. She has become dirty and slatternly, while Heathcliff appears handsome and bears himself like a gentleman; he greets Nelly courteously. Isabella is heartbroken by Edgar's message and the fact that he has sent her no token of forgiveness.

When Heathcliff inquires about Catherine, Nelly tells him bluntly that everything about her has changed, including her looks, and she feels it is only a sense of duty that keeps Edgar at her side. Furious, Heathcliff demands that Nelly arrange a meeting between Catherine

and himself. Nelly refuses, saying the excitement would kill Catherine.

When Isabella defends her brother, Heathcliff retorts that she looks like a slut. He hints that she is losing her mind and says he will not let her outside the house for fear she would disgrace him. He reveals how he has humiliated Isabella, and that she ran off with him even after he hanged her little dog. He says he would like to do the same thing to everyone in the family except Catherine. He declares Isabella will never leave him, even if he were to set her free. Isabella denies this and says Heathcliff would never allow her to leave. She admits that Heathcliff married her to get power over Edgar, but swears he will never be able to do so. Her only wish is to see

Heathcliff die. Heathcliff says she is raving and pushes her out of the room.

When Nelly wants to leave, Heathcliff forbids her to go. He says unless she arranges a meeting with Catherine, he will break into the house and knock Edgar down, if necessary, and threaten the servants with pistols. When Nelly still refuses, he says he will hold her there and go to the Grange himself. Fearing the consequences of such action, Nelly agrees to carry a letter to Catherine and make arrangements for a meeting.

Commentary

Heathcliff's plan for revenge is now out in the open. He has reduced the ladylike Isabella Linton to a slovenly drab and has separated her from Edgar. Another clash is indicated when Nelly is bullied into arranging a meeting between Heathcliff and Catherine during Edgar's absence. This is one of the few times in the novel that Nelly questions the prudence of her own actions.

Now we realize that Isabella's letter was not filled with melodramatic exaggerations. As we read this chapter, we see how monstrously Heathcliff has treated her. He boasts to Nelly that he never cared for his fragile, ladylike bride. He used her and he still uses her to wreak revenge on the Linton family. "I have no pity," he rages. "The more the worms writhe [within me], the more I yearn to crush out their entrails! It is a moral teething; and I grind with greater energy, in proportion to the increase of pain."

Chapter 15

Summary

While Nelly feels that Heathcliff is lurking around Thrushcross

Grange, it is not until Sunday, four days later, that she gives Catherine his letter. Edgar and the servants are at church, and Catherine is seated at the window. She is already marked by death; an unearthly beauty is stamped on her face. When Nelly puts the letter in her hand, Catherine is too sick to grasp its contents. Nelly then tells her it is from Heathcliff.

Before Nelly can call to Heathcliff, he bursts into the room and seizes Catherine in his arms. Having kissed her frantically, he looks into her face and knows that she is dying. When he cries, "Oh, Cathy! Oh my life! How can I bear it?" she declares he and Edgar have broken her heart, and now *they* are asking to be pitied. She refuses to pity either of them and asks

Heathcliff how many years he means to live when she is dead. She wishes she could hold Heathcliff until they both are dead; she cares nothing for his suffering. Probably twenty years hence, she says, he will look at her grave and say he loved her long ago. Heathcliff begs her not to torture him until he becomes as mad as she.

He then accuses Catherine of being possessed by a devil and says her words are branded on his memory and will eat deeper after she has left him. While she is in peace, he will writhe in the torments of hell. Rising weakly, she turns to Heathcliff and they meet in such a passionate embrace that Nelly thinks her mistress will never be released alive. Freely they forgive each other. Catherine appears to fall into a faint, and when Nelly tries to help her, Heathcliff "gnashed at me, and foamed like a mad dog, and gathered her to him with greedy jealousy." Heathcliff vows that when Catherine dies, his soul will be with her in the grave. Looking out, Nelly sees Edgar and the servants returning. She urges Heathcliff to leave, and although he tries to do so, Catherine refuses to let him go. They are in each other's arms when Edgar enters. Catherine has collapsed and Heathcliff gives her to Edgar, begging him to help her.

When she regains consciousness, Catherine's mind is wandering, and to get rid of Heathcliff, Nelly tells him her mistress is recovering. He leaves the house, but remains in the garden all night, telling Nelly that if she does not bring him news in the morning he will once again break into the house.

Commentary

Some of the most dramatic and moving passages in the book are to be found in this chapter. These scenes, more than any other, make *Wuthering Heights* the classic it is. The reader forgets the events are being narrated by the servant, Nelly Dean. It is possible that Emily

Brontë also forgot this because Nelly uses such phrases as "wild vindictiveness," "bloodless lip and scintillating eye," and "so inadequate was his stock of gentleness to the requirements of her condition." Such is the power of the writing that this in no way detracts from the effect. One wonders how Emily Brontë can sustain the rest of the story, now that the heroine, Catherine, is about to die. The fact that she does this so successfully emphasizes the fact that *Heathcliff is the novel*.

Chapter 16

Summary

At twelve o'clock that night, Catherine dies, after giving birth to a delicate, premature baby girl, the same Cathy Mr. Lockwood met at Wuthering Heights. Nelly knows that Catherine is now "incomparably beyond and above them all," as she had foreseen. Recalling Catherine's tempestuous nature, it seems strange to Nelly that she should be so calm in death. Heathcliff knows instinctively that Catherine is dead. When Nelly goes out to give him the news, he demands an account of how she died. He asks if Catherine spoke his name on her deathbed, and when Nelly says that she did not, he flies into a passion and prays that so long as he lives Catherine will not rest in her grave. He commands her to haunt him, saying, "*I cannot* live without my life! *I cannot* live without my soul!"

While Edgar keeps watch over Catherine's body until the day of the funeral, Heathcliff keeps watch outside. Taking pity on him, Nelly allows Heathcliff to enter the house while Edgar is sleeping, so he can say farewell to Catherine. To everyone's surprise, Catherine is not buried with the Lintons or with the Earnshaws, but in a corner of the kirkyard (churchyard) where the wall is so low it is only a step to the moors.

Commentary

There are interesting insights into the character of Nelly Dean and Edgar, qualities we might not have suspected in either: sentimentality in Nelly, and a sensitiveness and understanding on the part of Edgar when he has Catherine buried as close to her beloved moors as possible. Conventional and somewhat dull as he is, one gets the impression that he understands more about Catherine's nature than

either he or the reader is aware.

With the birth of young Catherine Linton, a second generation has been introduced to the Grange, just as Hareton's birth created a new generation at Wuthering Heights. The reader is prepared for later developments when Nelly Dean, suggests that because Edgar Linton lacks a son, his estate may eventually fall into the hands of Heathcliff.

Chapter 17

Summary

Winter seems to return on the evening of Catherine's funeral. Nelly is rocking the sickly baby Cathy when Isabella appears out of the storm. She has run away from Wuthering Heights and she presents an alarming sight without hat or coat, bruised, and with a deep cut under one ear. Denouncing Heathcliff, Isabella takes off her wedding ring, hammers it with a poker, and throws it into the fire.

Hindley kept himself sober so he might attend Catherine's funeral, she says, but as the time approached, he lost his nerve and started drinking heavily. Also, Heathcliff did not eat for days and locked himself in his room, "praying like a Methodist" to a god whom he confused with his own father.

When Heathcliff returned from his vigil at Catherine's grave, Hindley locked him out. Hindley suggested that he and Isabella kill Heathcliff and drew the weapon he had shown her previously. At the last moment Isabella ran to the window and warned Heathcliff. According to Hindley, this proved she still loved him. Then Isabella suggested that Heathcliff stretch himself over Catherine's grave like a faithful dog. Bursting through the window, Heathcliff wrenched the weapon from Hindley, who got badly cut on the arm by the blade and collapsed. As he lay senseless on the floor, Heathcliff kicked him and pounded his head on the stones. Recovering himself, he bound up Hindley's wound.

In Heathcliff's presence, Isabella reminded Hindley that Heathcliff was responsible for all their miseries, and that but for him, Catherine would still be alive. As she spoke slightly of Catherine, Heathcliff threw a dinner knife at her. This accounts for the wound under her ear.

As she ran from the Heights she left Heathcliff and Hindley quarreling and little Hareton hanging a litter of puppies from a chairback.

Her story told, Isabella leaves in the carriage which Nelly has called for her, accompanied by her old dog, Fanny. She goes to a suburb of London, where an ailing, peevish son is born. She names him Linton. Although Heathcliff keeps himself acquainted with all her doings, he never gets in touch with her, but he is interested in the boy and says he knows where he is and that he can lay hands on him when he wants to. About thirteen years after Catherine's death, Isabella dies; Linton is twelve.

Edgar is pleased to learn his sister has left Heathcliff. Following Catherine's death he withdraws from society for some time, taking solitary

walks and visiting his wife's grave. He is greatly consoled by little Cathy, who rules his heart completely.

Six months after his sister Catherine's death, Hindley dies. There is some talk of his having taken his own life, but nothing is made of it. The news is brought to the Grange by the doctor, Mr. Kenneth. Nelly reminds Edgar that he is now Hareton's guardian, being his uncle, and Edgar gives her permission to visit Wuthering Heights. She wants to be sure Hareton is not cheated out of his inheritance. The lawyer tells Nelly that Hindley has gambled his whole estate away and that Heathcliff holds the mortgages. Hareton is now a beggar.

Heathcliff pays for Hindley's funeral, and Nelly hears him say to Hareton "Now, my bonny lad, you are *mine!* And we'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it!"; the trusting boy seems to regard Heathcliff with great affection. When Nelly says she is taking Hareton back to the Grange with her, Heathcliff says if Edgar does not allow him to keep the boy, he will take possession of his own child, Linton. This ties Nelly's hands and those of Edgar. Heathcliff is now in firm possession of Wuthering Heights, and of Hindley's son, Hareton, whom he has reduced to the position of a servant without pay.

Commentary

This chapter marks the end of two more characters, Catherine and Hindley, and focuses on two new characters, Cathy Linton and Linton Heathcliff. Thus three generations have now been spanned at Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. Heathcliff and Hareton are alone at Wuthering Heights, while little Cathy and Edgar are alone at the Grange.

Heathcliff's obsession with the dead Catherine has completely warped

his personality. He has succeeded in the major part of his plan for vengeance: he is in possession of Wuthering Heights and Hareton, formerly belonging to his enemy, Hindley; furthermore, he is determined to brutalize Hareton as he himself was brutalized. This is evidenced by the incident of Hareton's hanging the puppies. Nevertheless, Hareton may prove not so simple a tool for Heathcliff's vengeance.

Chapter 18

Summary

After Catherine's death, Nelly Dean looks after Edgar and Cathy at Thrushcross Grange. Cathy resembles both her mother and father, having

the best qualities of both. She has the beautiful, dark eyes of the Earnshaws and the fair hair and complexion of the Lintons. She is a happy, affectionate child, but with a spirit and will of her own.

Nelly then turns her tale to Isabella: about four months before Isabella dies, she sends for Edgar in order to put her child, Linton Heathcliff, into his hands. She is afraid Heathcliff will claim him. Edgar sets off for London immediately, and Nelly is left to look after Cathy. During this period, Cathy disappears on her pony, taking three dogs with her. Greatly alarmed, Nelly searches and finds her in the kitchen of Wuthering Heights, talking to Hareton Earnshaw, a tall lad of eighteen, and the woman looking after the house.

On the way home to the Grange, Cathy tells Nelly how, on the way to Peniston Crag, she passed the Heights, and Hareton's dogs ran out and attacked hers. Hareton separated the dogs and then showed her the Fairy Cave and other secret places. Nelly insists that Cathy not tell her father about the escapade at Peniston Crag and Wuthering Heights. When Cathy understands that Nelly might be dismissed for not watching her closely enough, she agrees to say nothing.

Commentary

Twelve years have elapsed. Young Cathy's character has been delineated, and she is now prepared to meet her young cousin, Linton Heathcliff, when her father returns with him from London.

The thing that Edgar and Nelly have been desperately trying to avoid has happened: Cathy has visited Wuthering Heights and has met Hareton Earnshaw. Despite their initial clash, it is obvious that they have found pleasure in one another's company as they explored the Fairy Cave. While Cathy rejects the idea that the rough Hareton is her cousin, her interest in him and Wuthering Heights is obvious.

Chapter 19

Summary

On the day of Edgar's return from London, a letter, edged in black, announces that Isabella has died. Cathy runs wild at the idea of a young cousin coming to stay with them. She has a lock of Linton's hair that Isabella sent to Edgar. She insists she and Nelly go down the road to meet the carriage bringing her father and Linton to the Grange.

Linton is asleep in the carriage, and although he is fifteen, six months younger than Cathy, he seems delicate and puny in comparison. From Edgar's remarks, Nelly gathers that Linton has been peevish and crying during the entire journey. He backs away from Cathy's loving welcome and refuses to sit on a chair to have his tea with the others. He lies down on the sofa while Cathy treats him like a pet, even offering him tea from her saucer. He responds to this display of attention and manages a faint smile in response.

Edgar tells Nelly he thinks that Linton will gain spirit and strength from a companion of his own age—that is, if Heathcliff will allow him to stay at the Grange. After the children have gone to bed, Joseph arrives to tell Edgar he is to take Linton to Wuthering Heights immediately. Edgar says the boy is in bed and is not to be disturbed, that he is in a poor state of health, and that Isabella wanted him to be her brother's ward. However, he promises to deliver Linton to Wuthering Heights the following morning.

Enraged, Joseph leaves, threatening that Heathcliff himself will come to the Grange in the morning, and they will not dare to throw *him* out.

Commentary

On the surface it would appear that the old tragedy might be reenacted by the young people of the second generation at Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. However, while Cathy, Linton, and Hareton show some of the characteristics of their parents, these traits have been modified, and there is hope for a happier solution to the problems presented.

Cathy's warm and affectionate nature (a combination of Catherine's spontaneity and Edgar's mildness) has already affected her delicate cousin. Linton, on the other hand, is shown as having no spirit and

demanding pity and attention constantly. It is clear that he is very much like his mother, Isabella. Linton also has the earmarks of a petty tyrant that is, he is an obvious reflection of Heathcliff's personality.

Chapter 20

Summary

Cathy is told that Linton's father has sent for him; she knows nothing of his father and does not know where he is to be sent. Early the next morning Nelly saddles up Minny and takes the reluctant and suspicious young Linton to Wuthering Heights. Linton cannot believe his father is

living, as Isabella never spoke of Heathcliff. He resents being taken from the Grange and leaving Cathy and his Uncle Edgar.

On seeing his son for the first time, Heathcliff speaks contemptuously of his effeminate appearance and is amazed when Linton bursts into tears. Heathcliff can see nothing of himself in his son. When Nelly asks him to be kind to Linton, he assures her, sarcastically, that he will be *very* kind to him. Sending Hareton and old Joseph about their business, he reminds Nelly that Linton is heir to Thrushcross Grange. He is determined that eventually Linton will take over Edgar's estate and hire Earnshaws to work on the land. This is his only interest in Linton, as a cog in his plan for revenge. He hates his son because he reminds him so much of the despised Isabella. However, he says that Linton will be given a handsomely furnished room and a tutor, and Hareton and Joseph have been told to obey Linton as the young master of the house. Far from feeling proud of his son, he is bitterly disappointed in the "whey-faced whining wretch."

Commentary

It is ironic that Heathcliff's son should prove to be so weak and ineffectual, the very type to arouse all Heathcliff's intolerance and encourage his ruthlessness. His pride is stung and he insults Linton openly. This evokes sympathy for the boy who has always been sheltered and cannot conceive of the life he will lead at Wuthering Heights.

Chapter 21

Summary

Although Cathy is disappointed to find her new playmate gone, time dims her memory of him, so that when next they meet she does not recognize him; this is on Cathy's sixteenth birthday. There is never a

celebration on Cathy's birthday because it also marks the anniversary of her mother's death. Edgar spends the day quietly and visits Catherine's grave. Meanwhile, Cathy asks Nelly to go walking on the moors with her. This proves to be a trick, and Nelly finds that they have wandered near Wuthering Heights. She sees Cathy being approached by Heathcliff and Hareton and hears Heathcliff accuse Cathy of poaching. He pretends he does not know who she is and asks the name of her father. She says her father is Mr. Linton and asks Heathcliff if Hareton is his son. Heathcliff says no, but that he does have a son whom she has already met; he will introduce her to him if

she will visit Wuthering Heights. Cathy does not understand who the son could be and accepts the invitation, much against Nelly's wishes.

Heathcliff reveals that he is planning for Cathy and Linton to marry. He says Cathy will be well provided for if she agrees to the match. Nelly says that if Edgar dies, Cathy will inherit his estate and will not need Linton's money. Heathcliff informs her that in the provisions of the will, *he* will inherit Edgar's property, but to make doubly sure, he wants Cathy and Linton to marry. Then, in the event that Linton dies, he will inherit everything. Heathcliff's eyes seem to soften when he looks at Cathy, and Nelly imagines that it is because he sees the likeness to her mother, Catherine. Inside Wuthering Heights they are introduced to Linton, who has grown tall and looks brighter than he did as a child. Heathcliff asks Cathy if she remembers her cousin. It is evident that Linton is attracted by Cathy's beauty and high spirits.

Cathy invites Linton to the Grange. He says it is too long a journey for him, but asks her to visit him once or twice a week. Heathcliff is angered at Linton's attitude and tells Nelly he often wishes Hareton were his son. He says he could have loved Hareton, had he been anyone else.

Heathcliff tells Linton to show Cathy around the estate, but Linton prefers not to exert himself. Heathcliff then calls Hareton, and Cathy asks if Hareton is also her cousin. Heathcliff says this is so and comments on Hareton's good looks; Cathy agrees with him. As Hareton and Cathy leave to look around the farm, Heathcliff tells Nelly he understands and sympathizes with Hareton because he was subjected to the same treatment himself. He brags that he has degraded Hareton even more than Hindley degraded him because Hareton has an intelligence superior to his own. Yet, despite everything, Hareton has a deep affection for him.

Linton, feeling jealous, follows Cathy and Hareton. Hareton is unable to read the inscription over the door because Heathcliff has kept him illiterate. Cathy and Linton have a fine time insulting and mortifying him about this. When Linton taunts Hareton about not being a gentleman, Hareton says if Linton weren't so much like a girl, he would strike him down.

On the way back to the Grange, Nelly warns Cathy against the occupants of Wuthering Heights, but Cathy will hear nothing against them. The next day she tells her father about her visit to the Heights. In turn, her father says that Heathcliff is a murderer; he was responsible for her mother's death. Cathy cannot believe her gentle father capable of such hate. She is forbidden to visit the Heights again. When she wants to write to Linton and send the books she promised him, Nelly will not allow it. On the surface, Cathy seems to have accepted these restrictions, but Nelly

finds that the two young people have been corresponding. She finds some of the notes and threatens to turn them over to Cathy's father unless she promises to stop. Then Nelly burns the notes and sends a letter to Linton telling him not to write to Cathy again: "Master Heathcliff is requested to send no more notes to Miss Linton, as she will not receive them."

Commentary

Small but significant happenings have taken place. Nelly has lost any sympathy she might have had for young Linton, and Zillah, the "lusty dame" of Chapter 1, is now installed at the Heights as housekeeper.

The attraction between Hareton and Cathy is again hinted at. Heathcliff draws a comparison between his weakly son and Hareton and indirectly hints that despite himself he feels affection for Hareton.

But it is Cathy's joy at meeting her long-lost cousin that is of major significance here. Heathcliff has long hoped for such a successful pairing of the two young people. The fact that they are so taken with one another and decide to risk a secret correspondence creates suspense and anxiety within the reader. This budding relationship is developing exactly as Heathcliff planned part and parcel of his vengeful scheming.

Chapter 22

Summary

In the early autumn, Edgar Linton catches a bad cold that settles in his lungs. He is confined to the house the whole winter. Forgetting her little romance, Cathy waits on her father devotedly. In November, Edgar insists that she go with Nelly for a walk, and while in the garden Cathy confesses she feels that her father is going to die. Nelly

tries to reassure her, but Cathy reminds her that her Aunt Isabella died very young. Cathy's hat suddenly blows over the garden wall and, as Nelly tries to find a key, Heathcliff appears. He tells Cathy that Linton is dying of a broken heart because Cathy is so fickle, and if she does not do something about it, Linton will be dead before summer. Heathcliff says he is going away for a week and begs Cathy to visit Wuthering Heights and see for herself. He again swears that Linton is dying.

During the evening Nelly can see that Cathy is brooding. She is lost in thought and cries quietly to herself. Nelly repeats that she is sure Heathcliff was lying about Linton's condition. Cathy agrees that she might be right,

but she will never feel at ease until she is sure. She is determined to let Linton know it is not her fault she did not write, and that her regard for him is unchanged.

The next day, much against her better judgment, Nelly finds herself riding with Cathy to Wuthering Heights. Her only hope is that Linton's condition will prove that Heathcliff was lying.

Commentary

Once again playing on the weakness (he thinks) of his enemy, Heathcliff appeals to the pity and sensitivity he senses in Cathy and wrings her heart about Linton's deteriorating condition. He has baited the trap for her return to Wuthering Heights. Cathy's loyalty to her weakling cousin is aroused, and she is determined to prove her devotion to him. Ironically, it is the very qualities that Heathcliff despises in Cathy that will eventually frustrate his desire for revenge and bring tranquility to Wuthering Heights.

Chapter 23

Summary

It is raining, and by the time Cathy and Nelly reach Wuthering Heights, Nelly is wet and in a bad mood. Linton greets Cathy by saying his father had said she would call. He says not to kiss him it would take his breath away and to close the door because he is cold. Giving Linton a little wine and water, Cathy asks him if he is pleased to see her. He says he is, but that his father assured him that Cathy despises him because he is a weakling. Cathy insists she loves him, next to her father and Nelly.

Linton asks Cathy to spend some time with him whenever Heathcliff is hunting on the moors. She says she will spend half her time with

him, if her father permits it. Linton then says if she marries him she will love him even better than her father. Heathcliff has said so. Cathy says she would never love anyone better than her father. She also points out that married men don't always love their wives and uses Linton's parents, Heathcliff and Isabella, as an example. Linton says it is a lie and retaliates that *her* mother hated her father. In her agitation, Cathy pushes Linton's chair, knocking him against one of the arms. He has a violent fit of coughing and when he recovers, he accuses Cathy of striking him, something that not even Hareton has done. He is so filled with self-pity that Nelly says she and Cathy will never visit him again. As Cathy moves towards the door Linton

throws himself on the floor in a childish tantrum. The quarrel is patched up, and Cathy sings some old ballads at Linton's request. Nelly warns Cathy she will tell Edgar if she attempts to go to Wuthering Heights again.

Nelly contracts a cold from the drenching of the night before and is in bed for three weeks. Thus, Cathy divides her time between her father and Nelly, nursing each lovingly. At the time, Nelly never wonders how Cathy fills her evenings, and when she notices the color in her cheeks and a redness on her fingers, she thinks it is caused by heat from the fire. She does not connect it with a cold ride across the moor to the Heights.

Commentary

In the quarrel between Cathy and Linton about their parents there are echoes from the past, and the reader has a feeling that history will repeat itself, but that because of their differences in character, the story will have a happier ending. Plotwise, it seems too coincidental that Nelly should have to spend three weeks in bed, thus allowing Cathy to visit the Heights undetected. From a narrative point of view, however, Emily Brontë handles this superbly, and it would be quibbling to say this rather clumsy contrivance detracts from the story.

Chapter 24

Summary

Cathy finally confesses that while Nelly lay sick she visited the Heights every day. She begs Nelly not to be angry and says one of the grooms, Michael, helped her in exchange for books and pictures. The second time she visited Wuthering Heights, she says Linton seemed in better spirits. Zillah, the housekeeper, had made the place comfortable, and as Joseph and Hareton were out, Cathy and Linton

could do as they liked. They planned what they would do in the summer. Linton wanted to lie in the sun on the moors all day, while Cathy wanted to rock in the branches of a rustling tree. He wanted peace while she wanted to "sparkle and dance in a glorious jubilee." She thought his heaven would be only half alive; he thought hers to be drunk. They agreed they would try both things when the time came.

The next day, Hareton greeted her at the door and tried to make conversation with her. Looking at the inscription over the door, he told her he could read the letters, but Cathy laughed when he confessed he could not

yet understand the numbers. She told him she had come to visit Linton, not him, and he crept away angry and mortified.

When she entered the house, Linton told her he was feeling ill. As she started reading to him, Hareton stormed in, full of hate. Flinging Linton from his seat he told him to go upstairs to his room and take Cathy with him. Swearing, he raised his fist at Cathy and she dropped one of the books. He kicked it after her and locked her and Linton out of the room. Joseph urged Hareton on, saying he was full of the right spirit. Linton was in a state of collapse. Frantic and powerless with fury, he demanded to be let into the room, saying he would kill Hareton. This brought on a coughing fit. Blood gushed from his mouth and he fell to the floor. As Cathy set off for the Grange, Hareton tried to apologize to her but she struck him with her riding whip.

Three days later, fearing Linton might be dead, she returned to the Heights. Linton had recovered but was very sulky. After remaining silent for an hour, he blamed her for the previous trouble. She left immediately and did not return until two days later, at which time she told Linton this would be her last visit, as she seemed to cause him so much trouble. Linton made excuses for his bad behavior and begged her to stay. He said he knew he was not worthy of her love. He sounded so sincere that they became reconciled.

Having told all, Cathy throws herself on Nelly's mercy, saying she will not be prevented from going to Wuthering Heights, but cautioning Nelly about what effect it will have on her father if he is told of her visits.

Nelly thinks the matter over and then tells Edgar everything. He forbids Cathy to visit Wuthering Heights again, but agrees to write to Linton, giving him permission to visit the Grange. Nelly feels that had

he known of Linton's ill health and miserable disposition he would not have extended the invitation.

Commentary

Cathy has dedicated herself to helping Linton and she loves him despite his weakness and tyranny. Her love takes the form of pity rather than passion. The divergence in their temperaments is indicated by their differing opinions on what constitutes a perfect day. There is a suggestion that Heathcliff's absence from the Heights and Zillah's sudden friendliness are parts of Heathcliff's plot to throw Cathy and Linton together. The same relationship that existed between Heathcliff, Catherine, and Edgar is being repeated between Hareton, Cathy and Linton. Hareton's interest in Cathy is

indicated by his attempts to improve himself and by his display of jealousy toward Linton.

Chapter 25

Summary

Cathy obeys her father's wishes and does not visit Wuthering Heights. Linton does not reply to Edgar's letter, and Edgar discusses his nephew's health with Nelly. She says he is delicate and not likely to live long. However, he is not evil like his father, and should Cathy marry him, she would be able to handle him. Edgar says that he has been looking forward to the day when he would be lying beside Catherine in the churchyard, but that now he is worrying about leaving Cathy. Despite his hatred for Heathcliff, he would be glad for Cathy to marry Linton, if it would mean happiness for her even if it meant that Heathcliff would gain his ends.

Cathy mistakes the brightness of her father's eye and the flush on his cheeks for restored health. On her seventeenth birthday he does not visit Catherine's grave as he usually does, but makes a significant remark to Nelly: "I'll defer it this year a little longer." He again writes to Linton asking him to visit the Grange. Linton replies that his father will not permit him to make such a visit, but he hopes to meet his Uncle Edgar some time when he is walking on the moors. He begs that he and Cathy not be kept apart.

Cathy adds her entreaties to those of Linton, and Edgar finally agrees that Nelly should accompany Cathy to the moors for a visit with Linton. Edgar's health is failing rapidly. He is anxious that Cathy should be able to retain her family home, Thrushcross Grange, after his death, and feels the only way this can be done is by her marrying Linton, who is heir to the estate. He does not realize Linton's health is

deteriorating as quickly as his own. The doctor does not visit Wuthering Heights, and nobody sees Linton to report on his condition. Nelly hopes Linton is rallying, particularly as he writes of walking and riding on the moors. She cannot imagine even Heathcliff treating his own son cruelly when he is so ill.

Commentary

In spite of Nelly's participation in all that went before, and Lockwood's observations while visiting Wuthering Heights, neither is able to interpret wholly what has really been happening at the Heights. Mr.

Lockwood has discarded any idea he might have had with regard to Mrs. Heathcliff and is returning to the city and the social whirl. It is possible that he realizes that he is no match for Cathy's spirited nature.

Chapter 26

Summary

Summer is on the wane when Cathy and Nelly ride out the first time to meet Linton. They are to join him at the crossroads, but a messenger meets them and says Master Linton wishes them to proceed directly toward Wuthering Heights. Already, Edgar's stipulations are being disregarded. Nelly begins to have misgivings. They find Linton very close to Wuthering Heights. He is lying down when they approach. Nelly immediately tells him he looks ill and should not be out walking. Cathy also expresses concern at his appearance. Although weak, Linton protests that he is much better and merely tired because, as his father had said, he is growing too fast.

Cathy tries to make pleasant conversation and invites Linton to the Grange the following week. It is obvious that her cousin is not interested in what she is saying. His peevishness and self-pity have now become the moroseness of the confirmed invalid. Annoyed at his attitude, Cathy says she and Nelly will leave. This throws Linton into a state of terror. Glancing fearfully toward the Heights, he begs her to stay a little longer. Cathy says there is no point unless she can divert and amuse him. Linton tells her to rest, saying he enjoys her company and it is only the heavy weather and heat that make him dull. He asks her to tell her father he is in tolerably good health, and he dozes for awhile. Then he wakes up, badly frightened. He thinks someone has called his name, possibly his father. Cathy assures him they are alone. She begs him to tell her that he is really feeling stronger. Linton bursts into tears as he answers, "Yes, yes, I am!"

As Cathy and Nelly ride away, Cathy assures Linton she will be there the following Thursday. On the way home Cathy speaks of her doubts regarding Linton's true condition. Nelly counsels her to say nothing about it to her father: they will be better able to judge her cousin's condition after their next meeting. When Edgar inquires about their visit with Linton, Cathy and Nelly touch very lightly on the matter.

Commentary

Cathy is intelligent enough to sense that Heathcliff is behind this meeting and that Linton is so ill he has no interest in seeing her. He is being used as a tool. For her part, Nelly fears to speak to Edgar in his weakened condition. Heathcliff's revenge is almost complete.

Chapter 27

Summary

During the following week, Edgar's health grows steadily worse, and even Cathy knows he is dying. She does not wish to stir from his side, but he insists that she keep her appointment with Linton on the moors. Edgar thinks Linton resembles him in nature as he does in looks and is glad to think Cathy will not be left alone when he dies.

Linton seems surprised that Cathy has left her father to keep an appointment with him. Angered, Cathy urges him to admit he is not interested in seeing her. She asks why he insists on these meetings and asks him to release her from her promise. She demands an explanation. Linton cries, "For Heaven's sake, Catherine, don't look so angry! Despise me as much as you please; I am a worthless, cowardly wretch I can't be scorned enough! but I am too mean for your anger hate my father, and spare me, for contempt!"

Cathy prepares to leave. In an agony of terror and with tears streaming down his face, Linton throws himself on the ground, clutching Cathy's dress and begging her not to leave. He says he knows he is a traitor, but he cannot tell her what is going on. If she leaves, his father will kill him. He begs her to save him. He hints she can do this by consenting to something what, he will not reveal. Full of pity, Cathy asks him to tell her everything. Linton says he dares not because he dreads his father. Heathcliff appears on the scene, and ignoring Cathy

and Linton, addresses himself to Nelly, asking if it is true that Edgar is dying, and if so, how long she thinks he will last. Nelly admits Edgar has not much longer to live. Heathcliff expresses the hope that Edgar will die before Linton. He asks if Linton has appeared lively in Cathy's presence, and Nelly tells him Linton should be in bed under the care of a doctor. Heathcliff agrees this will be done in a day or two.

Dragging Linton to his feet, Heathcliff asks Cathy to walk home with her cousin. Cathy reminds Linton her father has forbidden her to visit Wuthering Heights. Linton replies he will never be allowed to enter the

house without her. Nelly interrupts and refuses to go to the Heights with Linton. When Heathcliff is about to mistreat Linton in his rage, Cathy and Nelly agree to accompany them to the Heights.

Once inside, Heathcliff locks the door. He tells them that the rest of the household are away. He offers Cathy a present, in the form of Linton "The present is hardly worth accepting: but I have nothing left to offer." When she attempts to wrest the key from him and bites his hand, Heathcliff strikes her violently and threatens Nelly when she tries to intervene.

While Heathcliff goes to look for their horses, Cathy and Nelly try to escape but cannot. It is clear that Linton has been used to decoy them to Wuthering Heights. He says that if Cathy marries him he will be allowed to return with her to the Grange.

Heathcliff returns and says their horses have trotted off. He sends Linton to bed, and Cathy promises to marry her cousin if Heathcliff will let her return to her father. Heathcliff gloats as he thinks of the agony he can cause Edgar and says Cathy must remain there for twenty-four hours. She cannot leave until she has married Linton. Her father will think she has ceased to love him and has run off, he says. He quotes from a letter Edgar sent to Linton, asking him to be kind to Cathy if ever he married her. Heathcliff assures her Linton will be as cruel as he, with anyone in his power, but unless Cathy marries Linton she will be kept at Wuthering Heights until her father dies: she will never see him alive again. Then Heathcliff locks them in a bedroom. In the morning he comes for Cathy, and for the next five days Nelly is kept a prisoner in the room, seeing only Hareton, who brings up her meals.

Commentary

In this chapter, the villainy of Heathcliff, culminating in the illegal act of kidnapping Cathy and Nelly, would be sheer melodrama, if it were not for the genius of Emily Brontë in creating wholly consistent characters. We *believe* Heathcliff would act in this manner. He has reached a point of crisis. If Linton dies before he can marry Cathy, his plans will be ruined. It is also important that Edgar die before Linton so that the estate will become Linton's. Cathy agrees to marry Linton if Heathcliff will let her visit her father. The actual ceremony is not depicted, but by Chapter 28 the marriage is an accomplished fact.

Chapter 28

Summary

On the fifth morning, Zillah, the housekeeper, enters the bedroom and expresses surprise at finding Nelly there. She says the story is abroad that she and Cathy were lost in the marsh land. She heard this in the village, and on her return related it to Heathcliff. He laughed and said Nelly was upstairs. Zillah says Nelly is to go to the Grange and Cathy will follow in time for her father's funeral. Nelly almost collapses, thinking Edgar to be dead, but Zillah says the doctor has told her he would last yet another day. Rushing downstairs, Nelly finds Linton alone, lying on the settle, sucking a stick of sugar candy. He tells her Cathy is locked upstairs and will not be allowed out. He says Heathcliff has told him Cathy hates him and wants to leave him and is interested only in his money. Nelly reminds him of Cathy's kindness and asks if he is treating her justly in return. He says Cathy does nothing but cry, and he can't stand being with her because he cannot sleep.

Linton says Heathcliff is outside with Dr. Kenneth, talking about Edgar's impending death. He also says he owns everything Cathy has. He even demanded the locket she wore, with pictures inside of her mother and father when they were young. She broke the locket in two, giving Linton the picture of her mother and keeping Edgar's picture for herself. Linton told Heathcliff, and he struck Cathy and crushed the picture under his foot. Nelly begs him to get the key and set Cathy free, but he refuses. Nelly decides she must bring help from the Grange.

Arriving at Thrushcross Grange, she finds Edgar desperately ill, but still alive. She tells him Cathy is coming to see him that night. She tells him how they were detained at Wuthering Heights, placing all the

blame on Heathcliff because she does not wish to distress him about Linton now Cathy's husband. Edgar cannot understand what Heathcliff is planning to do, but decides he had better change his will, leaving everything to Cathy and any children she might have, so that the estate will not fall into Heathcliff's hands, should Linton die. Nelly sends for Mr. Green, the lawyer, and also sends four servants to the Heights to bring Cathy home. The lawyer never appears, sending word he will be there in the morning. The four servants are told at the Heights that Cathy is too ill to accompany them to the Grange. Later in the day Nelly thinks she hears the lawyer coming, but it is Cathy. She runs to her father's room, and he dies blissfully happy, thinking she will be loved and cared for by Linton. At dinnertime, Mr.

Green appears. He has been taking orders from Heathcliff and for that reason he did not come to the Grange to execute Edgar's new will. He takes charge of the house and dismisses all the servants except Nelly. He orders that Edgar be buried in the chapel instead of beside his wife. Nelly knows the instructions in Edgar's will, however, and insists they be carried out. He is buried beside Catherine, close to the moors. Cathy is allowed to stay at the Grange until after her father's funeral.

Commentary

Edgar Linton is dead. He has been unable to change his will because Heathcliff has bribed the lawyer not to go to the Grange until it is too late. By this it can be seen that Heathcliff's evil influence and corruption have spread beyond the Heights and the Grange. Cathy is now completely in Heathcliff's power, and all that stands between him and final victory is the ailing Linton. When he dies, Heathcliff's dream of power and revenge will come true unless something unforeseen thwarts him.

Chapter 29

Summary

Heathcliff comes to take Cathy back to Wuthering Heights and says he hopes she will not encourage Linton in any more disobedience. He tortured Linton for two hours following Cathy's escape from Wuthering Heights and has reduced him to a wreck. Nelly pleads that Cathy and Linton be allowed to stay at the Grange, considering he hates them both so much, but Heathcliff answers that he is going to rent the Grange (which brings the story almost to where Mr. Lockwood takes over as tenant), and he intends that Cathy should work for her keep at the Heights particularly after Linton dies.

Cathy agrees to accompany him because she loves Linton in spite of all his faults and she knows he loves her. She tells Heathcliff nobody loves *him*, and no one will cry when he dies. When Cathy leaves the room to pack her belongings, Nelly begs to be taken as housekeeper at the Heights, but Heathcliff will have none of it. He then tells the horrified Nelly, how, on the previous day, he bribed the sexton who was digging Edgar's grave to let him open Catherine's coffin. For one moment he saw her face in the dust. He knocked one side of the coffin loose and told the sexton to do the same thing to his coffin when he died, and put it next to hers. Their dust

would mingle and Edgar's spirit would never be able to tell them apart.

Nelly condemns Heathcliff for disturbing the dead. He retorts that Catherine has disturbed him night and day for eighteen years until the previous night, when he dreamed he was sleeping beside her.

He relates, how, on the evening she was buried, he began disinterring her body, but hearing a sigh, he stopped, feeling that she was not in the earth, but was right there beside him. Through the years he has constantly had the feeling he was going to see her, but she always eluded him. He often thought he saw her at the window and pursued her ceaselessly. To Nelly, he appears half mad.

He contemplates Catherine's portrait and reminds Nelly to send it to him in the morning. When Cathy appears and says she will accompany him when her pony is saddled, he tells her she will not need a pony at Wuthering Heights. Her feet will have to serve her there. Cathy begs Nelly to visit her, but Heathcliff says Nelly is not to come to the Heights. If Heathcliff needs to see her, he will come to the Grange. He wants no spies in his house.

Commentary

We are now fully aware to what extent Catherine's death has affected Heathcliff, and we are forced to sympathize with him. He has been obsessed by the feeling of her presence night and day; he feels haunted. We are also warned that something strange is taking place when Heathcliff says that last night, for the first time since Catherine's death, he slept peacefully.

Chapter 30

Summary

This brings Nelly Dean's story up to date. She tells Mr. Lockwood she paid a visit to the Heights but did not see Cathy. She spoke to Zillah, the housekeeper, who said she refused to help Cathy when she came to the Heights, on instructions from Heathcliff. From then on, Cathy treated her with contempt. Since Mr. Lockwood has come to the Grange, she has met Zillah on the moor and heard how Cathy ran to Linton's room when she arrived at the Heights and shut herself up with him. The next day she asked for a doctor for Linton, but Heathcliff refused, saying he would not spend a farthing on him. When Zillah refused to help her, she looked after Linton

One night she roused Zillah and told her to tell Heathcliff his son was dying. When Heathcliff reached the room, Linton was dead, and he asked Cathy how she felt. "He's safe, and I'm free, " she answered.

Cathy did not attend the funeral. She stayed upstairs for two weeks, during which time Zillah tried to make friends with her, but Cathy coldly rebuffed her. Heathcliff showed Cathy the will that Linton signed during the week Cathy was with her dying father. Everything was left to Heathcliff; Cathy is destitute.

One Sunday afternoon, driven downstairs by the cold, Cathy goes to the kitchen. Knowing Cathy is coming down, Hareton allows Zillah to help him make himself presentable. After getting warm by the fire, Cathy allows Hareton to get some books off a high shelf for her. Fascinated by Cathy's yellow curls, he touches one of them and she flies into a rage, saying she cannot endure him.

Nelly had thought of taking a cottage of her own and having Cathy live with her, but then she realized Heathcliff would not allow it, any more than he would have allowed Hareton an independent home.

On this note Nelly ends her story.

By this time Mr. Lockwood is feeling much better. It is the second week in January and he is determined to call on Heathcliff and tell him he will be spending the next six months in London. Heathcliff can look for another tenant if he wants to.

Commentary

We know now, through Zillah, what happened after Cathy arrived at Wuthering Heights. Linton is dead, and now Heathcliff seems to be victorious in possession of all the money and power he craved and vowed he would have. We are also aware of the attraction between

Hareton and Cathy, and know that Heathcliff will do everything he can to crush it, just as Hindley came between Heathcliff and Catherine.

Chapter 31

Summary

Mr. Lockwood tells of his trip to Wuthering Heights the previous day, taking, as he did, a note from Nelly to Cathy. Hareton Earnshaw unlocks the gate for him and Mr. Lockwood notices how handsome he has become. When he asks for Heathcliff, Hareton says he will not be back until din-

ner time. Mr. Lockwood says he will wait. Hareton accompanies him into the house, where Cathy is making a meal. She is sulky and dispirited and ignores Mr. Lockwood's greeting. He drops Nelly's note into her lap. Saying "What is that?," she lets it fall to the floor.

Mr. Lockwood explains the note is from Nelly Dean. He is afraid anyone might think it is a note from himself. As Cathy bends to pick it up, Hareton seizes it, saying he will give it to Heathcliff. Pleading and crying, Cathy persuades Hareton to hand the note over to her. Reading it, she questions Mr. Lockwood eagerly about the Grange and its occupants, saying she longs to be there now. Then she lapses into indifferent silence.

Mr. Lockwood chides her for her rudeness and asks for a reply to take back to Nelly. He tells Cathy that Nelly is always speaking of her and praising her. She asks Mr. Lockwood if Nelly likes him, and when he answers "yes," she confides that she cannot reply because she is allowed no writing materials, or even books to read. Mr. Lockwood says he cannot imagine living without books. Cathy replies that Heathcliff destroyed her books; however, she found some religious works in Joseph's room, and in Hareton's room she found many of the books she brought to the Heights for Linton stories and poetry, which, she says, Hareton stole "as a magpie gathers silver spoons for the mere love of stealing." Hareton denies her accusations. When Mr. Lockwood says Hareton was merely trying to copy her attainments and that he will be a scholar in a few years, Cathy makes fun of Hareton's attempts to read and spell. Mr. Lockwood reminds her everyone has to start somewhere and that he needs encouragement rather than Scorn.

Hareton throws a handful of books into her lap, saying he wants nothing more to do with them. Cathy opens one and starts imitating

Hareton's stumbling attempts at reading. He slaps her in the face and throws the books into the fire. Mr. Lockwood can understand and sympathize with Hareton.

Heathcliff comes in and asks Hareton what has caused the trouble, but Hareton tells him nothing and walks out. Muttering to himself, Heathcliff says he wonders if he has thwarted himself. He cannot bear to look at Hareton's face because when he looks for the resemblance to Hindley, all he sees is Catherine.

After sending Cathy from the room, Heathcliff asks Mr. Lockwood why he has called. On hearing that his tenant is leaving for London, he tells Mr. Lockwood he will still have to pay the rent. As Mr. Lockwood has intended paying, this remark angers him greatly and he offers to pay on the spot, but Heathcliff will not hear of it.

Mr. Lockwood agrees to stay for dinner. It is a cheerless meal. Heathcliff and Hareton eat in silence, and Cathy eats in the kitchen, on instructions from Heathcliff. Mr Lockwood reflects that the girl possibly feels more at home with the servants. Afterward, he hopes for a chance to leave by the back door so he can tease old Joseph and catch another glimpse of Cathy, but Heathcliff shows him out through the front entrance. While riding home, Mr. Lockwood thinks it too bad that he and Cathy were not able to strike up an attachment as Mrs. Dean suggested.

Commentary

The fact that Hareton is trying to improve himself shows his growing love for Cathy, and while she repulses him, there are signs she returns his love. It is also obvious that when Hareton hands Nelly's note back to Cathy, rather than giving it to Heathcliff, he is transferring his loyalty to her. Hareton's resemblance to Catherine disturbs Heathcliff deeply; he is beginning to fear that his plans for vengeance may be thwarted.

Chapter 32

Summary

Six months have passed. It is now the following year 1802 and Mr. Lockwood narrates how he has been invited to a shooting party on the moors by a friend. The place is within fifteen miles of Gimmerton, and as he has to stay the night somewhere, he decides to ride over to Thrushcross Grange. While there, he can take a day and call on Heathcliff at Wuthering Heights to arrange about rental of the Grange.

He is amazed at the difference in the district in the summertime and decides "there is nothing more dreary than the glens and hills in winter, and nothing more divine in summer." Reaching the Grange

before sunset, he finds that Mrs. Dean is now housekeeping at the Heights and that an old woman and young girl are looking after the Grange. Mr. Lockwood decides, therefore, to go up to Wuthering Heights.

On reaching the Heights, he finds the gate hospitably open and there is a smell of fragrant flowers in the air. He decides that this is a great improvement over previous occasions. The doors and windows are open but a huge fire is blazing in the hearth. Through the open window Mr. Lockwood hears a feminine voice teasing someone and calling him a dunce, and an answering male voice asking for a kiss. Seated at the table is

a handsome young man reading from a book. It is Hareton. A beautiful young girl is bending over him Cathy. She is so lovely that Mr. Lockwood regrets he tossed away any chance he might have had with her. Seeing the young couple are about to walk out on the moors, Mr. Lockwood feels it prudent to seek refuge in the kitchen, in order not to embarrass them.

Nelly Dean is sewing at the back door. She is singing, and old Joseph is complaining in the background. She is surprised to see Mr. Lockwood and says he should have sent word that he was returning to the Grange. Mr. Lockwood says he has business with Heathcliff regarding the Grange, and Nelly says he will have to settle with Mrs. Heathcliff, or with her, as she acts for Cathy because she has not learned yet how to manage her affairs. Seeing Mr. Lockwood's surprise, she asks if he has not heard about Heathcliff's death, three months previous. She invites him to have a glass of ale while she tells him the story. Heathcliff came to a "queer end."

Two weeks after Mr. Lockwood left the Grange, Nelly was summoned to Wuthering Heights. She was grieved and shocked at the change in Cathy. Zillah had left and Heathcliff said Nelly was to keep Cathy company because he was tired of seeing her. Finally, Cathy admitted she did wrong in laughing at Hareton's efforts to teach himself to read. She started offering him books, or read aloud to Nelly in his presence, but he did not respond. He went to the kitchen and kept Joseph company. Heathcliff withdrew completely and seldom allowed Hareton into his apartment.

Hareton then shot himself accidentally in the arm, and while he had to stay indoors, Cathy insisted on keeping him company. Nelly heard her tell Hareton she would like him to be her cousin now. Hareton turned on her and they had a bitter quarrel. Nelly suggested to Hareton it

would do him good to have Cathy as a companion. Cathy sobbed and said everyone hated her. Hareton said this was not so. He had taken her part against Heathcliff many times.

Cathy forgave him, and as he would not shake hands, she kissed him on the cheek. Wrapping up a book, she asked Nelly to give it to Hareton, promising that if he accepted it she would teach him to read and would never tease him again. Nelly could see the former enemies were now staunch allies.

Commentary

With the return of Mr. Lockwood we learn of changes at Wuthering Heights. The gate is open and flowers fill the yard. The sun is setting and

the moon rising, symbols of a new regime. Heathcliff has died under peculiar circumstances, and ironically Cathy is now mistress of both estates. Only the complaining "self-righteous Pharisee," Joseph, remains unchanged.

Chapter 33

Summary

The next day, Nelly relates in a flashback, Cathy was helping Hareton in the garden. They decided to make a flower bed in a large space devoted to currant and gooseberry bushes; these bushes were Joseph's pride and joy. At the close of dinner, Joseph appeared, so full of rage he could barely speak. He demanded his wages because he was leaving. He could not stand his garden being taken away from him.

Joseph declared Cathy was the culprit, "graceless queen" that she was. Also, she had bewitched Hareton. It was for her that Hareton had torn out the currant bushes. Hareton and Cathy explained about the flower bed. Cathy said surely Heathcliff would not begrudge her a few yards of earth when he had taken all her land and money, not to mention Hareton's land and money, also. She said she and Hareton were now friends, and she was going to tell Hareton all about him. In a wild rage, Heathcliff said if Hareton did not take Cathy out of the room he would kill her. Before Hareton could drag her out, Heathcliff seized her by the hair. Hareton tried to free her. Just as Heathcliff seemed about to tear her to pieces, he looked into her face. Drawing his hand over her eyes, he managed to get control of himself. He told her that her love for Hareton would make the boy an outcast and a beggar. Nelly took Cathy upstairs.

While Heathcliff was out during the evening, Cathy tried to tell Hareton what Heathcliff had done to his father, Hindley. Hareton

refused to hear a word against Heathcliff, saying even if he were the devil, he would stand by him. When Heathcliff returned later in the evening he saw the two young people sitting together. They raised their eyes to his, and he saw the eyes of Catherine Earnshaw within Cathy's. This was the only way in which Cathy resembled her mother. Hareton, however, had a striking resemblance to his aunt. It was this that seemed to disarm Heathcliff. He sent them from the room.

Having brooded over the scene, he remarked to Nelly that now that he had everything in his power, he no longer had the will to pursue his revenge. He had lost the faculty for enjoying the destruction of Cathy and

Hareton. He felt a strange change approaching, he said. Hareton and Cathy were the only objects of reality to him, and they brought him agony. He refused to talk about Cathy but Hareton moved him differently. He saw in the boy the personification of his own youth, and also the startling resemblance to Catherine. Everywhere he looked he saw Catherine's features. He was surrounded by her image. Everyone's features, even his own, reminded him of her. Hareton's face was the ghost of his immortal love. From then on Heathcliff showed an ever-increasing love of solitude.

Commentary

Heathcliff is disintegrating rapidly. Now that he is able to crush Hareton and Cathy, he no longer has the will to do it. This explains his remark about "thwarting himself," in Chapter 31. His revenge has turned to ashes, and all he thinks of is Catherine. In contrast, Hareton's nobility is shown by his devotion to Heathcliff in spite of all.

The flowers that Cathy and Hareton plant after uprooting Joseph's blackcurrant bushes are blooming. The old order of vengeance and retribution, as represented by Heathcliff and old Joseph, has passed and has been replaced by the spirit of love.

Chapter 34

Summary

It is April and warm and sunny, as Nelly continues with her narrative. For some days Heathcliff shunned meeting company at meals and ate only once in twenty-four hours. He started going out at night and not returning. One day Cathy told Nelly she encountered Heathcliff near the gate, and while he did not appear his usual ferocious self, he told her to begone as fast as she could. He was strangely excited. When he finally arrived for dinner, he warned Nelly to keep everyone away

from him: he wished to have the place to himself. Last night he had been on the threshold of hell, but now he was within sight of his heaven.

In the morning, Nelly prepared breakfast under the trees for Cathy and Hareton. Heathcliff came down and spoke to Joseph on business. He appeared to stare at one portion of the wall and stopped breathing altogether for long periods. Nelly coaxed him to eat, but he ignored her. Finally he became annoyed and said he would eat only when he wished to do so. From then on, Nelly was to bring the meal and leave. So saying, he left the house and disappeared.

He returned about midnight. Nelly heard him pacing the floor and groaning. She heard his voice and the name "Catherine." In order to distract him, she went downstairs and started poking the kitchen fire. Heathcliff said he was happy, and Nelly said it was a strange kind of happiness. She advised him to send for a minister who would show him how much he had sinned and point the way to salvation. Heathcliff ignored the suggestion, but said it reminded him about instructions for his burial. Hareton and Nelly could accompany the casket, and the sexton would obey his instructions regarding his coffin and that of Catherine.

In the afternoon Heathcliff came into the kitchen again and at dusk he returned to his room. All night and far into the morning he groaned and murmured to himself. Nelly sent Hareton for the doctor, but Heathcliff refused to see him.

The following evening was wet, and in the morning when Nelly was walking around the house she saw Heathcliff's window was open. Thinking he had gone out, she went up to his room. Getting a key she unlocked his door, and seeing the room was vacant she opened the doors of the panel bed. Heathcliff was lying there dead; he had shut himself in before dying. Nelly tried to make him look presentable but he looked so frightening that she called for Joseph. He refused to do anything, saying the devil had taken Heathcliff's soul and he could take his body, too, for all he cared. Hareton, the one most wronged, was the only one who really grieved. Heathcliff was buried as he wished, and Hareton laid green sod on the grave. Nelly says she hopes Heathcliff sleeps peacefully, but she assures Mr. Lockwood that many of the villagers swear that Heathcliff walks abroad, and that they have met him near the church, on the moors, and he has even been seen inside Wuthering Heights. Nelly says she does not believe this, but Joseph declares that every rainy night since Heathcliff's death he has

seen two spirits walking together.

Then Nelly admits a strange thing happened to her about a month before. On the way to the Grange one night she met a little shepherd lad, crying and terrified. He said Heathcliff and a woman were out on the moor and he and his sheep were afraid to pass. This, she thinks, is nonsense, but she doesn't like going out at night by herself.

At that moment Cathy and Hareton return, and Mr. Lockwood decides he will not make his presence known. Giving Nelly a token of his appreciation he leaves and walks toward the Grange by way of the kirk. He seeks out the three headstones on the slope, and for a moment stands in silence, wondering how anyone could imagine unquiet slumbers for the sleepers in that quiet earth.

Commentary

Just as Catherine fasted prior to her death, so Heathcliff is unable to partake of earthly food for some time before his spirit joins hers. Like Catherine, he has forsaken temporal things and sought only that which is beyond the flesh. He has found peace at last. A happy life is predicted for Cathy and Hareton. Love, in the final analysis, has proved stronger than hate.

Character Analyses

Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw

Mr. Earnshaw brings the waif, Heathcliff, to Wuthering Heights and favors him above his own son, Hindley. He is a typical bluff Yorkshire gentleman farmer and has no time for a weakling like Hindley. Little is said about Mrs. Earnshaw, other than that she was not drawn to Heathcliff when Mr. Earnshaw brought him home and only grudgingly allowed him to stay. She loved her son Hindley, and when she died, he felt that he had lost his only champion.

Hindley Earnshaw

Possibly Hindley is the artistic type, because it is he who asks his father to bring him a fiddle from Liverpool, whereas his sister, Catherine, wants a riding whip. His father thinks little of him, and when Heathcliff is introduced into the family, Hindley is pushed to one side and finally banished to school.

Some sympathy must be felt for Hindley despite his cruelty and lack of character. He does not have the strength or temperament to match his wild and spirited sister and is helpless in the hands of the

scheming Heathcliff. Deprived of his father's love and esteem at an early age, he becomes bitter, and his desire to avenge himself on Heathcliff is understandable.

Frances Earnshaw

We know nothing of Frances's background, but she seems to have been the ideal type for Hindley to marry. Pretty and delicate, Hindley can feel protective toward her. She is not particularly intelligent, and no doubt Hindley considers himself her equal, if not her superior.

Catherine Earnshaw

The "free spirit" of Emily Brontë is epitomized in Catherine Earnshaw, who, as a child, could ride any horse in the stable, and in later years "rides roughshod" over everyone who tries to stand in her way. Beautiful, wild, arrogant, and willful, Catherine is a fitting companion for the arrogant and vindictive Heathcliff. Her love for Heathcliff and the moors is the ruling passion of her life. While she may appear heartless when she chooses to marry Edgar Linton, she is naïve enough to think that by so doing she will be able to lift Heathcliff from the degradation into which he has been thrust by Hindley.

Hareton Earnshaw

Hareton, son of Hindley and Frances, is brought up under the influence of Heathcliff, who gains control of Hindley and Wuthering Heights when Hareton is a small boy. Despite every effort on Heathcliff's part to turn Hareton into a brute, Hareton is very much like his aunt, Catherine, and while on the surface he appears sullen and uncouth, underneath he has aspirations and a great capacity for love. He gives the reader a glimpse of what Heathcliff might have been like under different circumstances.

Heathcliff

To everyone but Catherine and Hareton, Heathcliff seems an inhuman monster. He has been described as "rough as a saw-edge and hard as whinstone." Nelly Dean refers to him as a "cuckoo," who has no standing in the Earnshaw house, and he is constantly being put in his place and reminded that he is an outsider. In her interpretation of his character, Charlotte Brontë feels that "Heathcliff, indeed, stands unredeemed; never once swerving in his arrow-straight course to

perdition, from the time when' the little black-haired swarthy thing, as dark as if it come from the Devil,' was first unrolled out of the bundle and set on its feet in the farmhouse kitchen, to the hour when Nelly Dean found the grim, stalwart corpse laid on its back in the panel-enclosed bed, with wide-gazing eyes that seemed 'to sneer at her attempt to close them, and parted lips and sharp white teeth that sneered too.'" Heathcliff is, in reality, a man whose soul is torn between love and hate, and, because of the depths of his passions, he hates as deeply as he loves.

Linton Heathcliff

Although Heathcliff is his father, Linton displays none of his characteristics, other than his cruelty to anyone who crosses him. He resembles his mother, Isabella, in looks and disposition, being pretty, feeble, and effeminate. His one redeeming quality is that he loves Cathy, to the extent that he can love anyone.

Mr. and Mrs. Linton

As with the elder Earnshaws, we know very little of Mr. and Mrs. Linton, other than that they are well-to-do and very class-conscious. In their own way they are kind and hospitable, but only to those whom they consider on the same social level.

Edgar Linton

Edgar Linton has all the qualities one associates with the hero of a Victorian novel. As Charlotte Brontë says, "For an example of constancy and tenderness, remark that of Edgar Linton." Constancy and tenderness are hardly the characteristics to hold a woman like Catherine.

Isabella Linton

Isabella Linton is just as immature a woman as she is a child. She refuses to heed the warnings given her by Catherine and Edgar about Heathcliff, and despite Heathcliff's insulting attitude toward her, she persuades herself that he loves her; thus, she marries him. She is incapable of deep feelings and risks losing her brother's affection by marrying Heathcliff, whom he hates.

Cathy Linton

Young Cathy does not have the fascination of her unpredictable

mother. She is pretty and affectionate, but has a mind of her own and some of Catherine's willfulness. She is also capable of great sympathy and is intensely loyal to those she loves. These include the weakly Linton, whom she marries, and finally Hareton Earnshaw.

Nelly Dean

Because we think of Mrs. Dean as merely the narrator, we are apt to overlook her as a character and the part she plays in the story as a whole. While she may be regarded as "a specimen of true benevolence and homely fidelity" by Charlotte Brontë in her preface to Emily's book, if we examine Nelly's action closely, we find many instances when she does not exactly fit this description. Sometimes she seems to be enjoying the conflicts at Wuthering Heights and even encourages Heathcliff in his pride and arrogance. Nelly has little imagination, cannot understand fully the temperaments of Catherine and Heathcliff, and is thus unable to sympathize with them in any way. She is a lively storyteller, however, and brings immediacy to the dramatic story she recounts.

Joseph

Joseph, the servant at Wuthering Heights, is the perfect example of the faithful churchgoer and Bible-quoter; he spends most of his time gossiping, troublemaking, and backbiting. Joseph's actions are in direct contrast to what he preaches, and therefore there is more irony than humor in his remarks. His Yorkshire dialect adds color to the story, and despite his failings, he shows great loyalty to the family.

Zillah

There is very little importance attached to Zillah's role in the novel. She is the housekeeper at Wuthering Heights while Heathcliff is master there and feels no pity for young Cathy when she is nursing her dying husband, Linton.

Mr. Lockwood

Mr. Lockwood is a device through whom we hear Nelly Dean's story,

and he brightens the book here and there with his facetious quips. A city man, he takes a somewhat superior attitude toward the inhabitants of Wuthering Heights.

Theme, Style, and Structure

Theme

Wuthering Heights is such a strange, agonizing, and powerful book that every individual who reads it will give it his own interpretation. Revenge is the dominant theme of the second half of the novel, although in the last chapter Heathcliff abandons his plan for vengeance.

It should be stated, perhaps, that the novel cannot be considered merely to be a love story. If it were, Edgar Linton and Hareton Earnshaw would be the heroes and Heathcliff the villain. There is no traditional happy ending for the principal characters in the book, and the heroine dies halfway through. There would be no need to bring in Hindley, Hareton Earnshaw, Cathy and Linton, if the story were merely one of love between Heathcliff and Catherine. Also, it is brought out very forcibly that it is a spiritual love rather than a physical one that binds Heathcliff and Catherine together. They seem to be united only after they are both dead.

There is also the theory of sin and retribution (crime and punishment). All the characters sin in some way and are punished, with the exception of Cathy and Hareton, who manage to destroy evil in their lifetime.

Another theory holds that the story represents a conflict between storm and calm. *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross Grange* and their occupants represent storm and calm respectively. When these two elements clash, there is hate and violence, and harmony is not restored until Heathcliff relinquishes his desire for revenge and is united after death with Catherine, who is also a child of storm.

Knowing what we do about Emily Brontë, we might consider this to be too abstract a theory. She does not write merely in symbols. She is a practical person and would want something more concrete. Also, this theory would not give Heathcliff the prominence he should have. He *is* the story; everything happens through him and the distortion of his personality through thwarted love. As long as he has Catherine he can stand anything. Without her, everything in him turns to hate. His only virtue is his abiding love for Catherine and his unwilling love for Hareton.

Another interpretation would be the conflict between good and evil (love and hate). This would be the most logical one, knowing, as we do, that Emily Brontë is most concerned about spiritual things. Actually, the spirit of the novel is a religious one and contends that for a nature to be fully complete it must make contact with an existence beyond this life here on earth. The difference between the feeling that Catherine has for Heath-

cliff and the one she has for Edgar Linton is that she responds to Edgar only on the more superficial and shallow level, while the deeper and more spiritual side of her nature is reserved for Heathcliff. She is aware that this love is far more important than the civilized and worldly advantages that Edgar offers. Despite this, and going against her natural instincts, she marries Edgar, and chaos results. The good in Heathcliff is turned to evil, which he directs against everyone except Catherine, while Catherine herself is torn apart spiritually, mentally and emotionally and seeks release in death, knowing that only in death will she and Heathcliff be united. After seventeen years of wreaking his revenge, the venom in Heathcliff is drained away. He finds himself loving his old enemy's son, and from that moment on he eagerly awaits his own death and his reunion with the spirit of Catherine. Love is the only element that remains constant. Everything else withers away—ambition, hate—and we find that love conquers even Heathcliff in the end.

We shall never really know what Emily Brontë is saying in her book (she, herself, is certainly speaking through both Catherine and Heathcliff), but she seems to be pointing out two things: all our strivings here on earth amount to nothing, and it is not until we are dead and merged with the Almighty Being that we shall find our greatest satisfaction: the power of good is stronger than the power of evil and will eventually prevail.

Style

Emily Brontë's style is clear and simple but charged with tremendous vitality. She does not write for effect, but the rhythm of her sentences and the exact choice of word convey her meaning explicitly. The style is so condensed, like that of a poet, that every word must be read, or some vital point will be missed. The smaller object or snatch of

conversation has some part in the whole structure.

Wuthering Heights may be considered as a great lyric poem for it abounds in imagery. Emily Brontë's writing is also most effective when depicting the passionate and violent characters of Heathcliff and Catherine, for she has the uncanny ability to translate feelings into words, as in Chapter 1, when Mr. Lockwood struggles with the spirit of Catherine and says, "Terror made me cruel." In her descriptive passages the author paints a vivid picture of the wild bleakness of the Heights, and the cloying ease and luxury of Thrushcross Grange.

Emily Brontë also has an ear for the exact shading of sound, and this is shown in the subtle way she chooses the names of persons and places to

create a desired effect. Consider the contrast between Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff, Earnshaw, and Catherine all have a strong, harsh sound and Thrushcross Grange, Linton, Edgar, and Isabella these have a weak, soft connotation. Even the dogs are characterized by their names Skulker, the watchdog; Fanny, the lapdog; and Throtter, Gnasher, and Wolf, Heathcliff's dogs at Wuthering Heights.

Structure

The structure of *Wuthering Heights* is as different and unconventional as its theme. This had to be because Emily did not intend to write the typical Victorian novel, showing normal men and women in the ordinary pursuits of life. Her story was not to be confined to the nineteenth century; it was timeless and it contained universal passions love, hate, and revenge.

Using the method of the playwright, Emily Brontë plunges into the heart of the action in the first chapter. This approach is still used in the modern novel. Using the technique of the dramatist, there is a natural withholding of information which leads the reader on, just as it did Mr. Lockwood: where does this particular character fit? What has happened before? What is about to happen? When Nelly Dean interrupts the action by breaking off at the end of a section, she creates suspense; we want to know the answers.

As Mr. Lockwood records what was told to him by Nelly Dean when she breaks off at a given point, it marks a division in the story and sounds quite natural. Sometimes, however, this method of narration has its disadvantages, as when Nelly has to get part of the story from Isabella, when she flees from Wuthering Heights, and has to gossip with Zillah to get information. But her position in the household makes it appear normal that she should see and hear many things and be in many places she could not otherwise have been. The eyewitness

account by Nelly gives dramatic intensity, freshness, and vigor to the story. By telling only what she sees and hears, she lends credibility to the dramatic scenes in the book.

The careful construction of the story results in a pleasing unity of place and tone. The entire action is confined to Wuthering Heights, Thrushcross Grange, and the moors between. While other places are mentioned—Gimmerton village, Peniston Crag—the reader never sees them. He does not travel to Liverpool with Mr. Earnshaw when he finds Heathcliff. He knows nothing of what Heathcliff did when he disappeared for three years. Isabella goes to London, but the reader knows nothing of her life there.

The tone of the book remains unchanged throughout. It is somber and there are no touches of humor. Joseph's remarks are used for ironic effect, and Mr. Lockwood's sallies are merely facetious.

In constructing her novel, Emily Brontë stands aside and lets her characters speak for themselves. She makes no comment. Her characters are presented with relentless truth and are revealed by their own words and actions. It is left to the reader to understand and judge.

Questions for Review

1. Critics have often explained *Wuthering Heights*'s universal appeal by attributing it to the novel's fundamental truths and to the fact that it exposes the duality inherent in every nature. What do they mean by this?
2. Heathcliff often uses subtle methods to insure his revenge, but there is one notable exception; what is it?
3. How is the narrative technique in the novel unusual, when compared with other Victorian novels?
4. Lockwood's presence is felt throughout the novel; why is it necessary to the story?
5. *Wuthering Heights* has been described as a "lyric poem." Explain.
6. Nelly Dean considers herself a fair interpreter of what has taken place at Wuthering Heights and the Grange. Do you agree? Why or why not?
7. After reading the brief sketch of Emily Brontë's life at the beginning of the Notes, who, in your opinion, did she use when she fashioned the character of Hindley?

8. Emily could have chosen a number of ways to tell the story of *Wuthering Heights*; why do you think she chose Nelly Dean as the narrator?
9. Emily Brontë has been described as a mystic. Is there any evidence in the novel for this?
10. What do you consider to be the climax of the novel? Why?
11. Apart from his passion for Catherine, what do you consider to be Heathcliff's one redeeming quality?
12. How does Emily create suspense in the novel?
13. Why does nothing come from Mr. Lockwood's attraction to Cathy?
14. Why does Catherine dominate the story?
15. Contrast the characters of Cathy and Linton.
16. How do heredity and environment affect the formation of character in Hareton, Linton, and Cathy?

17. If you were asked to write "character sketches" of *Wuthering Heights* and *Thrushcross*, what qualities might you include?
18. Divide the chapters of the novel into 5 sections: Introduction, Complication, Climax, Denouement, and Conclusion.
19. Discuss the value of the diaries and letters in the novel.
20. How does the author use local color to enhance the novel's impact?

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