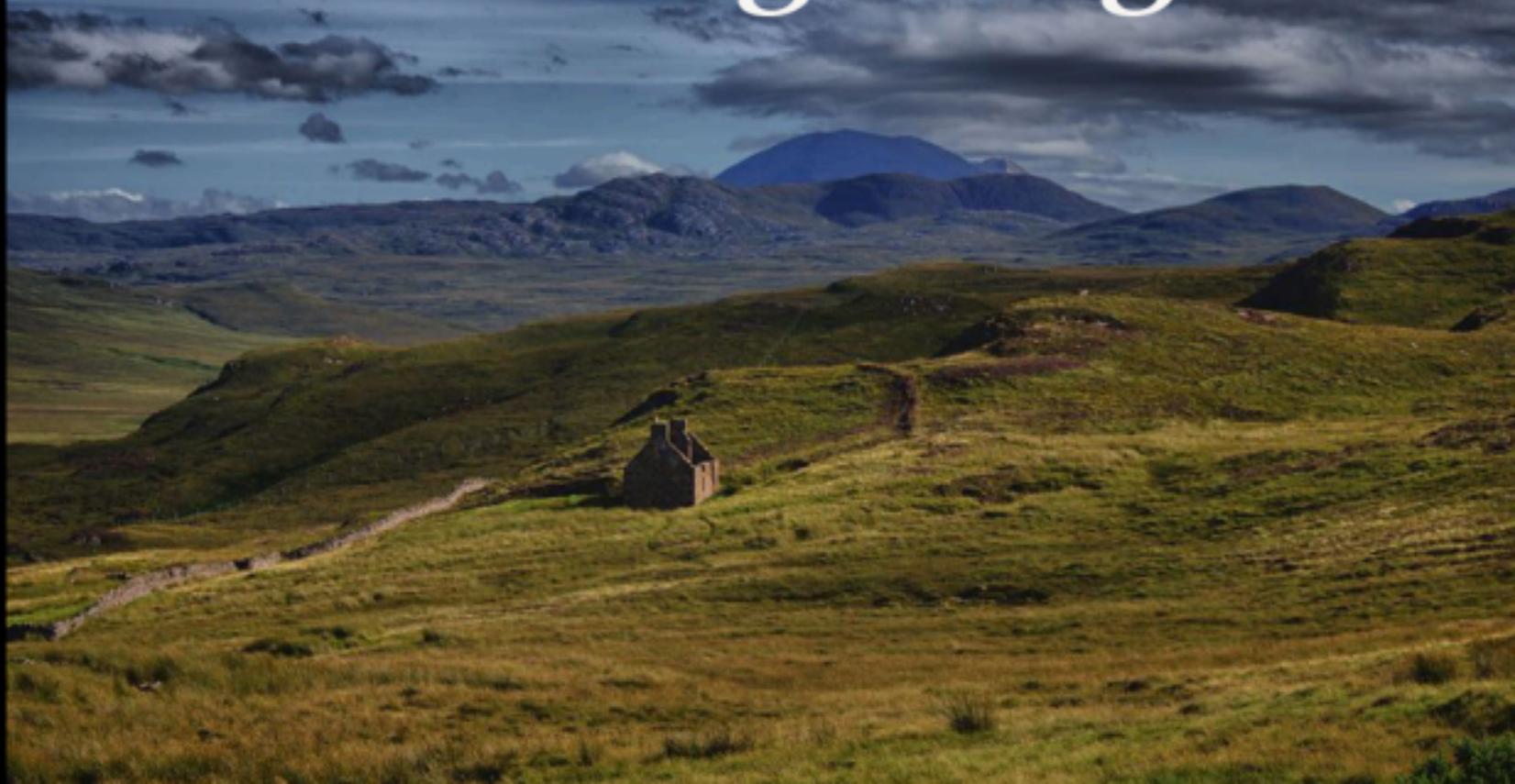


Wuthering Heights



Wuthering Heights

A tragedy in five acts

(after Emily and Branwell Brontë)

Dramatis personae:

Four regulars
Bartender
Two other guests
Branwell Brontë
Joseph
Catherine, the younger
Hareton Earnshaw
Lockwood
Ellen Dean (Nelly)
Heathcliff
Catherine, the older
Hindley
Mr Earnshaw
Mrs Earnshaw
Frances
Another guest at the pub
Edgar Linton
Isabella Linton
Priest
Ben, a servant
Linton, Isabella's son

The action is in north England in the beginning of the 19th century.

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Wuthering Heights

Act I scene 1.

Inside an inn. It's regular hours with not many customers.
The bartender hasn't too much to do,
a group is playing cards by a table, and the dominant mood is relaxed.

1st card player Damn!

2 No damned oaths here!

1 Be grateful instead, to learn that I have lousy cards!

3 Play the game instead.

1 That's what I'm doing.

3 No, you are just sitting there swearing.

4 Back to business, gentlemen!

1 That's what I mean!

3 No, you are just swearing like hell.

1 For the devil's sake! Give me a break! Let me concentrate!

3 Here he goes again.

2 Shut up and play cards!

4 Who the devil can play in this crossfire of blatherskite!

2 Do you intend to play or pull out?

3 Take it easy, John. The day is long.

2 The entire day has already passed by your talking nonsense.

1 It's worse just sitting here and listening to all your shit.

2 Go home then and wash your dirt out of your ears!

1 Shall we just sit here and listen to bullshit?

4 Gentlemen, back to business!

3 That's what we have been trying to do all day.

4 What?

3 Never getting down to business.

2 True indeed.

(The door opens, enter Branwell in a poor state on wobbly legs.)

4 Shall we now suffer him as well?

2 The only one missing, and the last one we wanted.

Bartender Shouldn't you stay at home, Branwell?

Branwell Yes.

Bartender So what are you doing here then?

Branwell Yes, why do people come here, my good man? *You* ought to be able to answer that.

Bartender You are drunk.

Branwell No, only half drunk.

Another guest You still have far to go, Branwell. I thought you were permanently confined to bed nowadays.

Branwell That's what the doctor wants, to make my illness grow worse, so that he can give me more medicines. It makes you want to puke and drives you mad.

The guest (takes him around the chin) Don't take it so seriously. You look better today.

Branwell That was not my intention.

Bartender (knows his customer) What will it be, Branwell?

Branwell The usual stuff.

Bartender Nothing else?

Branwell The day is long. I will have time for the rest later.

Bartender (pours him a glass) You know I have my restrictions.

Branwell (runs his fist on the table) Is there no place in the world you can be free? Not even in a pub?

The guest Take it easy, Branwell. You are among friends. You are free with us.

Branwell You can't go anywhere without people telling you what you may do and what is forbidden. Then put me in a straitjacket at once!

Bartender No one wants to make a martyr of you, Branwell.

Branwell I was born a martyr. I never even wanted it myself.

Bartender Martyr for what?

Branwell And you ask me?

Bartender Yes, I do.

Branwell For the free word! I was born a poet! No one became anything else in my family! We are all divine gifted fibbers! I am the incarnation of the free word! But no one wants it. I write it down, but no one reads it. I send around my poems, but no one wants them. I plead with publishers, but they only thank me for nothing and ask me to leave. I am a free man born into a restricted world of only mediocrity and sloth! I am too much alive for this world! I am the one outstanding pearl in a world of only swine!

The guest (patting him friendlily) We like you, Branwell. You have some understanding here.

Branwell (frowningly) Yes, by other drunkards.

The guest Don't frown so condescendingly. I am after all your friend.

1st card player It's impossible to play cards here! Read us something, Branwell! You ruined our game anyway!

The guest Yes, read something to us, Branwell.

Bartender Read your latest poem, if you have any.

Branwell I always carry around some crap in my cap. (*doffs his hat and picks some papers out of it*)

The guest That's good, Branwell! You can always be relied upon! You never deny yourself!

1 Read then, but loud and clear, so that we can understand.

2 And don't talk thick, for that will only make it funny.

3 That it'll be anyway.

4 Or pathetic.

3 It will be all that at the same time and unintelligible to sum it up.

2 But Branwell reads well when he wants to.

The guest Read, Branwell! Show that you can!

Branwell (takes out his papers, puts on his glasses and starts reading, while he uses his arm for gestures.)

"There is something ominous about the cold rattling wind that keeps threatening and holding me back as I wander across the moor along the endless grey stone fences, that appear like gravestones in their sterile rows of deadly rigidity, overgrown with moss, forgotten and partly fallen apart, as if they only had miserable lives to ever report about."

(interrupts himself, somewhat confused)

I didn't write this. I have brought the wrong papers.

The guest Read some more!

Others (joining in) Continue reading!

Bartender It started well, Branwell. We are expecting more.

Branwell I brought my sister's manuscript by accident.

The guest Your sister is as good as you.

4 Which one of them?

3 Any of them. They all can write and tell stories.

2 They are witches all three, and that's why their dad never wished them to marry.

1 What is he afraid of?

2 Misfortune.

The guest What is the story about, Branwell?

Branwell (has with increasing alarm seen through the papers) It's a novel, the draft of a novel. But it's my novel. But she has written it down. That was never intended.

4 Sounds interesting. Read some more.

The guest Yes, Branwell, read some more!

Branwell (has put on his glasses again) It's a stranger who has rented a beautiful manor out on the moor from an old dark, solemn and eccentric gentleman, who lives niggardly in a smaller place. But that's only the beginning.

1 You raise our curiosity.

Branwell Are you up to it? *(They all look at each other, as if to assess the odds.)*

Bartender Just get on with it, Branwell, and we'll see how far you'll reach.

Branwell As you wish. Come with me then out on the desert moor, where the winds never leave the unblessed restless spirits any peace, where eternal unrest stresses the whirling brains of the cursed, and where misfortune is the only certain fact of life, from the cradle to the gallows. Join me for a ride out into the wuthering hell of evil fate and eternal tragedy!

(blackout)

Scene 2.

The interior of a rather ramshackle larger cottage.

The mood is depressive. No one says a word.

All are poorly dressed in clothes worn and torn, there is a general feeling of decay, but no sense of perdition, rather like in a neglected prison.

Joseph, Catherine and Hareton in the room, when there is a knock on the door.

Catherine (sewing) Open, Hareton. (*Hareton, dirty, rises and opens to let in Lockwood.*)

Lockwood (a nice gentleman) God's peace in this cottage! (*removes his hat in a friendly salute*)

Catherine Who is it?

Hareton A stranger.

Joseph You seem to have come to the wrong place, Sir. There is no God's peace in this cottage.

Lockwood Isn't Mr Heathcliff living here?

Joseph That's why there is no God's peace in this cottage.

Catherine Quiet, Joseph!

Joseph I may say whatever. I have no say anyway.

Catherine Don't make things worse than they are!

Joseph Could they be worse than they are?

Catherine Have you lived for so long and still not learned, that it will always get worse?

Joseph So it doesn't matter what I say, since things will get worse anyway.

Lockwood It was not my intention to importune, (*cautiously*) but is Mr Heathcliff here?

Joseph Are you the new lodger of Thrushcross Grange?

Lockwood Precisely!

Joseph Is there anything wrong?

Lockwood No, everything is quite all right. There were just some minor details...

Ellen (the large hearty cook, entering from the kitchen) Who is it?

Joseph Just the new lodger.

Ellen But he looks nice enough. Let him in then, for goodness' sake!

Joseph Well, please to enter then, Sir. What are you waiting for?

Lockwood Mr Heathcliff, if you don't mind.

Ellen Heathcliff is upstairs. He is sure to come down. He hears everything. He must have heard that somebody arrived.

Catherine He only hears what he wants to hear. That's why he hears more than everybody else.

Lockwood That was somewhat difficult for me to understand.

Catherine No one can understand Heathcliff.

Ellen Have you met him?

Lockwood Yes, I have met him.

Ellen You don't seem much impressed.

Lockwood He made a somewhat, what shall we say, confusing impression.

Ellen Wasn't he rude and offensive to you like to all others?

Lockwood Something in that direction, you might perhaps say.

Heathcliff (*calling from upstairs*) Ellen! Who has arrived?

Ellen (*calling back*) Your lodger in Thrushcross Grange.

Heathcliff That oily fop! What does he want?

Ellen You have to ask him yourself.

Heathcliff I am busy. Ask him to leave.

Ellen Heathcliff, he is one of the very few who never caused you any harm! You are his landlord! Be so good as to show him some humanity!

Heathcliff (*angrily to himself*) Damn! Never to be left in peace! (*Some noise, indicating that he is on his way down.*)

Lockwood (*when Heathcliff shows up on the stairs*) It was not my intention to bother you.

Heathcliff (*coming down on a stick*) Don't ask so daft. You know very well that's what you are doing.

Ellen (*to Heathcliff*) A storm is gathering.

Heathcliff There is always a storm gathering. The more storms, the better! Let them gather! Let the winds howl themselves to exhaustion in torturing our demented souls! Let the goblins thunder across the moor in the dancing whirlwind and pull us all down together in its black hole of hell!

Joseph Fie what blasphemous language!

Heathcliff You know I always use it.

Ellen (*to Lockwood*) He is always like that, but he never means any harm.

Heathcliff Don't be such a ninny, Ellen! You if anyone know how much harm I always caused and wanted to be done!

Ellen He is just in a bad mood.

Heathcliff I am always in a bad mood! You might as well learn that at once, Sir! Well, what can I do for you?

Lockwood Just a few details about the house I am renting.

Heathcliff Come back tomorrow.

Ellen He can't come back tomorrow.

Heathcliff Why?

Ellen I already told you. There is a storm gathering. He can't walk home.

Heathcliff If I can get out and rave in any kind of weather, so can he. Be kind enough to get you gone, Sir! Come back tomorrow!

(*Thunder and lightning outside.*)

Ellen No one can get out in this weather.

Heathcliff Yes, I can!

Ellen You perhaps, but no one else.

Heathcliff I know many who could. Cathy, for instance...

Ellen Don't invoke the dead. No mortal could be outside any more today – except you.

Heathcliff (*dreaming*) No, only the undead. Only the unblessed. Only the unblessed memories of unblessed spirits...

Lockwood (*to Ellen*) Is he always like that?

Ellen We got used to it.

Lockwood He doesn't seem quite well.

Ellen He never did.

Lockwood (*indicating Hareton and Catherine*) Are they his children?

Ellen God save us, no! It shows, doesn't it? They are not even related. He has no children of his own.

Lockwood (*cautiously*) Adopted?

Heathcliff Don't stand there gossiping with the guest, Ellen, but show him out!

Ellen God forgive me, but that can't be done.

Heathcliff Don't get God mixed up in this! He has nothing to do with it!

Ellen He must stay here over night.

Heathcliff (*angrily beating his stick in the ground*) No, I say!

Lockwood By all means, I could find my way in the dark across the moor between the lightnings...

Ellen In this weather there is no path any more. There is only mud.

Heathcliff Why the hell did you have to come here to bother us? As if I didn't have enough of worries and griefs already! Now you have even ruined my temper! Bloody hell! (*gets out and bangs the door*)

Lockwood Where is he going?

Hareton He gets out into the rain to cool off. He always does. He is only happy in bad weather.

Lockwood You have a very strange master.

Ellen And he always gets worse.

Joseph It gets worse every year. And it will all end up badly for all of us by him, I know that for sure!

Ellen Don't talk nonsense, Joseph. Get out to the stables instead and look after the animals.

Joseph That's just what I intended. (*leaves*)

Catherine Don't worry, Sir. You can stay here for the night. I will give you a room and bedclothes.

Lockwood Thanks for your kindness. But what will your master say?

Catherine I take the responsibility. He never goes against me.

Ellen Sit down by the fire and warm yourself.

Lockwood (*getting closer to the fire*) Thank you, I am actually cold.

Ellen That's obvious. We all get cold as soon as Heathcliff appears.

Lockwood Still I believe it's not his fault but the cold outside.

Ellen We know better. We know *him*.

Catherine Don't talk rubbish now, Ellen, but give him something to eat.

Ellen We still have some chicken left. Would you like some?

Lockwood Super!

Ellen You are human at least. We are not exactly spoiled by humanity here.

Lockwood It's you who are human with me and not the other way around.

Hareton (*somewhat embarrassed*) I go out to the stables to help Joseph with the horses.

Catherine Yes, please do, Hareton. (*Hareton leaves.*)
(*to Lockwood*) He is worried about Heathcliff.

Lockwood Is he attached to Heathcliff?

Catherine Yes, although Heathcliff reduced him to a slave and an animal.

Ellen You mustn't speak like that, Miss Catherine.

Catherine But it is true.

Ellen Heathcliff could always stand behind doors and listen. He always did.

Catherine I go up to prepare your room, Mr Lockwood.

Lockwood I thank you for it.

Ellen Here is some food. Soon enough you will get warm.

Lockwood (*alone with Ellen*) You don't seem very happy here, if I may say so, Ellen. May I call you Ellen?

Ellen Of course. Just feel yourself at home.

Lockwood Could anyone? I mean, your master seems a somewhat cruel tyrant.

Ellen It wasn't always like that.

Lockwood Why did it become like that?

Ellen In the old days the house was always ringing with merry laughter, but that was long ago. That was before all the young ones went off dying. It was before Heathcliff arrived.

Lockwood Wasn't he always here?

Ellen No. He is a foundling. I always wondered if the old esquire didn't pick him up directly from hell.

Lockwood He doesn't seem evil but rather unhappy.

Ellen He made us all unhappy by his unhappiness.

Lockwood What is his trouble?

Ellen That he ever came here. And that he couldn't have Cathy.

Lockwood Cathy? I heard her mentioned earlier tonight. Who was she?

Ellen Young Miss Catherine's mother, and exactly like her.

Lockwood How old is Heathcliff?

Ellen Older than everyone else but still too young.

Lockwood Yes, that's the impression he gives.

Ellen It's a long story, Sir, but I could try to tell it briefly while the master is out. Can you take it?

Lockwood I am consumed with interest.

Ellen I was there from the start, so I know everything. This is how it was.
(*She turns towards the fire, while there is a change of scene.*)

(Cathy and Hindley as children come rushing in.)

Cathy Daddy! Daddy! It's daddy coming home!

Ellen Well, children, how do you know?

Cathy We saw him through the window!

Hindley It's actually true, Ellen. He is on his way.

(The door is opened, and enter Mr Earnshaw with a small boy carried on his back.)

Earnshaw Here I am, children! Is everything all right at home?

Cathy Daddy! Daddy! (*jumps up into his bosom*)

Earnshaw There, take it easy! Don't knock me over! (*sits down and hugs Cathy.*)

Mrs Earnshaw But what on earth are you carrying on your back?

Hindley A troll, mother, can't you see? A black troll from the moor.

Earnshaw Not at all, Hindley. This is your new little brother. Allow me to present... (*lets Heathcliff down from his back*) ... our new family member. I have given him the name of Heathcliff, my dearest, after the child we lost.

Mrs But where on earth does he come from?

Hindley Fram hell, mother, can't you see? He is a real blackamoor from hell. (*strikes Heathcliff*)

Earnshaw No, Hindley! No bullying here! Then you'll do without supper! Our home was always hospitable and will so remain. No one shall ever be anything but welcome in this good godfearing home. Did he hurt you, Heathcliff?

Heathcliff (*stoically*) That was nothing.

Mrs But where on earth did you find him?

Earnshaw In the back streets of Liverpool. No family. A small beggar. I saw my chance of saving a child's life, and I took it. Was it wrong, my dearest? We did have an empty place here at home.

Mrs Poor thing. He looks all washed up. Give him some hot soup, Ellen.

Hindley (*angry*) Are you giving him our food instead of us?

Earnshaw Behave yourself, Hindley! Another rude word, and you will sleep in the stables! This is your new younger brother!

Hindley You got us the devil himself for our brother.

Mrs Hindley! (*strikes him*)

Hindley I thought I was your only son, mother. (*leaves sulking*)

Cathy (*to Heathcliff*) Did he strike you, little troll?

Heathcliff (*unperturbed*) I am used to getting beaten.

Ellen He must be thoroughly washed clean. He could be carrying lice and other things.

Earnshaw That accounts for all of us, Ellen. But he is purest who is pure in his soul, and that's the one who has the most enduring patience. And if anyone has any patience here in this house it's our new little friend here, isn't it, Heathcliff?

Heathcliff If you say so, Sir.

Earnshaw I say so. Give him now a plate of soup. He is still freezing from the raw cold slush of the back streets of Liverpool.

Ellen He could even have lice of the plague.

Earnshaw That's enough, Ellen.

Cathy Did he hit you, poor dear?

Heathcliff I am no one's poor dear.

Cathy O yes, you are, for you have come to a wicked family and got two naughty elder kin over you.

Heathcliff I could bear with them.

Cathy But one of them is at least a sister. *(hugs him)*

Heathcliff What is your name?

Cathy Catherine. Call me Cathy.

Earnshaw (to Mrs) At least Catherine has accepted him.

Mrs It's my fault who always spoilt Hindley.

Earnshaw Hindley is not our only son any more, and that will do Hindley some good.

Mrs Yes, my dear, what father does is probably always right.

Earnshaw (more confidential) I think Heathcliff and Cathy already found each other.

Mrs The changeling will probably also eventually become a man.

(Earnshaw and his wife together with Cathy and Heathcliff make a happy idyll, while Ellen returns to Lockwood, the light returning on them, eventually leaving the Earnshaw family.)

Ellen But I observed it at once. It was as if a dark cloud entered the house on that day, and that cloud was not only Hindley's jealousy. That cloud hovered over all of us, and I think we all felt that it emanated from the new family member himself, but no one dared to express any dark misgivings and suspicions. It was something about Heathcliff that wasn't of this world. He had also been given the name of Mrs Earnshaw's deceased scion son. No, nothing boded any good.

(Some noise outside, as if a window was blown open.)

That infernal wind from the moor! Now the north windows have blown open again! I shall have to go and close the shutters. Just one moment, Mr Lockwood. *(leaves)*

Lockwood (sips his tea) A strange house, full of skeletons in the wardrobe. How many are they? Perhaps they don't even know themselves, but they are not likely to ever have any peace.

(The nearest window is blown open.) Now the ghosts come entering even here. Well, the least thing I can do is to close the window.

(goes for the window to shut it. When he reaches for it, a bare woman's arm clutches his arm from outside and keeps hold of it.)

Cathy Let me in! Let me in!

Lockwood (terrified) Who are you? Help!

Cathy (violently pulling Lockwood's arm) Let me in!

Lockwood Poor woman, what are you doing out in the storm! The door is open! Come in but not through the window!

Cathy (as before) Let me in!

Lockwood You are hurting me! Let go!

Cathy Let me in! Let me in!

(Lockwood succeeds in releasing his scratched and blooded arm and to shut the window not without force.)

Lockwood What madmen are allowed to run loose on the moor in this weather?

Heathcliff (entering) Still here? What are you doing here? Why haven't you left?

Lockwood You should be grateful that I am still here defending your house. A mad woman just tried to pull me out through the window.

Heathcliff (affected) A mad woman? Who was it?

Lockwood How should I know? You can't even yourself keep any order of all your ghosts in this area!

Heathcliff What kind of a woman was it? What did she look like?

Lockwood Blond, beautiful, like your young relation Miss Catherine but more mature.

Heathcliff (rushes to the window, opens it up wide, letting the storm howling in)

Cathy! Cathy! Where are you?

Lockwood Calm down, Mr Heathcliff! I just had all the trouble in the world getting that window fixed!

Heathcliff Cathy! Cathy! Come back!

Lockwood He is mad.

Heathcliff (turning around in fury) No, I am not mad! Don't you realize who the woman was that you saw? I have been waiting for her for years and years! And then she appears when you are here! Why does she come to you and not to me?

Lockwood You had better ask her.

Heathcliff Idiot, she is dead!

Lockwood (thoughtfully) Well, that complicates the case considerably.

Heathcliff (calling out again) My beloved! Come back!

Lockwood (giving up, lifting his hands) I wash my hands. *(sits down and returns to his tea. Ellen returns.)*

Ellen Why are you standing by the window, master Heathcliff? You could catch pneumonia!

Heathcliff I don't care.

Lockwood He is looking for passing girls.

Ellen Master Heathcliff, have you gone mad?

Heathcliff (turning to Ellen) Cathy was here, Ellen.

Ellen Of course she is here. She lives here.

Heathcliff No, Ellen, I mean the real Cathy. The departed Cathy.
Ellen (watches Heathcliff) Yes, you do look like having seen a ghost.
Heathcliff She was here, Ellen!
Ellen All right, but for God's sake, close the window!
Heathcliff (closes the window well enough but rushes on the door instead) Cathy!
Cathy! (rushes out)

(A moment's silence while Lockwood and Ellen look at each other.)

Lockwood There are more things going on around here than any human mind could understand.

Ellen I am afraid you arrived just in time for the conclusion.

Lockwood What have I missed?

Ellen Only the entire novel.

Lockwood You appear to have been in it from the start.

Ellen Yes, the happy start, the lovely, merry beginning, which then just irrevocably rushed us all down into a tragedy without end and of no bottom.

Cathy and Heathcliff loved each other. Hindley, her elder brother, pushed him around and did anything to humiliate him, which only resulted in Cathy's love for him growing even more uncontrolled and overwhelming. They grew up together as sister and brother, but their love was more than ordinarily passionate from the beginning. It was wild and unstoppable, like a force of nature.

And Mrs Earnshaw died, and Hindley grew constantly more difficult and cruel. He enjoyed torturing Heathcliff.

Lockwood Did Heathcliff never requite?

Ellen No, that was the miracle. His patience was more than human. He never repaid in any way, which earned him a constantly growing trust and confidence from Mr Earnshaw, while at the same time Cathy's love increased to the same degree as Hindley's hatred and rudeness.

But Hindley went away, the idea was that he was to be educated, but it all amounted to nothing. The boy had no interest in books. No one ever had in this corner of the world. He only got sickly and closed up and lost that small portion of robust health he did have before.

When Mr Earnshaw fell ill and it became imminent that he was to leave us, we immediately notified Hindley, urging him to come home, but it didn't turn out as we had expected...

Scene 3. Mr Earnshaw's death bed.

Catherine, Heathcliff, the servants, all are present.

Earnshaw Only Hindley is missing. Does he know that I am dying?

Catherine We sent for him, father. He should have come already.

Earnshaw He was never on time. Neither was I, for that matter. I always lingered behind and arrived late. You will take care of little Heathcliff, Cathy?

Catherine Of course, father.

Earnshaw You are my child of misfortune, little blackguard. Everything went wrong for me in Liverpool. The violin I bought for Hindley was broken, and your riding-whip, Cathy, was lost. Instead I came home with that one. Was it a bad deal?

Heathcliff No deals are bad, Mr Earnshaw.

Earnshaw Thus spoke a born businessman. Perhaps something could become of you after all, in contrast to Hindley.

Catherine You mustn't talk so much, father. You will only tire yourself out.

Earnshaw Don't try that, Cathy. It's only you I am boring and tiring out. But this is my last chance. (*Cathy cries.*) There, don't take it so seriously. It *will* get better when you are free of me and you can devote yourselves to your wild games in peace. Oh yes, I know well what you are up to, Cathy and Heathcliff, you rowdy children! Don't let it become a habit, and above all, never make an end to the fun, but always stay in good touch with each other and maintain your good contact at its best. Love is a sacred thing that never must be debased by meaningless misunderstandings. And I know your love is true. So just stick to it, and never let it down.

Ellen I distinctly hear someone coming.

Heathcliff Several.

Hindley (outside) Anybody home?

Catherine Hindley! Up here!

Hindley (enters with his young wife) So there you are. May I present my young wife, little Miss Frances.

Earnshaw You bungler, what have you now been up to?

Hindley I have married a wife.

Earnshaw With that wretched thing?

Hindley She is no wretched thing. She is my wife.

Catherine Didn't you get our message, that father was ill?

Hindley Certainly, but that was no news. He always was. Is his time up at last?

Earnshaw Yes, Hindley, it's finally time for me to die, so tomorrow you will be master here. And then you come home with a palefaced wench from town who probably can't even sweep the floor. Couldn't you have brought something more amusing to your father's death bed?

Hindley I always did my best, father.

Earnshaw No, you always did your worst. Look how pale she is, as of some wasting disease. And what about you? What has become of you? I sent you away with a lot of money for you to make something of for your education and a career! And what have you become? Only pale and bleak, a weak milksop, spoilt as such from the start, and then you bring home with you an even paler and weaker so called wife!

Hindley Don't listen to him, Frances. He is only gaga.

Earnshaw Send her away then, if she is not allowed to hear what I have to say! I assure you, that gaga is the very last thing I shall ever be. Others die demented and lost in their minds beyond all possible recovery and even younger than I, but at least I shall not die reduced in mind! So there! Get out, you coddled good-for-nothing, so that I may be spared the sight of your poor failure of a misconceived wife!

Hindley Come, Frances. It will pass. *(leaves with Frances)*

Earnshaw No, Hindley, death will never pass! It will always be present! We will never be without it! Even you shall die one day, but your wife will reach the grave before you!

(realizes that Hindley can't hear him) How could he bring home a wife who will never be able to endure this climate? He will be her death!

Catherine Don't worry about the others now, dear father. It's only you who are about to die.

Earnshaw Yes, can you image, I almost had forgotten it. Well, I might as well die then, and so have done with it! What a relief it will be to finally be rid of all of you! If I am lucky my wife will be waiting on the other side with at least a home well tidied up. *(dies)*

Ellen He is dead.

Catherine Daddy! Daddy!

Heathcliff Yes, he is gone.

(Catherine throws herself down by the side of the bed, crying.)

Heathcliff provides some tender and delicate soothing comfort.)

Hindley (enters) What did I hear? Has the old decrepit man at last turned in? About time! So I am the lord of the house now. Get out, Heathcliff! From now on you will sleep in the stables! It's over now with the old man's pampering favouritism! You are now just a farm-hand! And you, Catherine, must never associate with him again! I am now the lord of the manor, and all orders will come from me and my wife, which you must respect!

Catherine Respect for a brutal bully? Never!

Hindley Have you then no respect for the deceased? What foul language! Out with you, all of you! We shall have some order and efficiency here! At last an end to the decay of mismanagement!

Ellen Come, my children. Let's leave our new lord alone with his father's corpse.

(Exeunt all except Hindley.)

Hindley Apparently I came home in the right moment to displease you one last time more than enough! You always preferred Cathy and Heathcliff, that blackguard. But now I am in possession of my lawful rights to make a hell for them of their lives, if they so much as dare to utter any sound together again!

(clenches his fist threateningly at his dead father and leaves completely self-satisfied.)

Act II scene 1. The inn.
(like Act I scene 1.)

1 What kind of a bloody gipsy story is that, Branwell?
2 Let him just carry on to the end of it, so that he then can go home.
3 Or else we'll never be rid of him.
2 Give him another beer, to keep the fuel burning.
4 You can take some more pints, can't you, Branwell?
Branwell I would love to, if I am invited.
Bartender As long as you have something to tell we'll keep you going.
Several Right'o!
2 Drink, Branwell! Drink, and go on!
4 Yes, let it go on for long.
3 Let's hear every detail about how both those families went to perdition.
Branwell I warned you. It's a long story, and I have only arrived at the beginning.
2 The day is long, and the drinks are longer.
 (*A new man has arrived and taken a seat.*)
Branwell But who is that new guest? I have seen him before.
1 Don't bother about him. He is just another drunkard.
2 A true entertainer just carries on without minding the audience.
4 Yes, let's have that long tall story.
Branwell (approaches the guest) Sir, don't we know each other?
The guest Don't mind me. Go to your friends and continue your declamation.
Branwell What are you doing here?
Guest Listening.
Branwell Why?
Guest In case it would be interesting.
Branwell You have come here to listen to me.
Guest Yes, I admit it.
Branwell (to the others) I know who he is. He is a publisher.
1 Don't bother about him. Come on now.
Bartender Leave him alone and continue the entertainment. That's what we are paying for.
Branwell What the devil is he doing here?
Bartender Maybe you had better not try to find that out.
4 Come, Branwell. Don't be ridiculous, and don't pester the guests.
Branwell (attacks the guest and grabs him by the throat) You damned swine! Why have you come here!
 (*All interfere and try to stop Branwell from strangling the guest.*)
Branwell (wild) I know who he is! I know who he is!
Bartender Calm down, Branwell. (*to the guest*) We apologise. He is drunk.
Guest (shrugs) That's obvious.

Branwell You accursed vulture! What do you want with me? Haven't you insulted me enough?

1 What has he done to you, Branwell?

Branwell Nothing, except that he has torn my soul out of my body.

Guest I don't know what he is talking about.

Bartender (to the guest) Explain yourself. Who are you?

Guest I only met that individual once before, and that was just a fleeting moment.

Branwell A fleeting moment! As fleeting as when a hangman executes an innocent!

Guest I still don't understand what he is talking about.

Branwell Let me go! I'll not attack him any more. *(The others release him.)*

I know everything about that person, but he knows nothing about me. I gave him my poems to read. I gave him my novels to read. I was nothing but a born poet and writer, and I pleaded to him to accept me, so that I would come out of this snakepit of decay and ruin, misery and narrowmindedness. I gave him my soul. And what did he do with it? He trampled it down into a worse mire than I was born in, and what did you say, Sir, for a report? Do you remember?

Guest It's my thankless duty to give reports of hundreds like him every month.

Branwell What did you say, Sir, for a statment? I asked you a question!

Guest I don't remember.

Branwell Nay, of course you don't remember! You remember it as little as the last fly you massacred on your cheek! That's what we writers are to you publishers: flies to massacre and spit on and flatten with the ground and dry out the stain of! Nothing more!

Bartender Branwell, you go too far. You will never get published in that manner.

Branwell (stll upset) Tell me why you came here, Sir!

Guest (realizing that he has to answer) I came here to listen to you. I wanted to give you another chance. I wished to hear your story-telling and if what you tell is worth betting on. That's all.

Bartender We have no better story-teller in north England, not since the days of Walter Scott.

Guest (brushes his clothes clean) Could be. I can't give an opinion of that. But the thing is, that he is impossible. You saw for yourselves how he attacked me in the explicit intention to kill me. Such an author could never make a success on the market. All he can produce is scandals, no matter how good he is as a story-teller. I am sorry, Mr Branwell Brontë, that you didn't have the sense to take the chance that I was prepared to give you. *(leaves without another word in cold resolution.)*

(A moment's silence while they all recover.)

Second guest Branwell, go on.
Branwell How could I read anything more after this?
Bartender You were only drunk, Branwell. Forget about the incident.
 1 Yes, we are waiting, Branwell.
 3 Your yarn about how both the families perish isn't finished yet.
Branwell It's my sister's manuscript.
Bartender But it's your story.
Branwell It will never be known under my name.
Second guest The name doesn't matter. Who cares if Shakespeare wrote his plays or someone else? It's only the completed works that count.
 2 He is right.
Bartender Do you think you could pick up the thread? Do you need some more beer?
Branwell Yes, I think I will need another beer.
(All want to assist in serving him.) All right, thank you! That's enough!
Second guest Get going, Branwell! We are waiting!
 4 No one will interrupt you again.
 3 We have thrown out all stupid publishers.
Branwell (with four filled up glasses) Can you stand some more?
All Yes!
Branwell Well then. *(unfolds the manuscript again, puts on his glasses and starts reading.)*

They grew so fond of the wild Cathy at the rich and cultivated Thrushcross Grange, that they kept her there to educate her and teach her manners, so that when she returned to Wuthering Heights we couldn't recognize her any more...

(The scene shifts back to Ellen and Lockwood.)

Ellen She had turned into a fine lady and acquired manners which didn't at all belong with us and that most of all alienated Heathcliff, who felt neglected and disdained. As if it wasn't enough that Hindley treated him like dirt! That even his one and only ally Cathy would grow too good for him was more than he could bear. And Cathy was too fond herself of her new accomplishments to be able to move back by any step.

Scene 2. Wuthering Heights (like Act I scene 2.)

Hindley You have to brighten up now! Cathy has been gone for five weeks and acquired refined manners, so look to it that you don't make any shame of yourselves!

Frances But why has she been gone for so long?

Ellen Heathcliff knows.

Hindley (darkly) Yes, it's Heathcliff's fault, if it is a fault.

Frances How did it really happen, Heathcliff?

Heathcliff (dirtier and more untidy than ever) We were out on the moor playing as usual, when we lost our way to Thrushcross Grange and decided to peep through the windows. It was so well kept and splendid inside, a regular fairy tale castle, and then the dogs came barking and attacking us, biting Cathy's leg to the the bone so that it was almost broken. They were very sorry about Cathy, but they said it was my fault.

Hindly So it was!

Frances Hindley!

Heathcliff So they demanded to take care of Cathy until she had recovered, but they sent me back.

Hindley Yes, back and away with you out to the stables, Heathcliff! What are you doing in here?

Heathcliff We were all supposed to be here when Cathy came back to receive her and welcome her.

Hindley Miss Cathy to you, Heathcliff! You are just a farm-hand in charge of the manure! Well, well, stay here then, so Cathy might at last realize by your aspect and stench what kind of a parasite you really are!

Ellen (whispers to Heathcliff. He understands, smiles and leaves.)

Frances Here she comes! *(All are exhilarated.)*

(The servants open the door. Enter Catherine as a fine lady.)

Cathy Oh, how many of you are here to greet me! How sweet of you! And how well you have tidied up the house! Is it you, Ellen?

Ellen We were all part of it, but Hindley ordered it.

Cathy (greeting each one specially in due order with kisses and embraces.)

How sweet of you all! How wonderful to come home to a house in order!

(has greeted everyone, misses Heathcliff)

But one is missing. Where is Heathcliff?

Ellen He will join us presently.

Cathy (to Hindley) Have you turned him out to the stables again, Hindley?

Hindley That's where he belongs. He must realize his position and learn subordination. But it's not my fault that he is missing now. He was here a moment ago.

Ellen He was just going out to attend to something.

(Enter Heathcliff, washed and dressed up and almost handsome.)

Cathy (delighted) There you are my love, my beloved Heathcliff, my only true brother! *(embraces him whole-heartedly)* Where have you been?

Heathcliff I just washed off all the shit.

Hindley (furious) Your place is in the stables, Heathcliff!

Cathy Not today. Today he will sit with us at our table, for my sake, for that is how I want it.

Hindley You are a fine lady now, Cathy. You can't associate with gipsies.

Cathy That's for me to decide and not for you. And I don't associate with gipsies, unless that gipsy is you, Hindley.

Hindley All right, then, but only for today!

Cathy How do you manage, Ellen? Have you prepared for the feast?

Ellen Everything is ready, Miss Cathy. The guests are welcome at any time.

Cathy They also might arrive at any time, so you had better all get smarter.

Hindley What have you now been up to, Cathy? You haven't invited anyone here, have you?

Cathy Yes, I actually invited the Lintons.

Hindley (horrified) The whole family?

Cathy No, just Isabella and Edgar. They went so curious about the strange animals in their garden.

Hindley What do you mean by that?

Cathy We happen to be their neighbours.

Ellen I hear the carriage coming. That must be them.

Cathy Is everything ready, Ellen?

Ellen Everything is in perfect order. We might as well make a reception to the Queen.

Cathy Good dear old Nelly! What would we be without you?

Hindley Away with you to the stables now, Heathcliff. If we have guests they must not find you here.

Cathy (angry) He stays, Hindley! He is my guest as well!

Hindley There will only be trouble.

Cathy Let there be trouble then, but he stays!

Ellen Here they come.

Edgar (entering with his sister Isabella, prudently) Have we come to the right house?

Cathy (greeting them and embracing them overwhelmingly) Welcome, Edgar and Isabella! How nice that you would come!

Edgar You made us so curious about your folk.

Isabella How very tidy you have made it here!

Hindley (aside) It's the first time.

Edgar We must salute everyone in due order. This must be Nelly from the kitchen. (*politely saluting Ellen*)

Cathy She is the one who keeps everything in order.

Isabella It couldn't be more exemplary!

Edgar Hindley, my sincere compliments for keeping your home in such a perfect order!

Hindley A firm hand is needed to run this rugged house!

Isabella And this must be your exquisite wife, Hindley. (*greets Frances*)

Frances I am sure we'll be the best of friends.

Edgar And who is this? (*reaching Heathcliff*)

Hindley The groom. He shouldn't be here, but Cathy insisted.

Edgar I see. This is the famous Heathcliff from the gutter in Liverpool. He looks unusually clean for being generally busy about clearing dung in the stables.

Hindley I can promise you, Edgar, that he has never looked this clean before. He has put on a face for the sake of Cathy.

Cathy Don't be silly now, but come and sit down. Ellen has prepared the most delicious dinner in the world for us.

Edgar Won't you greet me, Heathcliff? (*offers his hand*)

Heathcliff (*accepts it with reluctance*)

Hindley He can put out a paw nicely, but only when Cathy is present.

Cathy Hindley!

Hindley Yes, what is it?

Isabella He is much more dashing, Cathy, than you ever could describe him.

Heathcliff Thank you, gracious lady. It brings me sincere pleasure that anyone else is human here except only Cathy.

Hindley Don't you dare speak with the guests, you inmate!

Heathcliff Have I no freedom of expression?

Hindley Not in my house!

Cathy Don't quarrel now!

Edgar Does Cathy defend the gipsy against the gentry?

Cathy Why is everybody always falling foul of Heathcliff, as if he had no right to call himself human?

Hindley Well, he just isn't, is he, Edgar?

Edgar Honestly speaking, I can see nothing under his made up face except the abject soul of a simple beggar.

(*Swiftly as lightning Heathcliff grabs a saucepan and throws its contents in the face of Edgar.*)

All are shocked.)

Different voices No! Alas! Not this! Oh dear! Now we've had it! Dear me! (*etc.*)

(*Only Heathcliff is satisfied, and only Cathy can't help laughing.*)

Edgar (*recovering from the shock*) If you were an equal I would challenge you to a duel.

Heathcliff (*crossing his arms*) Any time, Sir.

Edgar But it is beneath my dignity. (*to Hindley*) I will never set my foot in this house again, Sir, where you allow simple dung grooms to mishandle your guests.

Isabella (*also seeing the fun in the situation*) It was only you he mishandled, Edgar.

Edgar Come, sister! Let's go! We have nothing more to do here!

Isabella (*more and more amused, to Cathy*) Pity that we lost that dinner. Edgar already finished up all the sauce. But at least we had the funniest bit.

Cathy We'll carry on some other time, Isabella.

Isabella I am looking forward to it.

Heathcliff (*in rude boldness*) I am sorry, Miss, but your brother actually asked for it.

Hindley (furious, advancing and striking Heathcliff down) Haven't you done enough harm for today? Must you even insult the ladies?

Cathy I apologise for my brother, Isabella.

Isabella I think we both would have preferred Heathcliff for a brother.
(leaves with Edgar)

Hindley Never again are you to set foot in this house!

Cathy Hindley, both you and Edgar actually behaved intolerably bad. Compared with you, Heathcliff practically appears as innocent.

Hindley So? He might even be something of a saint?

Cathy Yes, at least in comparison with both of you.

Hindley Go to hell! *(leaves in fury. Frances runs after him to soothe him.)*

Cathy (helping up Heathcliff) Did it hurt much?

Heathcliff Don't touch me! *(getting up by himself)*

Cathy I only want to help you.

Heathcliff You are a fine lady now. You don't have to get dirty together with me any more. My place is in the stables, until I can get away from here forever. And your home is over there at Thrushcross Grange where they have finer manners more worthy of you than your addled egg of a brother.

Cathy You are my only real brother.

Heathcliff No, Cathy, we are not even related. And your brother will never let you have me.

Cathy You are cruel.

Heathcliff No, only realistic.

Ellen He is partly right, Cathy. The existence here will only become more and more intolerable by Hindley's constant increasing intolerance of Heathcliff.

Cathy (in despair) What have I done to deserve such a brother!

Heathcliff (tenderly) Me – or Hindley?

Cathy (smiling) The worst thing is, that I believe I deserved you both.

Ellen There is food left for a whole company.

Cathy Yes, we have forgotten all about it! Edgar and Isabella should blame themselves for not wanting to stay. And Hindley also, who only went away to sulk.

Heathcliff He has his bottle for compensation.

Cathy So what are we waiting for? Nelly, dinner time!

Ellen That's the signal I was waiting for. *(goes out into the kitchen)*

Cathy (sitting down at the table with Heathcliff) We can still live, Heathcliff, in spite of all the stupid people in the world.

Heathcliff It was made for only you and me.

Cathy So let's at least take care of it as long as we live.

Ellen (brings the chicken) Here is the chicken!

Cathy What are you waiting for, Heathcliff? Help yourself!

Heathcliff As you command, Miss, since Hindley seems to have fallen out in driving me out.

Cathy We have an occasion to enjoy.

(They attack the dinner table.)

Ellen (back with Lockwood) And so it went on. Edgar Linton and Heathcliff were absolute contraries: Heathcliff, always in neglect, dirty, sullen and evil, while Edgar always was the perfect gentleman, as if he came from another better world. Naturally Cathy preferred Edgar, who could promise her a better life, but Heathcliff still kept her heart, as if it lay in chains within him. That natural force was greater. And at the same time Hindley continued his brutal humiliation of him, which constantly grew worse, for Hindley did not improve with the years. His wife was sickly, and parallel to her illness constantly growing worse, Hindley constantly cultivated his friendship and intimacy with the bottle...

Hindley (entering, drunk. Cathy and Heathcliff are gone.)

Ellen Hindley, you must go in to your wife. Have you forgotten that you just became a father?

Hindley May the devil take him!

Ellen No, the devil will take your fatherhood, Hindley, if you don't want to keep the child! You won't be able to keep your wife anyway, the way you always have neglected her care!

Hindley Are you blaming me for Frances being no good?

Ellen Yes, I am, for she could never support your drinking!

Hindley It cured her illness with me, even if it didn't cure her.

Frances (faintly, from inside) Hindley!

Ellen (serious) There isn't much left of her, Hindley.

Hindley May the devil take all damned womanhood, which never can live up to what a man needs!

(goes in to his wife. The scene opens to the same as Act I scene 3.)

Hindley (immediately touched by his wife's declining condition) How is it, my dear little one?

Frances Your son is fine, Hindley. He will make it.

Hindley But what about you?

Frances Forget me, Hindley. Stronger stuff is needed here than poor little me.

Hindley My poor little dove! *(rushes to her side and buries his face in the bedside. Frances comforts him tenderly and motherly.)*

Frances I never made a good wife for you, Hindley. You were too wild for me, like the whole way of life out here was far too wild for me.

Hindley You mustn't leave me, my beloved! I would be lost without you!

Frances A big rowdy bull like you can never get lost. You were born here and are made for this hard way of life.

Hindley I am much weaker than you, Frances, for I have no character.

Frances Nonsense, Hindley. And now you even have a son, for the continuity of your farm and family. You have everything to live for. Your future has been secured.

Hindley No, Frances! When you are gone I see nothing else than a vast empty terrifying black hole!

Frances It's just your imagination.

Hindley I am a realist, Frances! Nothing is more real in life than your own imagination!

Frances You don't know what you are saying. I believe you have been at the bottle again.

Hindley I can't bear with life, Frances, not if you are leaving me!

Frances (quietly) I have no choice, Hindley.

Hindley (angry) Yes, you have! (*rising in rebellion*) Why the devil did you have to get ill? Only that has cast a gloom over all of us ever since you came! Your damned weakness is pulling us all down into the darkest bog of the moor!

Frances Hindley, you are raving.

Hindley I know damned well that I am raving, for I have the right to rave! It's my house! And I can't tolerate illness in my house! I can't stand wailings and complaints! I can't accept that you are going to leave me! I will not have it! Do you understand? I won't accept it!

Ellen (entering, eventually joined by Cathy and Heathcliff) Hindley, don't yell all over the house when your wife is ailing!

Hindley (pissed off) I don't care!

Cathy Hindley! You should be ashamed of yourself! You have been drinking again!

Hindley (like before) I don't give a damn!

Heathcliff We had better bring Hindley out of here.

Hindley And you, accursed gipsy, you monster from the abyss that brought damnation into my father's house, who caused my wife's death and who will ruin us all, to hell with you!

Cathy (to Ellen) He doesn't know what he is saying.

Ellen It's worse than that. He knows what he is saying.

Cathy (with Frances, to Hindley) Hindley, your wife is dying!

Frances (faintly) Let him rave. It will get better when I am gone.

Hindley Don't you try that one! Nothing will ever get any better! It will only get worse forever! It won't get any better even if you die!

Cathy Hindley!

Ellen (rushing up to Frances) My young mistress!

Cathy How is she?

Ellen She is dead.

Hindley (at a loss, awkwardly) Dead?

Ellen Yes, master Hindley. She is dead.

Hindley Dead? My wife dead? Impossible. It cannot be. Not in my house. Heathcliff, tell me it's impossible. Such a thing cannot happen to me. I am Hindley Earnshaw, the master of the house! I own our Wuthering Heights! Everything is mine! My wife must not die! No! (*dashes out in despair, crying and bellowing*)

Cathy Now hell is loose.

Ellen (takes up the small crying child from Frances) Fortunately there is always someone to survive. (*comforts the baby*) There, my dear. There, little one. There is nothing to be afraid of.

Cathy Catch up with Hindley, Heathcliff, and prevent him from doing something foolish.

Heathcliff That's a practical impossibility, since I am his serf in bondage.

Cathy Don't be silly, Heathcliff. Do as I say.

Heathcliff (ironically) As my lady commands. (*leaves*)

Ellen He is only getting more insidious with the years.

Cathy No wonder, the way Hindley treats him.

Ellen (cautiously) Miss Cathy, shouldn't he get away from here, before something worse happens?

Cathy What do you mean, Ellen?

Ellen Without young Mrs in the vicinity you could expect the worst between Hindley and Heathcliff.

Cathy Let the storm rage, Ellen. Who could stop it anyway? Let them destroy each other, if they please. Life will go on anyway. I will myself be rid of both, if I marry Edgar Linton.

Ellen Has he proposed?

Cathy Yes, he has proposed.

Ellen But you are too young. Have you accepted?

Cathy Not yet.

Ellen He is too kind and gentle for you, miss Cathy.

Cathy Is he? Am I too wicked for him? Could he break?

Ellen Yes, miss Cathy, in your hands he could break. Here in Wuthering Heights we have stronger knacks than what is good for the softer people at Thrushcross Grange.

Cathy Ellen, you are always right. But nothing can stop nature. If Edgar wants me he will get me.

Ellen And Heathcliff?

Cathy He can manage for himself.

Ellen Alone here with Hindley?

Cathy It will be interesting to see which one of them will be the first to go under. Personally I would bet on Heathcliff.

Ellen Miss, you are cruel.

Cathy No, Nelly. Here at Wuthering Heights we are only realists.

Ellen You and Heathcliff are so much alike both in naughtiness and wildness, that I certainly would hope for the best of all of us that you two never will have each other.

Cathy That's the spirit, Nelly. Now you are getting realistic. Let me now take care of our little nephew. *(takes over the child and cuddles it like any mother)*

Ellen Even you could be a good mother, Cathy.

Cathy What are we women made for if not for that?

Ellen Aren't you made for Heathcliff?

Cathy (looking at her) No, Nelly. Heathcliff is made for me.

Ellen But honestly, you didn't accept him, did you, Cathy?

Cathy (ashamedly) Yes, that's what I did.

Ellen You look as if you were ashamed of it.

Cathy I am.

Ellen But why? Edgar Linton has everything you could wish for. He is well off, Thrushcross Grange is a ten times finer home than Wuthering Heights, you will be settled and have an entire staff of servants to dispose of, – and you would be rid of me.

Cathy No, Nelly, I wouldn't, because you would come with me to Thrushcross Grange.

Ellen Well, I never heard the like! Me, who has been toiling here by the stove all my life!

Cathy You will advance as much as I, Nelly.

Ellen Still you look ashamed and dejected.

Cathy I am thinking of Heathcliff.

Ellen He is the one you love.

Cathy Yes.

Ellen So you must give up the idea of Thrushcross Grange and Edgar Linton, and I may stay here.

Cathy No, it can't be, Nelly.

Ellen Why not?

Cathy I can't marry Heathcliff. It would be beneath my dignity.

(Heathcliff, who has been standing concealed all the time, suddenly runs out.)

What was that?

Ellen Good God, what have you done now!

Cathy It wasn't Heathcliff, was it?

Ellen It could have been. I never heard him leave the house.

Cathy I never suspected he would hear everything we said.

Ellen He hears everything and is always around everywhere. But go on, Cathy. If you love him, how can you then forsake him?

Cathy That's what I cannot do. Even if I marry Edgar, I would be unfaithful to him with Heathcliff and only long for Heathcliff all the time. Heathcliff is more me than I am myself. He is everything, both me and himself, and I am nothing to him. He has possessed me. I can never get rid of

him. I can never forsake him. But what shall we do if he heard me and misunderstood me?

Ellen We must find him. But he always comes back. We will have to repair it later. Perhaps it would be best after all that you marry Edgar Linton. He is such a cultivated gentleman. And he truly loves you. You should give him the chance, Cathy.

Cathy But he is only water whereas Heathcliff is only fire.

Ellen No, Cathy, Heathcliff is only passion and storm and a menace to all our lives. *(A storm is coming outside.)*

Cathy Now it starts storming again. And Heathcliff is maybe out on the moor! Perhaps he is wild of grief over my desperate whims!

Ellen He will always come back. He always manages.

Cathy But what if he doesn't! *(starts up)* Alas, what have I done! *(opens the door wide open and rushes out)*

(outside) Heathcliff! Heathcliff!

Ellen (runs for the open door, calling after her) Miss Cathy! Come back!

(resigns) Hopeless. Now there is a rainstorm also. *(shuts the door against the wind)* I just hope we'll not have another pneumonia in the house.

(Enter Hindley staggering with his bottle.)

Hindley May the devil take you all, damned sissies and wimps!

Ellen Hindley, Cathy and Heathcliff are out in the storm.

Hindley Good for them! Just let them perish!

Ellen Hindley! You are drunk!

Hindley Don't you think I am aware of it, old hag? That's why I am drunk!

Ellen Hindley, it's raining and storming outside, Cathy is roving around the moor for the runaway Heathcliff, and you just keep drinking!

Hindley Well, what the devil is there else for me to do? My wife is dead! That's the only thing of any importance here in life.

Ellen Your sister could catch a cold and pneumonia and die, Hindley! She was in her bare dress!

Hindley That's her concern. I can't do anything about that.

Ellen Pardon me for saying it, Sir, but you are a complete failure of no use!

Hindley Thank the devil for that. *(drinks, falls down on a chair by the table and immediately falls asleep with his head in his arms.)*

Ellen And he would call himself a man! He is worse than a rotten haystack!

Joseph (enters) We have found her, Nelly.

Ellen (confused) Found who?

Joseph Miss Cathy. But she is wet through and frozen.

Ellen And Heathcliff?

Joseph Not a trace. She ran around like a white ghost crying hysterically for Heathcliff. But if I may say what I think, Nelly, I think it's best for all of us and perhaps especially for himself if he never comes back again.

Ellen Think of what you say, so that you don't say what you think.

Joseph That's what I am doing.

Ellen Yes, that's what I mean.

Joseph So what's wrong then?

Ellen Nothing, Joseph. Where is she?

Joseph They are carrying her here. She was almost out of her mind out on the moor and didn't know where she was. We were lucky to find her.
(Some maids and farm-hands come carrying in the coughing Cathy, completely wet through)

Ellen Poor little miss! What shall we do with you? Running wild out on the moor with bare arms, only her dress and barefoot! She is dangerously cold. We must put her to bed at once.

Cathy *(with great effort, between her coughing fits)* Where is Heathcliff, Nelly?

Ellen Dear me, if anyone knew! He is the least trouble now, although he usually is the worst.

Cathy I think I have broken his heart. But I never meant to, Nelly! I never meant it!

Ellen I know, dearest.

Cathy I love him! I belong to no one but him! I am only his!

Hindley *(wakes up by the table)* Who the devil can't let me drink in peace? *(gets lost again)*

Ellen Carry her up to her room. She has a full crisis ahead.

Joseph She will surely recover, Nelly.

Ellen No, Joseph, I don't think she will ever recover, even if she gets well again.

Joseph We'll take care of her all right.

Ellen Yes, Joseph. We will tender her like a child.
(Cathy is carried out, coughing hard, rattling and delirious)

Cathy Heathcliff! I didn't mean to! I didn't mean what I said! I will die without you! Don't leave me alone, not after this! *(She is carried out.)*

Ellen *(sitting down with Lockwood)* Heathcliff didn't come back. He had left us. And no one missed him except Cathy. That was the very thing that would lead to unforeseeable calamities, which no one could suspect...

Act III scene 1.
Back at the inn.

1 Relax, Branwell. You are taking yourself out.

2 This story seems to concern him personally.

3 That Hindley seems to be some kind of a self-portrait.

4 Are you Hindley or Heathcliff, Branwell?

Branwell I am both. I am them all. I am no one. It's my sister who wrote the story. Give me a drink.

1 Shall we give him another?

2 He isn't even half way yet.

3 Let's turn to our bartender, the only sense in every pub.

Bartender I don't think it's advisable.

4 Says a real bartender.

Branwell What's wrong with me, George?

Bartender You indulge yourself too much. You waste yourself without realizing that you are not inexhaustible.

Branwell That's not the issue. The thing is to refill, not to empty or exhaust.

Bartender Alcohol is a risky fuel that could catch fire.

Branwell But that's the meaning of it! I must be allowed to burn! I live only to consume myself! That's the very meaning of life!

Bartender (to the guests) Could you take some more?

The guests (looking at one another, all agreed) Yes.

Bartender Branwell shall get what he wants, for unfortunately he can take some more.

Branwell I am inexhaustible! Nothing can stop me once I get started!

The guest Shut up and start talking!

Branwell That's what I am doing!

Guest No, you are just boasting without doing it!

Branwell But I must be allowed to prepare myself!

Bartender (serves him) Here is the preparation.

Branwell (takes it all) That's exactly what I needed. Hold on now! For Cathy actually married that noble milksop Edgar Linton, but at the wedding someone turned up who wasn't invited...

Scene 2. The wedding reception.

Cathy and Edgar as bride and groom receive all the congratulating local people.

Guest 1 Imagine that you got married so early, Cathy! Now your chances are good to have many children!

Cathy One is enough to start with, Charlotte.

Guest 2 My sincere congratulations! But have you forgotten all about Heathcliff?

Cathy Heathcliff has been lost for three years. But I'll never forget him.

Edgar Hopefully he has forgotten you.

Cathy Are you jealous for the sake of a stranger?

Edgar How could I be, now when I have got you? No storms may besiege our hearts any more, Cathy. You are safe now.

Cathy Ellen! How nice to see you!

Ellen (worried) I just wanted to warn you, miss Cathy. Heathcliff has been seen in the village.

Cathy (simply) So why doesn't he come here, then?

Ellen That's what I wanted to warn you about. He might do just that.

Cathy In that case he is welcome.

Edgar I also heard that rumour, but I don't trust it.

Cathy Why didn't you tell me?

Edgar Because I refuse to believe it's true.

Cathy In that case I am sure he will come.

Heathcliff (*entering discreetly, but passing all the others*) Pardon me for being absent from the wedding itself. I didn't want to risk disturbing it.

Edgar You are not invited, Heathcliff.

Cathy But you are welcome all the same.

Heathcliff My sincerest congratulations. I knew that you two would have each other and did not want to obstruct the process. That's why you haven't seen me before.

Cathy Where have you been? You seem to have made your way in the world.

Edgar Mildly speaking. He is not far from a gentleman.

Cathy He may actually have become a gentleman.

Edgar No, he never will.

Heathcliff You should have allowed myself to make that concession, Mr Linton.

Cathy Call him Edgar. How long do you stay?

Heathcliff As long as they want me at Wuthering Heights.

Cathy Have you found quarters there?

Heathcliff Yes. Hindley and I are now the best of friends.

Cathy Heathcliff, I suspect you haven't come home to be quite on the level.

Heathcliff Who can demand being quite on the level of someone who never can become a gentleman, and who you, Catherine Linton, considered too much beneath your level to ever be able to reach your level? (*leaves them*)

Cathy Those knives were both keen and intended to hurt.

Edgar Forget him, Cathy. He is just a groom.

Isabella Heathcliff! Welcome back!

Heathcliff How lovely to see you, Miss Isabella. (*kisses her hand gallantly*)

Isabella This country has been dead without you for three years.

Heathcliff That's why I came back.

Isabella So it was not just for Cathy's wedding?

Heathcliff That was the springing point. At last I am no longer responsible for her destiny. I am free.

Isabella We both are. (*He conveys her to the table of refreshments.*)

Cathy Where is Hindley? Why hasn't he come to wish his sister good fortune for her wedding? He was duly invited.

Ellen They say he is sleeping it off, Miss Cathy.

Cathy Did he spend the evening before his sister's wedding drinking?

Ellen And well enough. He spent the whole night playing cards with Heathcliff.

Joseph Heathcliff could take it but not Hindley.

Cathy Was it Heathcliff who made him drunk?

Joseph Both were drinking like swine, but Heathcliff remained sober as Satan himself.

Cathy I understand. He collects souls. Just because he couldn't have mine he now collects others' to have his revenge on them. For what kind of harvest, Heathcliff, if not for hell itself?

Edgar Excuse me, did you say something?

Cathy I was speaking to myself.

Edgar As long as you know what you say, dearest.

(The wedding feast fades into the background as Ellen returns to Lockwood.)

Ellen Yes, Heathcliff was back after three years. He let her marry the noble Edgar just to start haunting us already the day after. Like a vulture he had kept watch on everything that occurred around us for all these years. He showed himself like a predator who all the time had kept watching us and now showed up only to start hunting us...

(The scene shifts to Wuthering Heights, where Hindley is playing cards with Heathcliff and other knaves. Heathcliff has dropped his gentlemanly manners and pulled up his sleeves.)

Scene 3. Wuthering Heights.

Hindley You have beaten me again, Heathcliff.

Heathcliff It's only luck, no skill.

Hindley Your luck is too infernal not to be skilful.

Heathcliff You are not a bad loser, are you, Hindley? *(fills up his glass)*

Hindley What have I to lose? My wife has died and left me, and my sister has married to a better farm. What do I have left? Only the stimulating intoxication of a permanent downhill.

Heathcliff That's right, Hindley! Now shuffle the cards!

Hindley Are you sure you are not cheating?

Heathcliff That's why I let you shuffle yourself, to convince you that any cheating on my side is impossible!

Hindley I believe you. No one can be more convincing than the devil's own advocate.

Joseph Master Hindley, you must see for yourself that he is tricking you down to hell.

Hindley Keep your infernal comments to yourself, you philistine of Satan! Go for the vicar's company, if you want to preach!

Joseph But master Hindley, I only want to save you from perdition.

Hindley What perdition? Be your own perdition! All your accursed sanctimony is just self-deceit and lies, and all so called Christians who go to church are just fooled and enchanted by black deceivers in frocks!

Joseph That's what that black Satan himself has taught you. (*indicates Heathcliff*)

Hindley No, you blithering halfwit, I actually got it myself! Leave us now to mind our own important business in peace!

Joseph He is gambling you out of all your property, master Hindley!

Hindley (rising, furious) Can't you see anything, Joseph? We are making a settlement! He has returned all dressed up and wealthy and has challenged me to an economic duel of life and death! It's either him or me! But I intend to play him out of everything including his last and dirtiest rotten underwear! So just let me hang this devil in peace and don't interfere!

Heathcliff Go and turn some leafs in your Bible, Joseph.

Hindley Yes, that's all you are good for! And even that you can't see that it's only full of crap and bullshit!

Joseph You blaspheme, master Hindley!

Hindley Listen to that one! I blaspheme! Yes, telling the truth has always been equal to blasphemy, for no one ever could stand hearing the truth, except those few exceptions who dared to stand up for it!

Joseph What is truth, master Hindley?

Hindley The truth, Joseph, is that you are an old incurable fool. Go now and hang yourself with your sacred catechisms.

Joseph Alackaday, he is completely lost!

Hareton (tiny and dirty, pulling Hindley's sleeve) Daddy! Daddy!

Hindley What is it now, you little son of a bitch?

Hareton The vicar is here again.

Heathcliff (rising) I'll take care of him. (*goes opening the door*) Welcome, reverend!

Hindley Are you here again, you old bonehead? No, I told you!

Heathcliff There, Hindley, don't talk like that to a reverend father. Please come in, reverend.

Vicar I am sorry, Mr Earnshaw, but I must insist. It will not do to neglect your son's education.

Hindley I educate him myself.

Vicar No, that's exactly what you do not, Mr Earnshaw.

Hindley Heathcliff helps me.

Vicar Mr Heathcliff isn't even baptized and even less any believer.

Hindley Haven't I made it clear to you, yours sanctimonious falsity, that we don't want any established superstition in this house?

Vicar Little Hareton is ten years and can still neither read, write or count.

Hindley That's his business! If he doesn't want to learn anything, it's his human right to do without it!

Vicar You thereby condemn him to a life of ignorance and what is worse!

Hindley Here we are all doomed and by our own choice. That's all, reverend.

Vicar The whole village condemns your way of life!

Hindley Not another word, reverend.

Heathcliff You heard him. He is master here. No one else has any right to order anything in his house.

Vicar But by my soul, Mr Heathcliff, I believe you are ordering his life without his realizing it.

Heathcliff He is only following his nature, reverend.

Hindley Get out, devil priest! (*throws an empty bottle at him. The vicar leaves in a hurry.*)

Where were we now before all those idiots came blundering and disturbing us?

Heathcliff You were shuffling the cards.

Hindley They were shuffled long ago.

Heathcliff Then it's only for you to deal.

Hindley I shuffled them, so it's your deal. Fair play all the way.

Heathcliff Fair play all the way. (*deals the cards*)

Scene 4. Thrushcross Grange.

Isabella (picking flowers in her lovely garden) Alas, when may I see him again? Does he love me, or will he only use me? What does it matter, as long as I love him? Loves me, loves me not... (*plucks a flower,*) loves me, loves me not... He doesn't love me. Alas, you can trust flowers no more than love. Neither flowers nor love can ever reach any definite fulfilment. (*Heathcliff appears.*) Oh! You startled me, Heathcliff!

Heathcliff (in a charming mood) Don't let me scare you for nothing.

Isabella How elegant you are today, Heathcliff.

Heathcliff It's only in your eyes, so the grace is only yours. Your eyes makes me better than I am.

Isabella I only see the soul, Heathcliff. Your dark exterior means nothing.

Heathcliff How could anyone see my soul, which I can't even feel myself?

Isabella Women see everything, Heathcliff, that men are blind to.

Heathcliff And what am I blind to?

Isabella That I love you.

Heathcliff Dangerous words, Isabella. If your brother heard you he would throw both me and you out.

Isabella Marvellous destiny! I would share any life with you, Heathcliff.

Heathcliff Don't you know then that I am a villain?

Isabella The whole world speaks of you with the darkest fear. No one ever had such a bad reputation as you in this part of the world, which

endows you with a strange aura of magic and irresistibility. I know that you are good, Heathcliff, deep inside, and that you perhaps could love more than anyone else.

Heathcliff I do.

Isabella I knew it! (*offers him her mouth to kiss. He embraces her and is just about to bury her in a kiss when Catherine, who has been stealing in and listening for a while, breaks off:*)

Cathy Isabella! Heathcliff!

Heathcliff (*desisting*) We have company.

Cathy I thought it was my company you looked for at Thrushcross Grange and not my poor sister-in-law's.

Isabella Why do you call me poor, sister?

Cathy Can't you see him through, poor Isabella? Can't you see the massive darkness in his soul of only evil and bitter revengefulness?

Isabella What do you mean?

Cathy I mean that he is intent on seducing you and to get at your brother's family and Thrushcross Grange by you.

Isabella You are just jealous, Cathy! You love him as much as I do!

Cathy Heathcliff, declare your intentions.

Heathcliff You have treated me shamefully, Catherine Linton.

Cathy So shamefully that you must take out revenge on everyone who is close to me?

Heathcliff When Pharaoh tramples on his servants, his servants trample on their slaves.

Cathy And how did I treat you shamefully?

Heathcliff You know that too well.

Isabella (*clinging to him*) Don't mind her, Heathcliff. She is only jealous.

Cathy Don't dare to touch him, Isabella!

Heathcliff Try to stop her, if you can. (*puts his arm around her*)

Cathy Heathcliff, don't make me upset now again! You know I can't take it!

Heathcliff What is it you can't take, Cathy? (*embraces Isabella*)

Edgar (*appearing*) Is he here now again, that miserable manure groom! Haven't I forbidden you to see him, Isabella?

Isabella Forbidden fruit tastes the better.

Edgar Heathcliff, I have warned you! You must leave us in peace!

Heathcliff May I not visit my friends? Cathy and I did grow up together, you know.

Edgar But she is now my wife! If you don't leave at once I must call on my men!

Heathcliff Reinforcement without battle, Edgar? Don't you dare hit me yourself?

Cathy Edgar, if you are a man, you will throw the uninvited guest out of your house yourself!

Edgar I urge you to leave, Heathcliff! I warn you!

Heathcliff No one is more ridiculous than the one who threatens, Edgar. I didn't know you were such a childish coward.

Edgar (calling) Jamie! Roger! Come here and chase this trespasser from our land!

Isabella (wants to defend Heathcliff) No one touches one hair on our invited guest's head!

Edgar (surprised) Was it you or Cathy who got him here?

Heathcliff I came entirely by myself just to change a few words with the best friend of my childhood.

Edgar And have you done your business? If so, get lost!

Heathcliff I let her know how shamefully she has treated me.

Edgar Has Cathy treated you shamefully?

Cathy Explain yourself, Heathcliff.

Heathcliff Why did I disappear three years ago? Only because Cathy, with whom I grew up and whom I worshipped throughout my childhood, declared that I was not worthy of her kindness.

Edgar And how could you believe that you ever could be, you manure groom? By putting on a face and coming home like a conceited dandy and disturb her wedding?

Heathcliff I was absent from your wedding in order to not risk disturbing it.

Edgar Isabella, I am surprised at your behaviour. You must choose. Either you will never see this manure groom again, or you will have no home with me any more.

Isabella My brother, not even you can resist nature.

Edgar (to Cathy) What does she mean?

Cathy (to Heathcliff) Get away, Heathcliff, before some fool here will shoot at you.

Edgar So I am now a fool as well? Those words from your mouth, Cathy, are not worthy the wife of a gentleman.

Isabella Move inside, Edgar, before you make yourself even more ridiculous.

Heathcliff That coward can't make himself more ridiculous than he already is as a husband.

Edgar (furious, attacks Heathcliff, tries to strangle him, but Heathcliff throws him to the ground.)

Heathcliff I apologise for your husband, Cathy.

Isabella (rushing up to Edgar) My brother, how could you be so childish!

Edgar (bleeding from his mouth) It's us or him, Isabella. *(gets crawling up and disappears into the house)*

Cathy Are you satisfied now, Heathcliff? My husband grovelling on the ground and his sister besmirched by your intimacy...

Isabella Leave us in peace, Cathy!

Cathy He will never leave us in peace. *(walks in after Edgar)*

Isabella I am yours, Heathcliff. Take me away from here, anywhere.
Heathcliff As you wish, my dear. But time isn't ripe yet. Come when I call on you. (*gives her a hasty kiss on her mouth and disappears.*)
Isabella He may be the greatest villain in the landscape, but he is at the same time the only real person here and the only one worth loving.

Scene 5. Catherine's bedroom. Catherine in bed.

Ellen (entering with a tray) Are you better now, miss Cathy?
Cathy Is it you, Nellie?
Ellen Yes, it's me.
Cathy I had so many poignant dreams. I don't know any longer what is real, my dreams or reality. How is it with Edgar?
Ellen He keeps himself locked up in the library.
Cathy Locked in?
Ellen By himself. Yes, he is as daft as you. He doesn't want to see anybody.
Cathy Poor Edgar! Poor soft chicken of a husband! However could I marry him?
Ellen You wanted it yourself.
Cathy Yes, but I always loved another.
Ellen Perhaps that's what your husband has realized and can't get over.
Cathy He will get over it. When I am dead...
Ellen You mustn't speak like that, Miss Cathy.
Cathy Not even you can cancel my thoughts, Nelly. They must find their own direction regardless of relationships. But Heathcliff hasn't come back since Edgar attacked him?
Ellen No, he hasn't come back.
Cathy Do you think he hates me, Nelly?
Ellen No one could hate you, Miss Cathy.
Cathy But there is a kind of love resembling hate which could find expressions of hatred without being hate.
Ellen Heathcliff is only capable of endless bitterness.
Cathy And that's worse than hatred, for thereby he only torments himself. Bitterness is a self-consuming illness, while hatred always passes by finding healthier expressions. Nothing is worse, Nelly, than when a man tortures himself without anyone being able to stop it.
Ellen I assure you, Cathy, that nothing ails Heathcliff. Your husband's state is much worse and should be a greater matter of concern.
Cathy He doesn't know that I am ill, does he?
Ellen He knows nothing, since he doesn't want to know anything. He has completely shut out the world outside from his hiding place in the library. He doesn't know anything because he doesn't want to know anything.

Cathy You bury yourself in books when you are disappointed with humanity. But what is that cupboard doing there? I have never seen it before.

Ellen It has always been there, Miss Cathy.

Cathy Impossible. It doesn't belong in Wuthering Heights.

Ellen Is that where you think you are?

Cathy Where else?

Ellen Dear Miss Cathy, you are hostess at Thrushcross Grange and married to its patron Edgar Linton. You haven't been at Wuthering Heights for years.

Cathy That's why I never felt at home here. But who is that ghastly hag staring me right in my face?

Ellen It's a mirror, Miss Cathy.

Cathy Cover it, quickly! (*Ellen does so.*) If there is anything I can't stand now it's viewing my own soul in my heart.

Ellen Nothing is more harmless than your own reflected image, Miss Cathy.

Cathy Wrong, Nelly. Nothing could be more dangerous. It reveals everything.

Ellen It's only what cannot be revealed that's dangerous, Miss Cathy.

Cathy How wise you are, Nelly! (*suddenly cries out and screaming hysterically as the cover glides off the mirror.*)

Take her away! Take her away!

Ellen (*covers the mirror again and turns the mirror away.*) Calm down, Miss! It's nothing!

Cathy I was so afraid. I saw her as my double, my second and worse nature, who has come to take me away. Don't let her take me, Nelly!

Ellen Take it easy. I am here.

Cathy Stay with me, Nelly. I am so afraid of the dark. It suffocates me and squeezes the breath out of me, so that I cough blood.

Ellen It will pass, Miss Cathy. You are the very essence of strength and health.

Cathy It's not my own pain I am suffering from. It's the pain I caused Heathcliff that consumes me and devours me as unbearably as Heathcliff torments himself with his outrageous pain. But the difference is, that he can bear it, while I can not.

Ellen You worry too much, Miss Cathy.

Cathy No creature has a higher responsibility for life than woman, Nelly. I have a right to worry to death about life, for I am a woman. If life is bleeding, I have the right to bleed even more for life's sake.

Ellen Take it easy, Miss Cathy. All you have to do is to eat and rest.

Cathy Do you think that helps? The healthier I am, the more my soul is bleeding. But there is a limit to everything. One day not even life will be able to keep me here any more, but I will fly away to the moor back to the cave of the elves under Peniston Crag, where I and Heathcliff always forgot

about the cruel world and disappeared from its sight just to be happy together...

Ellen You mustn't speculate in your own death, Miss Cathy.

Cathy Who can stop me? My husband has locked himself up in the library. If he can hide and escape in his books, then so can I. (*suddenly runs up from bed hurrying to the window, which she throws wide open to let in the howling icy wind.*) Come and get me! Come and get me!

Ellen (rushing up) Miss, what are you thinking of? (*tries to pull her away from the window*) You will only get yourself a pneumonia again!

Cathy That's the point! Let me be free! Release me from living with my sins!

Ellen Miss Cathy, no one has anything to reproach you, but if you get yourself a cold and die, everyone will regret your folly!

Cathy Let me be a fool then! Let Edgar moulder to death with his volumes in his library, so that I may be free and fly out on the moor with Heathcliff! We are the only truly sentient ones! Why did everyone try to stop us from being together? Hindley was the cruellest of them all. He started it. He mishandled poor Heathcliff and transformed him into an abyssal angel of revenge. Then Edgar came between us. Why did you allow him to court me? I already belonged to Heathcliff!

Ellen Miss, pull yourself together!

Cathy Thanks to that I will die unblessed and remain unblessed until Heathcliff unites with me dead and cold by my side! No matter how deep you bury me, and how much stone you weigh down on my grave, I shall constantly go on haunting and calling for Heathcliff, only because I never was allowed to have him...

Edgar (entering suddenly) Who was it that cried out?

Cathy Does it take so long for you to react, Edgar?

Edgar Cathy, you are beside yourself! You look ill! And what are you doing by the window? How dare you let in so much cold air, Nelly, by opening the window? Can't you see that Cathy is ill? Do you want to kill her?

Ellen (finally succeeding in closing the window and getting Cathy away from it) She has been ill for four days, master Edgar.

Edgar Ill for four days? And why wasn't I told?

Ellen Because you stayed locked up in the library for just as long!

Edgar (completely embarrassed) Oh!

Cathy Did you get through many books this time, Edgar?

Edgar Not a single one.

Cathy What did you do then in there? Just sulking?

Ellen Don't quarrel with him, Miss! You did hardly any better here in bed!

Edgar What did she do in bed?

Ellen She refused to eat for four days.

Edgar And that I am told not until now! How dare you, Nelly!

Cathy It's not her fault. It was my fault. I didn't want you to know. I ordered it. I just wanted to die.

Edgar Die? Why?

Cathy Because I committed my life's greatest and only mistake when I married you, you silly impotent impossible skulker!

Ellen She is ill. She doesn't know where she is any longer. She thinks she is at Wuthering Heights.

Cathy Don't extenuate circumstances, Nelly. I am a criminal. I am an adulteress.

Ellen She is just rambling.

Edgar How could you commit adultery if you just lie sick in bed and locked in all the time?

Ellen Good question.

Cathy I am sorry, Edgar. I am not myself. How is it with you?

Edgar Well, except that I am deeply unhappy.

Cathy And why are you so?

Edgar Because you don't love me.

Cathy Is that all?

Edgar What do you mean? Could it be worse?

Cathy You haven't imploded of jealousy because of Heathcliff?

Edgar Don't mention his name in this house! He is through here!

Cathy He is part of me, Edgar. You must accept it. We grew up together. He is closer to me than my own brother.

Edgar That drunkard! He is also finished here.

Cathy And your sister loves Heathcliff, Edgar.

Edgar That's all we wanted. But I have made it clear to her, that she has to choose between us and Heathcliff. If she chooses Heathcliff, she is out of here for good.

A servant (at the door) Sir.

Edgar Don't disturb me in my wife's bedroom!

Cathy Edgar, I think something has happened.

Ellen What is it, Ben?

Ben Miss Isabella is missing. The vicar is here.

Edgar (can't believe his ears) The vicar?

Ben He seems to know what has happened.

Vicar (makes a worthy, solemn entry) I am sorry I have to come on this deplorable errand, but it's about your sister. How are you, Miss Catherine? You look terribly emaciated.

Cathy Thank you, it will pass. Is it about Heathcliff?

Vicar If only we could do without that scoundrel for good! But now he actually seems to have left us again.

Cathy Alone?

Vicar That's the worst part of it. No.

Edgar Don't tell me...

Vicar Heathcliff came riding with a lady to Gimmerton. One horse was limping, so they had to change a horseshoe there. The lady was dressed in a cape with a hood, that protected her face, but it glided off...

Edgar It must not be true!

Cathy Sit down, Edgar. (*Edgar falls down into a chair.*)

Vicar The smith recognized the lady as your sister Isabella Linton.

Edgar (recovering slowly) Impossible. It can't be true. She can't dishonour her brother's house like that. I warned her! That Heathcliff was Satan himself! It must have been against her will. Tell me that she was bound, that she was his prisoner and abducted by force!

Vicar Unfortunately they were smiling and laughing together. They both eloped quite willingly together.

Edgar This is the end! (*swoons*)

Cathy No, it's only the beginning.

Ellen (tries to wake up Edgar) That's all right, reverend. You can go.

Vicar I entrust the patients in your safe hands, Ellen Dean. Take well care of them.

Ellen You can be sure.

(*The vicar leaves. Ellen doesn't care about Edgar but fusses very much about Catherine and tenderly puts her back to bed and stays by her side.*)

Scene 6. Wuthering Heights.

(*Joseph and little Hareton alone by the table as Heathcliff enters with Isabella.*)

Joseph Here comes that bloody vicious Satan again! And what is he bringing along if not a damned appendage as well?

Heathcliff No complaints, Joseph. Now you will have someone to assist you in the kitchen.

Joseph She looks like never having been to a kitchen before.

Heathcliff She hasn't. So you'll have to teach her how to cook.

Joseph What do you know about cooking, you wench?

Isabella I actually know how to make porridge.

Joseph She can make porridge! Have you heard the like! And where did you find such an infernal marvel of an inoperative woman, master Heathcliff?

Heathcliff She happened to come my way, so I saved her from a destiny worse than death.

Joseph But she doesn't exactly look like coming out of the gutter. She doesn't even resemble any ordinary trollop.

Heathcliff Can't you recognize her, Joseph?

Joseph No. Never seen her before. Should I know who she is?

Heathcliff Introduce yourself, Isabella.
Isabella I am actually Isabella Linton.
Heathcliff Nowadays Mrs Heathcliff, married to me by her own will.
Joseph Have you heard, Hareton? Heathcliff has found himself an appendage.
Isabella Excuse me, but what kind of a place is this which you have brought me to, Heathcliff?
Heathcliff It's your new home. Welcome to Wuthering Heights. You are the only woman in the house, so you will have plenty of things to do.
Isabella But doesn't this house belong to Mr Earnshaw?
Heathcliff Only part of it. Most parts are mortgaged for me.
Isabella But does he accept us as lodgers?
Heathcliff You will have to ask him when he pleases to show himself. Where is that rotter, Joseph?
Joseph He usually keeps himself locked in.
Heathcliff He had better. Feel yourself at home, Isabella. You are welcome to cook some porridge for the boys.
Isabella Where are you going?
Heathcliff Just to carry up our things. Sit down and take it easy in the meantime. (*leaves*)
Isabella (*sits down exhausted by the table*) What kind of a nightmare place is it have I ended up in?
Joseph I will tell you, my fine madame. This is the precincts of hell. The hell is in there. (*indicates a door*) And the drum major of hell is upstairs. (*points after Heathcliff*)
Isabella What have I done? And who is Heathcliff really?
Joseph Only you yourself know what you have done. And you if anyone should know who Heathcliff is, since you have married him.
Isabella I thought I loved him. But now I believe I married some abysmal demon.
Joseph Then you know who he is.
Isabella But how could he acquire such power in the house? He is not even born in the family!
Joseph He is the devil's own messenger, and the devil gives him power over everyone he comes near. He is just made that way.
Isabella And I am married to that man!
Joseph For good and for worse, but mostly for worse, and hardly for any good at all.

(*shuffling steps are heard*)

Isabella Who is coming? It sounds like some debile idiot.
Joseph It's our master.
Hindley (*enters, a shadow of his former self, in complete decay, long-haired and disgusting*) (*tired*) I heard voices.

Joseph We have a woman in the house, master.

Hindley What?

Joseph A woman.

Hindley Yes, I can see that.

Isabella (*rising*) Is this Hindley?

Hindley Don't stand up for me, little girl, whoever you are. I don't even know who you are.

Isabella Hindley! Don't you recognize me?

Hindley What?

Isabella I am the one who used to be Isabella Linton.

Hindley And I am the one who used to be Hindley Earnshaw. Then we are in the same boat. Have you also ended up in the clutches of Heathcliff?

Isabella I am married to him.

Hindley Poor thing! Oh my! Then you are really deplorable. Then you are even worse off than me, for I am fortunately not married to him. I am just pawned to him with my body and soul and house and farm. That's why there's nothing left of me, as you can see.

Isabella Poor Hindley!

Hindley No, poor Isabella, for he will torture you out of life. Do you know why he married you?

Isabella I married for love.

Hindley He saw his opportunity to use you to acquire your brother's property.

Isabella No! It's impossible! He could never succeed with that!

Hindley When you die he will have your right of inheritance. When your brother dies he will inherit with Catherine, but also Catherine will probably already be dead by then and childless. So he inherits everything. Then he will sit here alone with the ghosts of all his victims and old Joseph.

Isabella But you have a son, Hindley! You must live for him!

Hindley A son of a bitch like all the others, an unwanted child who killed my wife, a manure groom like Heathcliff once was, completely incompetent and a parasite on nature like all of us damned human beings.

Isabella He is your son, Hindley, your own flesh and blood!

Hindley And my own flesh and blood is cursed. Get it into your head, Isabella! All in this house are cursed! Heathcliff has played me out of everything I owned, but I still have one card left.

Isabella You mustn't give up, Hindley.

Hindley And I won't. Do you know what this is? (*takes out an impressive pistol with a bayonet from a hiding-place*)

Isabella (*shudders*) It's a murder weapon.

Hindley It's a double murder weapon. I sit and wake like a cat for his prey. One night Heathcliff must forget to lock his door. Then I have my chance. Then nothing can save him. Then I will enter and shoot him in his

head and cut out his liver and tear out his heart and saw off his head and impale it outside the farm so that all can see that the devil finally is dead.

Isabella Hindley, you are not yourself. You are a totally different person from the one I knew as a child. You are your own contrary. You have become inhuman.

Hindley Thank the devil for that with someone like Heathcliff in the house.

Heathcliff (has entered unnoticeably) Put away that toy, Hindley.

Hindley (frightened) It's mine!

Heathcliff You can hurt yourself with it. It's not for frightening young ladies with. *(comes down determined)*

Hindley Don't come any closer! Then I'll shoot! *(aims with his hand shaking)*

Heathcliff Just shoot then. You couldn't hit an elephant at one yard's distance.

Hindley I warn you, horrible Satan!

Heathcliff Yes, aim at Satan and shoot to hell. I am just a human being.

Hindley (shoots and misses, drops the gun and loses control completely.)

Heathcliff (takes care of the pistol) Look at him! Look at this worm! Imagine that he was such a bully once! Get up, Hindley Earnshaw, your father's pride and universal heir, you great landowner and patron! *(kicks him. Hindley lies crushed on the floor shaking.)* That was once Hindley Earnshaw, Isabella. Look at him now. And it's all his own doing. No one has helped him on his way down except himself. He is what he has made of himself. How would you define him? A wretch? A wreck? A living corpse? Or something worse? His humiliation is total, and still he goes on degrading himself.

(Isabella wants to run to Hindley's assistance.)

Heathcliff (holds her back) No, Isabella. Let him manage by himself. Let him get up on his own two feet, if he can. At least he is cured now. He has no need for a dentist any more, for he has lost his last tooth. There is nothing left in him that could hurt him.

Isabella But he is still Hindley Earnshaw.

Heathcliff And who is Hindley Earnshaw? His whole life is mortgaged. His debts are more than the double of what he was worth, and I own all the bills. The only thing Hindley Earnshaw has left of his life is a mass of deficit. *(to Isabella)* Come up when you are ready. *(goes back up with the pistol bayonet.)*

Joseph (to Isabella) Leave him be. He always insists on getting up himself when Heathcliff has crushed him.

Isabella (tries to give Hindley a hand)

Hindley Damned witch! Leave me alone!

Joseph You see what I mean.

Isabella (puts her hands to her face in despair)

Joseph It doesn't help to hide, old girl. You have come home now. Welcome home.

Isabella (slowly lowering her hands from her face, has suddenly become another person) I get it. I have become one of the rats in Heathcliff's kitchen.

Joseph Stand well with him, and you might survive.

Isabella (*watching the lying, shaking Hindley*) I suppose that's my only chance?

Joseph Yes.

Isabella I will write to my brother and Nelly Dean about what has happened. They must be informed of the situation. And I will love Heathcliff. Maybe that can save him.

Joseph Nothing can save him, not even love.

Isabella Yes, love will save him, even if it might not be mine. (*goes up the stairs after Heathcliff.*)

Joseph He has her chained to his foot like everybody else. And whatever she does she will never get out of the cage until she has been starved and mishandled to death. Poor little canary.

Hindley Joseph, help me up.

Joseph So, it's time now? (*comes to his help*)

Hindley And then give me something to drink. I need something to strengthen me.

Joseph Yes, master Hindley, the bottle is probably all that remains for you in life.

Hindley (*succeeds in stumbling reaching a chair by the table, catches all of a sudden sight of his son*)

 What are you staring at? Get lost! (*Hareton immediately rushes out.*)

Joseph You don't exactly make any good example to your son.

Hindley That's not my intention either. Get me the bottle!

Joseph (*hands him the bottle*) God forgive you, master Hindley.

Hindley No, he will never forgive me. (*drinks*)

Scene 7. Nelly back with Lockwood.

Ellen She wrote a letter that arrived at Thrushcross Grange, but don't you think Heathcliff intercepted it and read it on the way? But he didn't care. He knew too sure that Isabella was completely in his power. She couldn't even run away from him, and that he got hold of her letter resulted in painful chastisements for her. He was an unassailable castle and an inescapable prison.

Lockwood But didn't her brother react to her letter?

 (*Edgar Linton is seen in a chair with a letter.*)

Edgar I can do nothing. She has only herself to blame. The less we have anything to do with the Heathcliff family, the better, and Isabella is nowadays a Heathcliff, not a Linton. She is lost. (*sighs, rises and leaves.*)

Lockwood And did *you* nothing to help her?

Ellen Don't you think I did my utmost? Her brother sent me to Wuthering Heights to deliver his answer, but that answer brought her no pleasure or hope.

Lockwood How did she react?

Ellen She was already completely subdued and humiliated when I went to Wuthering Heights. But I had another card in my back pocket.

(Back to Wuthering Heights)

(Heathcliff at the seat of honour, a well off gentleman, while Isabella is degraded to a shabby slattern. Joseph and Hareton are there but no Hindley.)

Heathcliff Welcome, Nelly Dean! Do you bring any letter for Isabella from her charitable brother?

Ellen Unfortunately, Isabella, I don't. I have only greetings by mouth.

Heathcliff Then convey them, Nelly. I and my wife have no secrets for each other.

Ellen Miss Isabella, he regrets, but he can't help you, not until your husband Heathcliff has left the country.

Heathcliff *(laughing rudely)* So he is afraid of me! That hare! He doesn't dare to come close to his sister until I have left the country! That hare will die before me, Nelly! He isn't far from his grave, that poor abject coward!

Ellen Neither is Catherine.

Heathcliff *(immediately serious and upset)* What are you saying?

Ellen She has been ill all since your last meeting. And she is in her seventh month.

Heathcliff With Edgar?

Ellen Who else?

Heathcliff This is terrible. I must see her, Nelly. How ill is she?

Ellen Dying.

Heathcliff You say so only to boost my pain.

Ellen You must not see her. It would only kill her.

Heathcliff The more important then that I may see her before she dies.

Ellen Edgar would shoot you down on the spot if you came anywhere near his house.

Heathcliff So let him! Nothing can separate Catherine and me.

Ellen Not even I?

Heathcliff You least of all.

Ellen Can't you just leave him, Miss Isabella? Your marriage is just a fake and farce anyway.

Isabella Don't you think I have tried? But he always keeps me under guard. I am captured, he beats me, I am locked up, he binds me to the bed, he mishandles me, he abuses me.

Heathcliff That's enough, Isabella! Get up to your room! *(She obeys obsequiously.)*

Ellen In your care, Heathcliff, she has sunk down to the lowest kind of servility.

Heathcliff (*hard*) That's the intention! Her brother has ruined Catherine's life!

Ellen She wanted it herself.

Heathcliff No, you made her do it, you senseless vultures! (*controls himself*)
I am sorry, Nelly. I must see her.

Ellen Impossible.

Heathcliff Nothing is impossible.

Ellen Everything is impossible.

Heathcliff Says a woman. A man says the opposite.

Ellen All at Thrushcross Grange say no including Catherine herself.

Heathcliff So I must break in by force! So I must keep you here by force,
so that you cannot warn them! Be reasonable, Nelly. No one can take a stand
against me.

Ellen (*realizes that the situation is hopeless*) It's Sunday tomorrow. Come while
Edgar is at church.

Heathcliff That's what I always said, Nelly Dean. You are all the common
sense of Wuthering heights and Trushcross Grange.

Ellen But I am not responsible for the consequences. The risks are
entirely your own. And you can't stay more than an hour.

Heathcliff That's enough.

Ellen I shall warn Caherine that you are coming.

Heathcliff Do so. It's her life, not mine.

Ellen It's her death, not yours.

Heathcliff Women will always interpret everything to the contrary of
men's meanings.

Ellen I can't find Hindley here. Where is he?

Heathcliff He is indisposed.

Ellen I see. Well, good-bye, then. But I wash my hands.

Heathcliff Do so, Nelly Dean, in peace and quiet. Thanks for your visit.
(*She leaves.*)

Joseph Are you really going to enforce yourself once more on the poor
young couple?

Heathcliff I have to. The urge of destiny has no laws.

Joseph You will be her death, master Heathcliff.

Heathcliff No, Joseph, *she* will be *my* death.

Scene 8. Catherine's bedroom

Catherine (*Nelly comes in*) Open the window, Nelly. I stifle.

Ellen You can't take fresh air any more, Miss Cathy.

Catherine On the contrary. It liberates me.

Ellen Another cold would be your death.

Catherine So let it at last come and liberate me! Why should I be tortured any longer? You all keep me in this prison against my will, in this trap of destiny of no return that is my life, in this weak and frail misery of a woman's body that isn't any good!

Ellen But think then of your child, Miss Cathy.

Catherine That's the only life I have.

Ellen (cautiously) I couldn't stop him, Cathy.

Catherine From what?

Ellen From visiting you. He will come.

Catherine I thought so. When will he come?

Ellen Any time.

Catherine While Edgar is in church?

Ellen That was the only possibility.

Catherine (jokingly) You are the best pimp in the world, Nelly.

Ellen It was against my will, Madame. He forced me to it.

Catherine Yes, I know how he works. Nothing can stop him. But I can't bear seeing him.

Ellen I told him so. He will come anyway.

Catherine Let him come then and bring me out on the moor one last time to Peniston Crag. Only there we shall ever find peace with each other.

Ellen I hear him coming.

Catherine Let death come. I fear him less than Heathcliff.

Heathcliff (coming quietly, smoothly and swiftly through the window, more dashing than ever) Catherine!

Catherine Why have you come, Heathcliff? To see me die?

Heathcliff (coming up to the bed) No, to see you live! To bring you life!

Catherine It's too late.

Heathcliff It's never too late to live.

Catherine Can't you see that I am dying?

Heathcliff You are in the seventh month! You have everything to live for!

Catherine Why then have you taken my life away from me?

Heathcliff On the contrary! You took my life away from *me*!

Catherine Can't you see what you have done, Heathcliff? You have consumed me! You have devoured and wasted me! Your love has burnt me out!

Heathcliff Catherine! (*embraces her*)

Catherine Too late! You have come too late! (*kisses him fiercely. She rises, and they embrace passionately.*) It was always only us, Heathcliff.

Heathcliff Why then did you desert me? Why did you marry that Linton? Why did you say that I wasn't worthy of you? Why did you forsake me and discard me? How could you be so cruel to yourself and to me?

Catherine It just happened that way, Heathcliff. I didn't want it myself. My fault is that I am a woman. A woman is hopelessly subject to the conditions of her own body. She can't protect herself against female conditions. A man can

take his fate into his own hands, but a woman is always a victim to her own weakness.

Heathcliff But you chose Linton yourself! You married him yourself!

Catherine He offered comfort and a home and a good family. He became my life's only security when Hindley reduced you to a manure groom. My own family kept you out of my reach, Heathcliff, by force!

Heathcliff You sold yourself and your own soul. For what? Female vanity! False security! Self-deceit and money!

Catherine Here he goes raving again.

Heathcliff I am sorry, my love. It's still not too late. Come with me back out on the moor! The elves are dancing at Peniston Crag and waiting for us!

Catherine And your wife, Heathcliff? My sister-in-law? Have you trampled her like you trampled everyone down just because you couldn't have me?

Heathcliff Only you know me. Only you know how miserable I am.

Catherine And only you know how I suffer. Oh Heathcliff, how could life so cruelly betray us by the grossest injustice in the world, only because we always loved each other! We were predestined for each other before birth! We must have known each other well already before!

Ellen Her temperature is rising again, Heathcliff. You had better leave. Mr Linton will be home now any time.

Heathcliff I can't let her go now.

Ellen She could die in your arms, Heathcliff.

Catherine Yes, let me die in his arms, Nelly, since I never was allowed to live in them! Grant me that blessed boon of dying while I still have him, if only for the briefest moment! I will never let you go, Heathcliff! If I die I will take you with me.

Heathcliff You mustn't die!

Catherine Try to stop me.

Ellen (increasingly worried) I hear the master's footsteps in the house. He is on his way here.

Heathcliff One last kiss, my love.

Catherine Take it! Take my life!

Heathcliff No, I give you life. *(kisses her. She swoons and lies like lifeless in his arms.)*

Ellen (crying out) She is dead! She is dead!

(In the same moment the door opens, and Edgar enters.)

Heathcliff She isn't dead, Linton. She has only fainted. Take care of your wife and your child, Edgar. I am at your disposal whenever you wish. *(leaves)*

Edgar (with the lifeless Catherine) What has happened, Nelly?

Ellen Cathy just wanted to see him one last time.

Edgar And it became once too much?

Ellen No, she is still alive. I just went so scared when she fainted.

Edgar We must get her to bed immediately. (*puts her to bed with Nelly assisting*)

Ellen And Heathcliff?

Edgar I don't want to see him. He can go home.

Ellen He must know how Cathy is.

Edgar And what about me? Have I no right to any share in my own wife's sentiments? Must that unblessed demon Heathcliff always stand between her and me? Whenever I sought for her I only found the villain Heathcliff.

Ellen She carries your child, Sir.

Edgar That's a totally different matter. (*Catherine moves slightly.*)

Catherine, my love! How are you?

Catherine (faintly) I don't want to see you, Edgar.

Ellen Master, you had better leave. I will sit up with her.

Edgar Let me know everything that happens.

Ellen Of course, Sir. (*Edgar leaves.*)

Catherine (faintly, queringly to Nelly) Heathcliff?

Ellen He is waiting in the garden for any notice. He watches over you down there, and I wake with you here.

Catherine Good old comforting Nelly.

Ellen How are you?

Catherine The last drop was too much. I knew one more encounter would be too much for me. But I want to give birth to my child first.

Ellen It's too early!

Catherine It will be tonight anyway. Or else she will never be born by a living mother.

Ellen Do you think it's a girl?

Catherine That's how I feel. Be ready, Nelly. We have a difficult night ahead of us, which will be my last fight.

Ellen It's my fault. I should never have allowed Heathcliff to come.

Catherine No, Nelly, Heathcliff can't help his own nature. He is like that. He is too strong and too dynamically emotional. He must destroy everyone in his path by his mere dynamics. He can't help it. We will all be his victims, me, Edgar. Isabella, Hindley – no one will make it, except you, who are immune by your experience and age. But I was the only one who loved him and who was loved by him. That's my life's only merit, but it outshadows everything else in the world. Get going, Nelly. Heat up the water. The labour pains are coming. It is time.

Ellen And Heathcliff?

Catherine Let him wait. (*is suddenly seized by acute pains. Nelly starts working.*)



Act IV scene 1. At the inn.

(Branwell has fallen asleep with his head in his arms.)

- 1 Wake up, Branwell! You haven't finished yet!
- 2 He can't discontinue now.
- Bartender* You gave him too much.
- 3 How the devil could we know how much he can take? *You*
should know!
- Bartender* I warned you!
- 4 Now we shall never know whether she made it or died.
- 3 She died, of course. She must have.
- 2 Shall we bet?
- 1 That solves no problems. We must wake him up.
- 3 Bartender! Give us a hand!
- Bartender* I have a better idea. *(takes a bucket of water and throws it over*
Branwell, who instantly wakes up.)
- Branwell* Is there a fire?
- Bartender* No, but you are fired here.
- 1 But he must tell us the end!
- Bartender* Not if he goes on drinking.
- Branwell* What end?
- 1 What happened to Catherine!
- Branwell* I have forgotten.
- 2 You can't have forgotten it! You have the papers in your hat!

Branwell (seems to remember something) Oh, Catherine.

3 Yes! What did you do with her?

Branwell She died.

4 Just like that?

Branwell She gave birth to a girl that night and died.

3 (*angry*) And then what?

Branwell (confused) I have forgotten.

1 Did you write this story or not?

Branwell It's my story, but my sister wrote it.

2 Then finish it!

Branwell (collects himself) Well, that's what I must do, then.

1 That's the spirit.

Branwell But in that case I shall need something to drink.

Bartender (categoric) You have had enough.

Branwell But I must!

Bartender No, you mustn't.

Branwell Then there will be no story.

1 Unlock him, for our sake. You have the key.

Bartender It's against my conscience.

2 We are all your accomplices.

4 No one else needs to know.

3 You can't leave a story half way.

Bartender Well then, but don't blame me afterwards when he implodes or expires.

Branwell (solemnly) I take the responsibility.

2 That's the spirit, old boy!

3 That's a good sport!

1 Refill!

(The bartender refills his glass. The mood is on again and back to normal.)

Branwell (finds a position) Well, gentlemen...

Scene 2. Catherine's bedroom.

Dimmed light with lighted candles around Catherine's dead body.
Suddenly she is quite relaxed and beautiful. Nelly wakes by her side.
Someone throws dirt at the window from outside. Nelly opens it.

Heathcliff (outside) Is the coast clear?

Ellen You must be absolutely quiet, and you can only have a few minutes.

Heathcliff That's enough. (*enters*)

Ellen You haven't been out of your clothes for three days, Heathcliff.

Heathcliff Catherine is dead, Nelly. What then can you ask of me?

Ellen Have you been out in the garden every night?

Heathcliff Of course! And battered my head bloody against the oak! And sweated blood and cursed my fate in languishment and outrageous anguish!

Ellen Quiet! You have five minutes. (*leaves by the door*)
Heathcliff (*approaching Catherine's body*) So you finally succeeded in leaving me, but still I am not lonesome. You promised to haunt me, Catherine. Do so, please. Torture me, pester me with unbledness, and never leave me in peace! Perhaps it was I who took your life, but if I did it was only of love. Why shouldn't I be allowed to love? Am I not a man? Were my passions too great and too strong for you? Could ever any feelings be too strong? They will never be worthy enough for love in any case, since true love always will remain unattainable. The idealist is doomed not for being an idealist but for never being able to realize his ideals. The greatest and truest love is therefore the most unhappy, for it can never be answered enough with what it deserves. (*sinks down on the floor by her side completely at a loss and crying*) O Catherine, forgive me! Forgive me for failing you by my love! Forgive me for not being worthy of you! I take all the blame and guilt. Haunt me to death! (*unveils her*) One last kiss. No, she isn't home. She is more beautiful than ever but cold and has left her cover empty. She is already out on the moor and flying in freedom under the stars, further away than I will ever be able to reach her – before death. Maybe I'll be able to catch up with her then. But she has left something here. (*opens her locket around her neck*) A lock of hair from your virgin days. I steal it. Instead I give you my own. (*tears off a black lock from his hair and puts it in the locket*) Take me with you into death, Catherine, for without you I will never find peace in this life.

(*rises and returns quietly out through the window. After a while Ellen returns.*)

Ellen This time he was wise enough not to linger too long. But there is no danger now when it is all over. Poor men, going sentimentally mad! For three days and nights they both waked and stayed up all night torturing themselves by crying to heaven and gnashing their teeth in agony and anguish, the husband in the library, the lover in the garden, both equally ridiculous in their deranged exaggerations of their own absurd sentimentality, with no idea of how the one suffered exactly as much as the other.

But Edgar now has his daughter, although the poor child remains the poorest of comforts, while Heathcliff has lost everything, his only friend, his only anchor in life. But what has he been doing to you, Miss Cathy? (*adjusts the veil*) He has been at her and opened the locket! What a presumption! And here he has added his own black lock to hers. Well, no harm in that. There is no violation of the dead. But I can't understand why the vicar won't let her be buried in church...

Scene 3. Wuthering Heights

Joseph sits by the table reading the Bible as Hindley enters.

Joseph You aren't dressed yet, master Hindley.

Hindley Don't you think I am aware of it?

Joseph Were you not going to your sister's funeral today? Wasn't that why you kept sober yesterday?

Hindley (pitiably) I can't go, Joseph. I am not fit. I am so ashamed of myself. What have I done with my life? I am just a decayed miscreant! I am not even worthy of treading in the vicinity of my sister's dead body!

Joseph You can't just be absent, master Hindley. You are invited and expected.

Hindley Even less can I then show myself! Alas, I am lost, Joseph. *(falls down into a chair)* Give me something to drink. I can't stand myself as sober.

Joseph Is benumbing yourself with the devil's medicine all that you are good for, master Hindley?

Hindley Yes, Joseph, that's all I am good for.

Isabella (enters) Don't let him in.

Hindley Who?

Isabella You know who. The tyrant. The only enemy of us all. The oppressor.

Hindley Oh, that one. Isn't he still crying at Cathy's?

Isabella He hasn't been here for four days. Now we have the chance. He is coming. Lock him out!

Hindley Lock the door, Joseph! *(Joseph locks the door. To Isabella:)* Have you any plan?

Isabella Here is your pistol. I stole it from Heathcliff.

Hindley Clever girl! And now I am almost sober. We all have things to settle with him.

Heathcliff (outside, feels the door that it is locked, walks around the house)

Joseph He is coming for the back door.

Hindley It's always locked.

Isabella Unless Hareton is there to let him in.

Hindley Damn! Hareton!

Heathcliff (outside from the other side) Hareton, open up! *(Heathcliff us heard entering.)*

Isabella He is inside.

Hindley I will blow his head off as soon as he shows himself.
(Enter Heathcliff. Hindley hesitates.)

Isabella Shoot, quickly!
(Hindley fires off, missing. Heathcliff immediately attacks him. They fight on the floor. Heathcliff wrings the pistol bayonet out of Hindley's hands. Both cut themselves on the sharp blade.)

Isabella Kill him, Hindley! Kill him!

Heathcliff (holding Hindley down, to Isabella) So it's you, who are behind this! *(to Hindley)* Weren't you supposed to be at your sister's funeral?

Joseph He was unfit.

Heathcliff When you for once are sober enough to hold a gun steady! What you need, Hindley, is a drink! Give me the bottle, Joseph! (*Joseph hesitates. Hareton has entered and passively watches the scene, as if he had seen it too many times before.*) Give me the bottle, Hareton! (*Hareton gives him the bottle.*) Here you are, Hindley! You won't be obliged to go to anyone's funeral until it's time for your own!

Hindley At last! (*drinking voraciously*)

Heathcliff (*let's him go*) And concerning you, my wife, who steals murder weapons from me to entrust them in a murderer's hand, did you really think he would be able to shoot me? Why didn't you try yourself?

Isabella Heathcliff, release me, so that we then are free from each other!

Heathcliff And where would you go? You are not welcome in your brother's house. He would only throw you out. You are carrying our child in your bosom. Where would you go as an unwonted single mother? You could possibly support yourself as a fallen woman in London.

Isabella Rather that than remain under the same roof as you.

Heathcliff Do you hate me so recklessly, that you would prefer the prospect of a slut's humiliation in the gutter to my company? Am I such a monster, such an abomination, such an inhuman freak?

Isabella (*laughs shortly*) You are worse than that. You are a necrophile.

Heathcliff What do you mean?

Isabella The only person you ever loved was Catherine, and she is still the only one you can love although she is dead. So go and lie with her! Fuck her over there where she lies buried as far from church as possible!

Heathcliff Keep her out of this.

Isabella And how do you think that she could ever love you? She was your friend only by condescension. She only felt sorry for you. She was happy with my brother, but with you she was only unhappy.

Hindley (*getting drunk*) That's right, Isabella! Just get at him! Tear his soul out of his body! When we can't assail his body, we can at least torture his soul!

Isabella He doesn't have any. He has no heart either. He is only power and cruelty, and my sister-in-law kept in good standing with him only out of respect of his dark menace, so that he wouldn't hurt her. The more he hurt her and brought her down.

Heathcliff (*darkly*) Stop it, Isabella!

Isabella If only you had never come to Thrushcross Grange, Heathcliff, I and Catherine and Edgar could have lived happily there. If you only had desisted from disturbing her after her marriage, she would never have died.

Heathcliff Her name in your mouth is like a jewel in a toad's mouth.

Isabella Only you are to blame for Catherine's death. Carry that burden on your conscience until your dying day, and then bring it with you down to hell!

Heathcliff (dangerously self-controlled) I never want to see you again. Go away from here as far as possible, for your own good.

Isabella I will bring your child with me abroad, which you never shall see.

Heathcliff Isabella, leave the house before I murder you. (*Isabella doesn't hesitate, runs out at once.*)

I never thought I could become a murderer. Now I know.

Hindley Pity you didn't kill her. That would at last have put you behind bars.

Heathcliff You are not finished yet, Hindley. You still have your bottle.

Hindley The only comfort you gave me for the life you stole away from me.

Heathcliff You are already dead. It's no use killing you.

Hindley Yes, Heathcliff. Behold your victim, which you execute so slowly and methodically that you could never be caught for it. First you took my wife, then my soul, then my son, then my sister and house and property. I have nothing left. Still I live to scorn you.

Heathcliff Shut up, Hindley, stick to your subject and drink.

Hindley (raises his bottle) Cheers, Heathcliff, for your death and mine.

Heathcliff I promise you, Hindley, that you will never need to live another day without your bottle.

Hindley That's all I still have to ask of you.

Heathcliff Then we are agreed.

Hindley For the first and last time. You won, Heathcliff. You got it all – the house, the farm, my poor son. But I am happier. I may die. You must live.

Heathcliff Cheers, Hindley. (*leaves the room*)

Joseph He has already been punished.

Hindley How?

Joseph Catherine's premature death.

Hindley May that punishment plague him as long as he lives – and go on after his death.

Joseph Amen.

Scene 4. Thrushcross Grange.

The doorbell. Nelly runs to open.

Ellen Isabella!

Isabella (wet and miserable) I have run away from Heathcliff never to return.

Ellen Shall I fetch Edgar?

Isabella No, don't. I don't want to disturb him in his grief. I only wanted to say goodbye to you.

Ellen But where will you go?

Isabella There is plenty of streets for such as I in London.

Ellen In London? There is nothing but perdition.

Isabella I know.

Ellen This will not do, Isabella. Let me go for Edgar.

Edgar (enters) I heard the bell, Nelly. You know, Isabella, that you are not welcome here.

Isabella I had not intended to see you. I will leave at once.

Edgar So you have left Heathcliff?

Isabella Definitely.

Edgar You'll need money. Send us your address.

Isabella I demand nothing, Edgar. You will be rid of me, as you now are rid of Catherine.

Edgar Don't mix Catherine up in this!

Isabella Now you sound exactly like Heathcliff. Farewell, Nelly Dean. You are the only person I will miss. (*departs hastily*)

Edgar As if it wasn't enough with Catherine's illness and death! Couldn't she just disappear without firing off at my heart?

Ellen You are oversensitive, Edgar.

Edgar We all are, and that will be our death. Don't disturb me again, Nelly Dean. (*leaves*)

Ellen As if it was me! He came himself! What does he really want of me? He doesn't want to see his own daughter and leaves all the nursing to me. What am I really? Do they want me for some kind of curator? As if they were completely innocent themselves of their own follies! (*returns to Lockwood. The scene disappears.*)

And six months after his sister, Hindley died. He locked himself up and drank himself to death. When Heathcliff and Joseph finally managed to break into his room, he was already stiff and cold. But he died without complaining like a satisfied baronet on the top of his career as an alcoholic.

The fate of Isabella was less fortunate...

Scene 5. A dark decayed apartment in London.

Linton Isn't father coming soon?

Isabella You have no father, Linton. You never had one.

Linton But you always keep saying that he will come.

Isabella No, Linton, it's my brother we are waiting for, your uncle.

Linton Is he kind?

Isabella He must be kind, Linton. Or else we are finished.

Linton But when will he come then?

Isabella You always keep asking that. I can't answer any more, my dear little darling. I can't stand much more. But he must come before I die.

Linton Are you very ill, mother?

Isabella Yes, my little boy. I am very ill.

Linton You mustn't die from me, mother.

Isabella My dear, neither you nor I can decide about that.

Linton Who will decide it then? Is it my evil father?
Isabella No, not even your father, Linton, not even if he was almighty.
Linton What is there then for us to hope for?
Isabella Nothing, Linton, nothing. (*a knock on the door*) At last! Come in!
(*Enter Edgar, noticeably aged*)
Edgar At last I found you, sister, after all these years. How could you refuse to leave your address?
Isabella I wanted to spare you any further pain.
Edgar You only caused yourself the more pain. I offered you money. I offered you everything. And then you live in this horrible den, like a beggar! How did you manage in these twelve years?
Isabella You don't want to know, Edgar.
Edgar I know it anyway. I can see it from your circumstances. You have had a hard time, Isabella, harder than I could have imagined. And then I finally find you – like this!
Isabella At least I was allowed to see you before it was too late.
Edgar Too late? What do you mean?
Linton Mother says she is going to die.
Edgar (*embracing her*) No, Isabella! Not this! Not now when at last I have found you!
Isabella Take care of little Linton.
Edgar No, Isabella! I will bring you home!
Isabella Too late.
Linton Are you my father, uncle Edgar?
Isabella Let him think so, Edgar. Never let him know he had a father.
Edgar So this is little Linton Heathcliff. A strange name in my ears.
Isabella Only Linton, Edgar. Strike out the other name.
Edgar Not possible by law.
Isabella At least, never let me hear it again.
Edgar As you wish, my darling sister. (*embraces her. She dies.*)
No, Isabella! (*gets hysterical*) Don't leave me!
Linton Has she left now, uncle Edgar?
Edgar Yes, my boy. We have lost her.
Linton Will you bring me back to my father now?
Edgar No, Linton. I will only bring you home. But we must bury your mother first.
Linton Is it certain that she is gone?
Edgar No, my boy. She will never leave us.
Linton I thought so.
Edgar Come, my boy. We can't stay here now. (*takes him with him*)
This is too unbearable to both of us.
(*Both sniffle and cry and comfort each other.*)

Ellen (with Lockwood) Hardly had Edgar come home with his young nephew until Heathcliff demanded the care of his son. Unfortunately he was in his legal rights, no matter how out of all moral rights he was. Edgar could do nothing but capitulate – and the weak little boy immediately landed in the roughest imaginable company at Wuthering Heights with Heathcliff, Hareton and Joseph. We all understood that he could never survive there for long. He was too much like his mother and uncle, who were all made of more delicate and fragile stuff that wasn't made to withstand the harder nature of this world.



Act V scene 1.

Branwell has everyone's attention.

Branwell Heathcliff got his way. Since both families had refused him Catherine it was natural for him to instead take over both farms and destroy both families, and nothing could stop him. That's why he took care of and brought up the delicate Linton only for the boy to be able to marry Catherine's daughter Catherine before he died, so that Heathcliff then could inherit them and also take over Thrushcross Grange.

1 But what about the vicar? Had he no say in the village?

Branwell Priests are only abject cowards. It's enough to threaten them, and they will fall and agree to anything, for they know anyway that all they represent is delusions...

Scene 2. Wuthering Heights.

Vicar But you can't keep me here against my will, Heathcliff. It's absurd.

Heathcliff You may leave as soon as you have married them. It's just a formality.

Vicar You want to force them to marry against their will!

Heathcliff Not at all. They like each other. Linton has no one else in the world to take to, and Catherine feels sorry about her little cousin. With her good heart she can't but sacrifice herself for him.

Vicar It's against the law!

Heathcliff Don't be ridiculous. A marriage if anything is legal. We even have legal witnesses: Hareton and Joseph.

Vicar It's a parody! You ridicule and blaspheme the church! We can't do it without Edgar Linton's endorsement.

Heathcliff He lies dying. He is not in a condition to endorse anything. And Catherine happens to be here now.

Vicar Have you abducted her?

Heathcliff No, she came here quite willingly. She feels sorry for her small cousin. I beg you, reverend, to cooperate. Getting married to Catherine will be the last and only joy in poor Linton's life.

Vicar Your appeal to compassion in your mouth sounds abominably grotesque.

Heathcliff I am just sincere.

Vicar Then you have to help me on with some sherry. This situation demands some careful consideration.

Heathcliff Have as much as you need, reverend. You will get any amount of consideration. But you will not get out of here until the youths are married.

Vicar You want to make me guilty of a marriage under threat.

Heathcliff No, I just hasten the natural development. Think of your calling, reverend. You follow it to be gracious and merciful. Isn't tolerance your religion? Think with grace of your sinners, and pardon them. That's all your existence is for. And I can't see that you have any choice.

Vicar (empties a large and full glass of sherry) Let's go for it then. Let's get done with it.

Heathcliff Your heavenly wisdom, father, transcends itself. Joseph, get the youths. We shall have a Christian wedding here. (*Joseph goes to bring the youths.*)

Vicar It's almost against my conscience, though.

Heathcliff Leave the conscientious objections to me, reverend. I have plenty of room.
(Joseph brings young Catherine, scared stiff, and Linton, pale and weak, in a primitive wheelchair with a blanket.)

Vicar Is this Isabella Linton's son?

Heathcliff Isabella Heathcliff. Yes. It our son.

Vicar There isn't much left of him.

Heathcliff Hurry on then.

Linton What is the clergyman doing here? Am I already to die?

Heathcliff No, Linton. Now life begins. You are about to be married.

Catherine Is that why I have been kept here against my will?

Heathcliff You have known it all the time. Only you can save Linton's life. Only if you marry him you can prolong his life.

Catherine My father is very ill. I must see him.

Heathcliff Later. Get married first.

Catherine Is that a condition?

Heathcliff You may call it what you want. For me it's just a natural necessity. Get going, reverend.

Vicar Is the boy able to stand up?

Heathcliff Can you stand, Linton?

Linton Yes, if you don't hit me.

Heathcliff I will not hit you if you obey. Stand up then, when the reverend speaks to you!

Catherine It will soon be over, Linton. *(helps him on his feet)*

Vicar *(opens the prayer book)* Are we all ready then? *(All nod approvingly.)*

Heathcliff You seem to hesitate, reverend. Hareton and Joseph are here as witnesses. Look how sweet the bride and bridegroom are standing there faithfully supporting each other. What more do we need? The bride's father is impeded by illness. Would you like some more sherry, reverend?

Vicar *(terrified)* God help us. The sooner this ceremony is over, the better.

Heathcliff That's what we all think, reverend.

Vicar May God forgive us. We are gathered here today...

Scene 3. Thrushcross Grange.

Edgar *(in his bed, dying)* I understand that Catherine has abandoned me, Nelly.

Ellen We think she has been kept against her will at Wuthering Heights.

Edgar *(very weak)* How can they be so cruel and inhuman? Are they doing it only to prevent her from seeing her father alive?

Ellen We think it's worse than that. We think they use your condition as a means of pressing her to marry Linton.

Edgar Linton? The small sickly boy?
Ellen Yes.
Edgar Isn't he dying like me?
Ellen Almost.
Edgar So Heathcliff wins it all in the end. He gets his son married to my daughter, so that he himself inherits his son. Thus Thrushcross Grange will be lost, and my daughter becomes his dependent slave. Why all this smothering infernal cruelty, Nelly?
Ellen Only because Heathcliff's love married you.
Edgar Was it my fault?
Ellen No, it was nobody's fault. It just happened that way.
Edgar Would Heathcliff have been able to make her happy?
Ellen That we shall never know.
Edgar We live to die to get the chance of learning something on the way. But all we get is lessons of destiny that only bewilder us. But we must have done something wrong, Nelly. What did we do wrong?
Ellen No one did anything wrong except only Heathcliff, who decided to revenge himself for nothing.
Edgar Hindley's dipsomania? Catherine's illness? Was it all Heathcliff's fault?
Ellen Pardon me for saying it, Sir, but yes, it was all Heathcliff's fault, because if he had only waited and not departed, Catherine would have chosen him anyway.
Edgar So basically he has only the folly of his own feelings to blame?
Ellen Like all of us.
Edgar So we are all equally guilty. Oh Nelly, whatever shall we do with ourselves? *(takes her hand. They understand each other. Enter Catherine.)*
Catherine Father! Father! *(rushes forth embracing him)*
Edgar Where have you been, my girl?
Catherine I was detained.
Edgar I know all, Catherine. You were detained at Wuthering Heights. You were compelled into marriage with Linton Heathcliff. He is dying like me. He now has your right of inheritance, and when he dies your father-in-law takes over Thrushcross Grange.
Catherine Oh, father, Linton is so sick, and he is so like you!
Edgar That's why he won't make it. That's why his father hates him. He hates him like he hated Isabella, and that's why my poor nephew is doomed to die. He has no chance.
Catherine Forgive me, father!
Edgar It was not your fault. It was nobody's fault. Perhaps it was my fault, who married your mother. But we wouldn't have had you, if we hadn't.
Catherine No, everything is my fault, father!

Edgar Nonsense. When I am gone, Catherine, you shall take care of your young husband at Wuthering Heights until he dies. Then everything is accomplished. Then all that's left of the tragedy is for it to find its own end.

Catherine Don't leave us, father! You are everything we have!

Edgar I know, my child. Unfortunately there is no other choice for me than to take what comes. (*dies*)

Catherine Father! Father!

Ellen He has passed away, Cathy.

Catherine Alone in the dark! What are we poor people more than just lonesome poor frightened children in the darkness!

(*back to Nelly and Lockwood*)

Lockwood And the poor boy? What befell the poor weakling without health, whom the cruel father forced into a marriage of speculation in his death just to inherit him?

Ellen He died as well.

Lockwood Did that multiple murderer also cause the death of the youngest martyr?

Ellen Don't burden poor Mr Heathcliff with too much exaggerated guilt. No one suffered more than himself.

Lockwood That consumer of men and souls, who destroyed everyone in his way!

Heathcliff (*happens to enter*) So you are still here, Mr Lockwood?

Lockwood (*rising in anger*) I have something to say to you, Sir.

Heathcliff Well, say it then.

Lockwood You can search for another lodger at Thrushcross Grange.

Heathcliff But you are already contracted for a year. You must pay the whole year's rent. Why this sudden change of mind?

Lockwood I know all about you, Mr Heathcliff! You are a scoundrel and a murderer!

Heathcliff How interesting! What else?

Lockwood A torturer of men and of children, a ruthless ruffian and, in brief, a total villain!

Heathcliff I never heard the like! And what brings me the pleasue of being so generously renowned by you? Have you listened to the village gossip?

Lockwood I have witnesses!

Heathcliff So, there we are! Why then not prosecute me and put me on trial? Do you have any attourney to sue me? And if you wish to accuse me of anything you will have to find better arguments than those childish abusive invectives you have used so far.

Lockwood After learning how you acquired Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, you must understand that I could impossibly rent anything from you.

Heathcliff Well, just leave then. What are you waiting for?

Lockwood Thank you. I will do so at once. I regret that I ever had anything to do with you, Mr Heathcliff. (*leaves*)

Heathcliff That's normal. That's what they all do.

(*catches sight of Catherine and Hareton who sit together further away in the house and who have been observing Lockwood's scene.*)

And what are you staring at, my children? Have you never seen me before? (*They continue glaring. Heathcliff advances.*) And what are you doing? You could never do anything together before. Answer me! What are you up to!

Hareton (stammering) My cousin teaches me how to read.

Heathcliff (can't believe his ears) Does she teach you to read?

Hareton Yes.

Heathcliff And why in the name of all unhung devils does she try to teach you to read?

Hareton I thought it would be fun to be able to.

Heathcliff (to Catherine) Then you would teach that clout to write as well, so that he could start writing his name?

Catherine Yes, father-in-law. That's his human right.

Heathcliff And since when does a manure groom have human rights?

Catherine He always had. But you have withheld all his rights from him.

Heathcliff I had no rights when I grew up here as a manure groom and had to sleep in the dung of cows!

Catherine You were not the son of the master in the house and was not called Earnshaw.

Heathcliff (increasingly angry) What are you thinking of? How dare you? You are in my possession as my slaves! I own your body and soul! You are nothing! I am the sole owner of everything!

Catherine Because you grabbed all that our parents owned by cunning and stealth. Nothing of what you have acquired, you ever really had any right to.

Heathcliff (fearfully self-controlled) You go too far, my girl. (*takes a firm hold of her long hair*) You have provoked me since of long. You are both getting more and more like your damned parents. My dream was to overcome you all and get the better of you, but the more you become like my hated adoptive family, the more I lose the lust to go on subduing and smothering your youth and beauty, your charm and grace. My envy is losing its urge. All my hatred is not enough. But I still have one thing left to do. I never reached your mother, Catherine Heathcliff. She died from me because she committed the mistake of marrying your failure of a father. She married unhappiness just to escape being mine! But you are eighteen now, Catherine Heathcliff, you are my own daughter-in-law, and your husband, my poor infamous mishap of an unnatural son with a feeble-minded shrew of a wife, is now dead. All that you own belongs to me. All that remains is to also acquire your body and make it mine. Not even your mother could stop me from that,

Catherine Heathcliff! She could withhold herself from me, but you are completely at my mercy! Or what do you say, Hareton? Isn't she beautiful? Isn't she charming and irresistible as the intact virgin she still is? Do you want to get in my way, Hareton? Do you really think she could teach you to read? You will not have a single book for yourselves, you lowborn inmates! I will burn every letter in the house except that old worm-eaten tattered Bible which poor old Joseph keeps returning to ever and again while every page is blotted by his drivelling! What do you say, Hareton? Do you dare try to stop me from taking your darling cousin Catherine? (*Catherine Earnshaw starts appearing.*)

Don't look at me like that! Must you both have her eyes? Catherine Earnshaw, what are you doing here? Have you come to muster me? Will you at last put a stop to my brutal violating ways with your entire family? Will you at last bring me home to you and take me away from here and out of my own hell! (*falls down on his knees. Catherine Earnshaw disappears.*)

Ellen He is mad.

Joseph No, he is at last being taken home by the devil

Catherine No, it's something else. It's a change.

Hareton (*cautiously, approaching Heathcliff*) How are you, uncle Heathcliff?

Heathcliff (*crying*) A nervous fit. It will pass. It has never happened to me before. (*looks around*) Where is she?

Catherine Who?

Heathcliff (*rising*) She was here! I saw her with my own eyes! She reminded me that I am still loving her! Catherine Earnshaw, where are you? Come back!

Ellen He is mad, and it's serious.

Joseph No, it's the devil pulling and tearing at him. It's time.

Catherine Shut up, you old senile pharisee!

Joseph You will see that I am right. (*engages in his Bible.*)

Hareton (*softly*) Can I do anything for you, uncle Heathcliff?

Heathcliff No, Hareton. I don't understand myself what is happening. (*Suddenly the windows blow open with full force and break while the wind is howling.*)

Heathcliff (*extatically*) Catherine! Catherine!

Ellen Close the windows!

Catherine (*tries to*) It can't be done!

Heathcliff (*like before*) Catherine! Catherine! (*rushes suddenly at the door and out*) (*Then the storm winds gradually decrease, and Catherine succeeds in closing the broken window.*)

Catherine It was a sudden gush from Peniston Crag.

Hareton Yes, sometimes there are horrible whirlwinds from there.

Ellen (*at the door, calling*) Heathcliff! Heathcliff!

Joseph (*calmly*) We'll never see him again.

Ellen (*going up to him*) What do you mean, Joseph?

Joseph He has gone home.

Ellen Home?

Joseph Yes, home, wherever he came from.

Catherine (*signalling to Ellen that Joseph isn't right in his head*)

Ellen Where did he come from then?

Joseph From hell of course.

Catherine (*certain*) You see.

Hareton (*looking out*) We can't go out looking for him now.

Ellen No, it's dark, and the storm is coming.

Joseph You will probably find him by Peniston Crag tomorrow, when the storm is over.

Ellen Do you think he will find his way there?

Joseph He always found it together with Catherine.

Ellen (*thoughtfully*) Every time they disappeared, that's where they had gone. No one else dared to go near the dangerous forbidding rocks.

Joseph That's where they both are now. Forever.

Hareton (*cautiously*) Do you mean that they are free?

Joseph I would think so.

Ellen We'll see tomorrow.

Catherine (*takes Hareton's hand*) We aren't finished yet, Hareton.

Hareton Do you think we might start reading now without being disturbed?

Catherine Life is short, Hareton. Let's at last get started for real.

Hareton Yes, I have much to catch up with.

Catherine Our whole life, Hareton. And we have the lost lives of many others as well to reclaim.

Hareton Daddy's?

Catherine And mother's.

Joseph (*gets a bright idea*) You have two lost families to restore, my children.

Catherine So let's get started! (*resumes her seat by Hareton*) Which letter now is this one, Hareton?

Hareton It must be an H.

Catherine Bravo! You are learning!

Ellen I think Catherine Earnshaw saved Heathcliff in the mast minute, Joseph, before he went too far.

Joseph They both always went too far. But they are well off now together. Leave them be.

Ellen And the farms?

Joseph They will both be Cathy's and Hareton's.

Ellen Are you sure that Heathcliff will not come back this time?

Joseph Nothing can make him give up Catherine Earnshaw now, Nelly.

Ellen I think you are right.

Joseph I am always right. (*returns into his Bible.*
Ellen goes to the fireplace and starts minding her duties there.)



Epilogue

The inn.

Branwell passed out across a table again.

- 1 At least he got through to the happy end.
2 But I don't think his end will be happy.
3 Let's check his manuscript now, when we have the chance.
4 Do you really think his sister wrote it?
3 Let's have a look!
1 (*gets hold of Branwell's papers, scurries eagerly through them, finds nothing*)
It's empty! It's only blank sheets!
2 That explains it.
3 What do you mean?
2 Branwell's stories were always just unwritten sheets.
4 You mean that he never wrote anything?
2 I don't think so.
3 He was always best at just ranting.
1 (*to the bartender*) What do you think, who knows everything about us all?
Bartender (after careful consideration) I have only one thing to say, gentlemen.
All Well?
Bartender It's time, gentlemen.
1 Not already!
2 One more pint!
3 We must get some life into Branwell!
4 We aren't finished yet!
Bartender But Branwell is finished. That's all that matters.

1 He is right.
2 Branwell! Wake up! (*tries to wake him without succeeding*)
3 Is he dead?
4 No, he's asleep.
Bartender I will get the doctor to collect him later.
1 We trust you, Mac.
2 Come, let's go. It will have to do for today.
3 Yes, at least he finished the story.
4 Now he seems completely washed up.
Bartender He never will be, gentlemen. Welcome back tomorrow. (*wants to close up*)
1 Bye, Mac.
2 Thanks for tonight.
3 Our thanks to Branwell. (*They leave.*)
Bartender (*when he has locked the door*) Time to go home, Branwell.
Branwell (*slowly lifting his head*) Which one shall I take next time?
Bartender You could try the one who happened to marry a wife that was hopelessly insane.
Branwell The story of Edward Bulwer-Lytton?
Bartender Yes, why not?
Branwell It's a good story. But I'll have to use other names.
Bartender Of course. It will always work anyway.
Branwell Well, I'll also have to call it a day, then. We'll share the profits as usual, won't we, Mac?
Bartender You always have your share here, Branwell.
Branwell Thanks. So I have your permission to drink myself to death with a clear conscience?
Bartender Yes, but please prolong it as far as possible.
Branwell I will do my best.
Bartender I trust you will.
Branwell Good night, Mac.
Bartender Goodnight, Branwell. (*Branwell leaves.*)
That's that. Another good day for the cash-box, thanks to Branwell.
(*closes the pub and turns off the light and leaves.*)

The End.

(Constantinople 27.3.2001.
translated in September 2018.)



Who is Heathcliff?

(an essay from 1986)

He is the main protagonist in Emily Brontë's only novel (1847), which has been called the only representative novel of the romantic period in the English language. He is a foundling, and all that we ever really get to know about him throughout the novel is that we really can't know anything about him.

When Mr Lockwood, the ego of the novel, comes to the Wuthering Heights place by the moors of Yorkshire in 1801, Heathcliff, the ruler of the farm, is a man of 50 years at the height of his powers. All other residents at the farm are his slaves: his daughter-in-law Catherine, her cousin Hareton and the old bigoted groom Joseph. The atmosphere of the house is depressing. Heathcliff himself is silent and constantly very gloomy, bitter and irksome. His only language is that of force, which he often applies by violence.

Gradually the guest Mr Lockwood learns the background of the depressive situation. He learns about all who died at the farm and the finer house he is renting, the Thrushcross Grange: Hareton's father Hindley, who was the patron of Wuthering Heights, his sister Catherine, who married

Edgar Linton, the owner of Thrushcross Grange, and his sister, who was married to Heathcliff.

All these departed people have died very young: not one of them reached over 30 years of age, and all died because of the tragic love affair between Heathcliff and the first Catherine, in which they never could have each other, the consequence of which resulted in everyone becoming the victims of Heathcliff's relentless and uncompromising revenge.

Gradually you realize that Heathcliff is a necrophile. He only lives in the past, and his only company is the only one that ever was kind to him, his beloved Catherine. Her ghost haunts Wuthering Heights at night, Heathcliff restlessly chases her ghost, and in her company turns more and more like a ghost himself.

It's only after Heathcliff's death that you at last come somewhere near him. During the whole novel of the housemaid Nelly Dean's stories about him while he is still alive you never reach him. You never get into his world of thoughts, he only appears as something terribly awesome and enigmatic which no one can control, and he never shows his own feelings.

Not until he is dead you start to realize something of his terrible misery, and he becomes somewhat sympathetic in his deep buried humanity in spite of all. It's only his constantly more ecstatic necrophilia that somewhat reconciles him with reality and with the reader and which in spite of all gives him peace by death.

But will the reader after having read his massively romantic saga ever come over it and find peace for him?

Emily Brontë was like that herself: completely unreachable as a person. Like Stevenson and Chopin and many other romantics she suffered from tuberculosis and died in it at 29, and apart from the novel and some poems there is nothing else written by her and even less about her. The language of the novel is not its least remarkable feature: she writes with a concentrated sharpness where every word is important for the context. You can't jump or inattentively read one passage without falling out of the story. At the same time the language at times reaches ecstatic poetical if not wuthering heights.

In addition to all this, the story as such is as impressing as a drama of destiny by Shakespeare. The action invariably takes place on the most primitive thinkable level: you are never out of the stormy moors, the fatally bad weather, the constant presence of illness, the brutal evil with alcoholism and decay for instruments or the inevitable destiny condemning the Earnshaw and Linton families to the utmost brink of destruction.