

Wuthering Heights

The Plot

Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) is a story of love, hatred, revenge and catastrophic suffering as a result of the medley of complicated emotions and the consequences brought forth in its wake. The plot is convoluted driven chiefly by the protagonist turned antagonist, Heathcliff's motive for revenge.

The story begins with a man named Lockwood renting a manor house, Thrushcross Grange owned by Heathcliff. He is intrigued by the rather dour nature of his landlord Heathcliff and asks Nelly Dean, his housekeeper, the story of Heathcliff. Nelly Dean consents and the plot forms Lockwood's recollection of it in his diary.

The owner of *Wuthering Heights* Mr Earnshaw returns one day with a dark orphan boy, Heathcliff, in tow. He raises Heathcliff alongside his two children Hindley and Catherine. While Hindley detests Heathcliff and bullies him, Catherine quickly grows to love Heathcliff, and the two becomes inseparable. After his wife's death, Mr Earnshaw sends Hindley off to university and keeps Heathcliff with him. Hindley returns with his wife Frances after Earnshaw's death and inherits *Wuthering Heights*. Heathcliff's position soon deteriorates as Hindley starts treating him as a common labourer making him work in the fields. While all these years, Catherine and Heathcliff grow very close. However, in a major turn of event, Catherine gets infatuated by Edgar Linton from Thrushcross Grange and marries him. This embitters Heathcliff badly and he leaves *Wuthering Heights* only to return back after three years as a wealthy man.

Meanwhile, Frances is dead, and Hindley drowns himself into alcoholism. Heathcliff lends money to Hindley knowing fully well that Hindley would accrue more debt and fall into deeper despondency. As it so happens, Hindley soon dies leaving his son, Hareton behind at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff inherits Wuthering Heights. Besides, he also marries Edgar's sister Isabelle who begets him a son called Linton. Catherine dies after giving birth to a daughter, also called Catherine. Thirteen years pass and Young Catherine grows up at Grange without any knowledge of Wuthering Heights. However, one day wandering through the moors, she meets with Hareton and gets to know about wuthering heights. Despite Nelly Dean's remonstrations, she keeps at her visit to the Grange to meet young Linton and is finally trapped into marrying Linton, Heathcliff's sickly son. Soon after Catherine's marriage with Linton, Edgar dies followed by young Linton's death. Heathcliff now inherits Thrushcross Grange also. Over all these years, Heathcliff keeps on growing sinister by day. He keeps Younger Catherine at Wuthering Heights forcing her to act as a servant and rents out Thrushcross Grange to Lockwood.

Nelly ends her story as she reaches the present. Lockwood is appalled upon hearing the story, ends his tenancy at Thrushcross Grange and returns to London. He pays another visit to Wuthering Heights after eight months and learns of further development in the story. Although, initially younger Catherine mocks Hareton's illiteracy but soon grows to love Hareton as they live together at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff becomes more and more obsessed with elder Catherine's memory to the extent that he begins talking to her ghost. Shortly after a night spent walking on the moors, Heathcliff dies. Hareton and young Catherine inherit Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights and they plan to be married on the

next new year's day. After hearing the end of the story, Lockwood goes to visit the graves of Catherine and Heathcliff.

The story of *Wuthering Heights* is told through flashbacks recorded in diary entries and events are often presented out of chronological order.