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**Emily Brontë**

**Wuthering Heights**

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Author: Emily Brontë

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## Description

**One of the most passionate and heartfelt novels ever written, *Wuthering Heights* tells of the relationship between Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, the orphan boy her father adopted and brought to *Wuthering Heights* when they were children.**

While Catherine forms a deep attachment to Heathcliff, her brother Hindley despises him as a rival. Heathcliff becomes torn between love for Catherine and the rage and humiliation he suffers. Finally he can stand it no longer and, in the violence of a summer storm, leaves the Heights for three years. During his absence Catherine has married, but her tormented heart belongs eternally to Heathcliff who is now prepared to exact his tyrannical revenge.

With its freedom from social convention and its unparalleled emotional intensity, *Wuthering Heights* is a highly original and deeply tragic work.

## Insightful reviews

Whitaker: My goodness, but doesn't Emily Brontë get to have her cake and eat it too. On the one hand, the story is underpinned by deeply bourgeois morals; on the other hand, she gets to flirt with wildness and nature. It's like going on a luxury safari: you get to pretend you're out in the wild but it's wilderness with a champagne breakfast and air-conditioned tents.

Here you have Heathcliff, right, the stand-in for the forces of nature. And this is nature "red in tooth and claw", Hearne the Huntsman, the faery changeling that usurps the place of the son. Like all good faeries, Heathcliff upends the natural order: good is made bad, the low are made high, love is made indistinguishable from hate. He ousts the gentry out of their hearth and home and becomes lord of the manor, and the world is turned topsy-turvy.

But in the end, he is defeated. The changeling is ejected, and the land reverts back to the gentry again as both the Grange and *Wuthering Heights* revert to the care and custody of the Lintons and the Earnshaws. The unity of Catherine and Hindley, the bond of brother and sister that was broken with Heathcliff's arrival, is restored with the marriage of Hareton Earnshaw and Catherine Linton. Chaos and disorder are cast out, and the rightful order of nature is restored.

And how huge a role blood plays in this. You can't escape your natural destiny: A gentleman will always be a gentleman regardless of how much you try to corrupt him, while the scion of a nameless urchin will be low and nasty regardless of how much guilt he is covered with. You could read the entire Shakespearean canon into this. It's *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *The Tempest*, and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* all rolled into one.

And yet, oh, the language! That deep love, and also terror, of the wild harsh beauty of the moors that sings out in her prose despite her eventual return to civilisation! The whole story trembles on this pivot between longing and repulsion. And right to the final word, she never quite resolves it: the ambiguity thrums to the very last. Wow!

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Ellen: I never expected this book to be as flagrantly, unforgivably bad as it was.

To start, Bronte's technical choice of narrating the story of the primary characters by having the housekeeper explain everything to a tenant 20 years after it happened completely kills suspense and intimacy. The most I can say is that to some extent this functions as a device to help shroud the story and motives from the reader. But really, at the time literary technique hadn't quite always gotten around to accepting that omnipotent 3rd person narrators are allowed, so you'd have to have a multiperspective story told by an omnipotent 3rd person narrator who was actually a character in the story (e.g. the housekeeper Ellen). The layers of perspective make it annoying and sometimes impossible to figure out who is telling what bit of story; and moreover, because so much is related as two characters explaining things between themselves, the result is that we rarely see any action, and instead have the entire book explained in Socratic, pedantic exposition.

The sense of place is poorly rendered and almost entirely missing. Great, the moor is gray.

But ultimately, the most damning thing is that the characters are a bunch of immature, insufferable, narcissistic assholes with very little self respect. This isn't a story of great love and passion. It's the story of how child abuse perpetuates itself through the generations. The characters are either emotionally abused as children or, as in the case of Cathy I, they're spoiled and overindulged with no discipline and can't muster the restraint and self-respect to ditch abusive relationships. I kept waiting for any of the characters to be remotely worth my time, but I found no respite from the brutish abuse of the horribly twisted Heathcliff or from the simpering idiocy of Cathy I and II. Ugh. Not only are there no transformations or growth, but the characters aren't even that likable to begin with. How this book got to be a classic is beyond me.

Diane Librarian: I was not prepared for how bleak this book was. I had seen movie versions of *Wuthering Heights*, but this was my first time reading the novel, and it was much darker than I expected.

So many of the characters are utterly unlikable! Cathy is selfish and foolish and obstinate; Heathcliff is brutal and vengeful and psychotic; Hindley is spiteful and venomous and a drunkard. And when Edgar and Isabella Linton enter the story, everything goes to hell in a handbasket.

Why, oh why, did Cathy marry Edgar when she admitted she loved Heathcliff? As a reader, I wanted to shake her and scream at her that she was making a disastrous choice. Let's hear it from Cathy herself:

I've no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn't have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now; so he shall never know how I love him: and

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that, 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.

Yes, I know Cathy felt she couldn't marry Heathcliff because of his low birth and lack of education, but considering how isolated they were in Yorkshire, did it really matter that much? Was that Bronte's point -- that disobeying one's heart by following the courtship rules of one's social class caused suicidal and homicidal ravings?

I agreed with Heathcliff when he later scolded Cathy for her decision:

You teach me now how cruel you've been -- cruel and false. Why did you despise me? Why did you betray your own heart, Cathy? I have not one word of comfort. You deserve this. You have killed yourself. Yes, you may kiss me, and cry; and wring out my kisses and tears: they'll blight you -- they'll damn you. You loved me -- then what right had you to leave me? What right -- answer me -- for the poor fancy you felt for Linton? Because misery and degradation, and death, and nothing that God or Satan could inflict would have parted us, you, of your own will, did it. I have not broken your heart -- you have broken it; and in breaking it, you have broken mine.

There was such violence in this book! Women are beaten and locked up; children are bullied and abused; punches are thrown, shots are fired, and even dogs are kicked and hung. Egad. I can imagine how shocking it must have been to the good folks of England when it was published in 1847, learning that not only did a woman write it, but that she was a clergyman's daughter, and the story involved a married woman having a tryst with another man. Wowsers.

Despite not liking the darkness of the novel, I thought the writing was good and the structure was interesting: the servant Nelly Dean relates the history of the doomed love affair to an outsider. The servant was an interloper and kept informed on events in both houses. I can't imagine a more effective way to tell the story of the love triangle. I wouldn't trust either Heathcliff or Cathy or one of the children as a narrator, they might only tell their parent's side of things. Of course, it's also interesting that Nelly Dean may not be a reliable narrator either. She often edits and omits what she tells the master; why should we believe she'd tell an outsider the whole truth?

It took me twice as long to get through this novel as it should have -- it was so bleak that I was hesitant to pick it up. The only other Bronte sister book I've read was *Jane Eyre*, which I liked very much, but that love story at least has some warmth in it. In contrast, *Wuthering Heights* left me feeling cold and bitter. I'm glad I've read it, but I don't think it's one I'll be rereading anytime soon.

Brad: *Wuthering Heights* is many things. A late-gothic ghost story. A story of affection and

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revenge. A chronicle of violence -- physical, mental, emotional and social. a dismal peek into human nature. A condemnation of England's damaged type system. a kind of anti-Austen ebook with out manners. I've enjoyed it on the grounds that I first learn it in grade eight. it really is one other of the books my loopy cool mother foisted upon me in her big, 3 12 months pushing of classics that outlined my analyzing tastes for the remainder of my life. i admire the ebook so much, and Emily Brontë's best man, that I named my daughter Brontë (dooming her, no doubt, to a lifetime of pain, depression, and unfinished business, sorry Të). This time through, however, i discovered myself no longer being concerned a whit approximately Heathcliff and Catherine the Older, or Hareton and Catherine the Younger, or Edgar, or Isabella, or Linton the king whinger. i discovered myself worrying approximately Nelly Dean, and simply Nelly Dean. And in so doing i found one other factor that Wuthering Heights is: the main circuitous personality comic strip within the English language. To learn Wuthering Heights worrying in simple terms approximately Nelly is to learn a wholly varied story. without warning the ill-fated love of Heathcliff and Cathy -- the torture and discomfort and ghosts and revenge -- turns into the best way Nelly finds herself, and the unreliability of Nelly as a narrator turns into the very stuff of herself. each motion she reviews on, each motion she claims to take, each piece of these stories she tells Lockwood stop to be approximately her topics and, instead, exhibit her because the subject. She is the big name of her personal narrative, and all these characters she claims to like or hate are mere helping avid gamers to a servant's story of herself. Which, for me, makes Wuthering Heights much more very good than i have continually believed it to be. i ponder what a level model of this is able to seem like if one have been to take advantage of Nelly's point of view AND make her the focus, subverting her makes an attempt to obfuscate her importance. possibly I should still take a crack at it. or perhaps i may simply go the assumption directly to my own Brontë. I wager she may well do whatever fantastic with it someday.

Ben: i finished at web page 42. i could not stand the writing. not just used to be it tricky to decipher -- name me dumb in the event you needs to -- yet sentences, even paragraphs, which can were summed-up with a number of phrases have been expounded upon pompously for pages. it is a shame, simply because i like darkish love tales -- and that, in addition to what I had heard approximately this novel's robust personality development, and its normally robust acceptance -- made me imagine i might love it. But i cannot take anymore of the prose, and i am too uninterested in ADD, and too distracted with loss of endurance to continue. Just cannot do it....MeeeYuck.

Elisard: Ah the classics. everyone can learn their very own schedule in them. So, first a quick plot consultant for dinner conversations whilst one must faux acculturation, after which directly to the critics' view. a girl [1:] is in love along with her non-blood brother [2:] yet marries her neighbor [3:] whose sister [4:] marries the non-blood brother [2:]; their [1,3:] daughter [5:] marries their [2,4:] son [6:]; meanwhile, their [1,2:] elder brother marries and has a son [7:]. Then each person dies, 1 of undesirable temper, four of stupidity, three of a cold, 6 simply because he's irritating, 2 simply because he's suggest and attempted to upward thrust above his station. five and seven are the single ones left, in order that they marry. the ladies are all known as Catherine, the boys are in general known as Earnshaw, and during intermarriage all people is a little bit a Heathcliff. The Marxist critic: the oppressed and underprivileged [2:] revolts to enhance his lot in life, yet fails to make allies and loses everything, as always. The Post-colonialist critic: once more the wealthy [1,3,4:] meddle with the lives of the negative [2:] lower

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than the pretense of enhancing them, in reality wrecking havoc. The Feminist critic: if merely the Catherines had learned the female Mystique... The Freudian critic: repeated intermarriage and border-line incest make for such stable stories! The Shakespearean critic: a lot Ado approximately Nothing. The Leisure Weekly executive: tales instructed by way of resources just about the protagonists consistently promote well, simply because most folks reside vicariously. And dinnertime has constantly been the precise slot for gossip.

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