

WUTHERING HEIGHTS

BY

EMILY BRONTË



FOREWORD AND ANNOTATIONS BY
ERICA ABBETT

VOCABBETT CLASSICS

WUTHERING HEIGHTS: ANNOTATED EDITION

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READ THIS YES, YOU!

Before you brave Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, and this edition in particular, there are a few quick things you should know:

- 1) I, Erica Abbett, wrote the annotations. I'm an author and former teacher, and I've annotated about a dozen other classic novels. You're in good hands!
- 2) If a footnote falls after a word, it generally defines the word. If it falls after a punctuation mark, it generally explains the preceding sentence or idea.
- 3) You do *not* have to read all the annotations. Brilliant as they are, they will take you out of the story. Use them when you need them; ignore them when you don't!
- 4) There is a glossary of terms at the back of the book. I've used my infallible¹ judgment in deciding which words are hard enough to warrant a definition at the bottom of the page. Sometimes I repeat myself; often I don't. In the latter case, you will find definitions at the back!

That being said, I'll see you in the footnotes! You should read my foreword after this, but if you don't, I'll see you in chapter one!

Erica Abbett
Texas, 2026

¹ Infallible - Unfailing; incapable of being wrong

FOREWORD

BY ERICA ABBETT

Something specific probably prompted you to pick up this book. Maybe you're a fan of *Jane Eyre*, written by Emily Brontë's older sister Charlotte, or perhaps you can't stop thinking about Jacob Elordi's cheekbones and want to know the "real" story behind Cathy and Heathcliff's tragic romance.

In either case, the tale you'll find herein is...different...than what you might expect.

Before we dive into *Wuthering Heights*, however, you should learn a little something about the tragically short lives of the Brontë sisters. That family didn't just write gothic literature—they lived it—¹and this knowledge might help you sympathize with Emily Brontë's dreary tale of doomed desire and desolate landscapes.

BACKSTORY: THE BRONTË SISTERS

The year is 1825. Six siblings are being raised by their father, a small-town clergyman, in the windswept moors of northern England. Their mother is dead, buried in the church vault directly beneath their Sunday pew. The church is about a 30-second walk from their front door, just on the other side of the overflowing local graveyard.

Life expectancy in the village is shockingly low—about 25 years old, compared to the national average of 40. Years later, a study will reveal horrendous sanitary conditions that regularly saw eight families sharing a single roadside bathroom, fecal matter running through the streets, and—perhaps worst of all—bacteria from the graveyard

¹ I swear on my life that ChatGPT didn't write this. I just love em dashes and refuse to relinquish them to the clutches of AI.

entering the water supply.¹



You can actually visit the Brontës' childhood home in Haworth. It is now the Brontë Parsonage Museum, and yes, those mossy things in the foreground are graves.

Image credit: Alan James via Wiki Commons

Hoping to secure a brighter future for his children—or maybe assuming that fewer kids in the house would make it easier to remar-y—Patrick Brontë sent his four oldest daughters to boarding school. I use the term “oldest” loosely: Maria, the eldest, was ten, and Emily, the author of *Wuthering Heights*, was barely six years old.

If you’ve read Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre*, you’ll recognize their boarding school as the fictional Lowood School. Charlotte hated that wretched institution until the day she died, and insisted the reality was even worse than fiction. Malnourished, beaten, and frozen half to

¹ “Report to the General Board of Health on a Preliminary Inquiry Into the Sewerage, Drainage, And Supply of Water, And the Sanitary Condition of the Inhabitants of the Hamlet of Haworth” by Benjamin Herschel Babbage, 1850 https://www.google.com/books/edition/Public_Health_Act_11_12_Vict_-_cap_63_Repo/adT8pB4TFUAC

death, Patrick's two eldest daughters, Maria and Elizabeth, only lasted about ten months until somebody decided they were too sick to remain.

As summer swept into Haworth in May of 1825, no rose bloomed brighter than the crimson droplets that appeared on the small, white handkerchiefs Maria and Elizabeth clutched during their rattling fits of coughing. Maria only survived a few days after returning to the comfort of her home; Elizabeth followed five weeks later. They died of "consumption," which we now call tuberculosis.

The Brontë six were down to four: Charlotte, Branwell, Emily, and Anne. All were artistically gifted, but when people talk about "the Brontë sisters," they are typically referring to the surviving three: Charlotte, Emily, and Anne, all of whom achieved significant literary recognition in life and death.

Their brother, Branwell, was more of the "painter-slash-drug-addict" type, and consequently never amounted to much.

Astonishingly, Patrick sent Charlotte and Emily *back* to boarding school the following fall. But when illness broke out again that winter, he decided enough was enough. He fetched his daughters, opting to educate the whole family at home with the help of his sister-in-law, who moved in after his wife's death, resigning himself to perpetual bachelorhood.¹

EMILY BRONTË & *WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

I can't help but wonder if, looking out at the rolling moors, Emily sometimes felt the scales of life tipping in death's favor. When she attended church every week, there were almost as many family members below-ground as above. From a young age, Emily wouldn't have seen death as something that comes with old age or childbirth, but a palpable presence in the steaming graves beneath her window and suffocating fog surrounding her home.

But perhaps I am projecting. By all accounts, Emily loved her gloomy little life. She was notoriously reclusive, preferring the comfort of home to any social event. She and her surviving sisters entertained themselves by writing stories, even building entire fictional

¹ "Reader, I Married Him" by Judith Thurman, The New Yorker <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1989/03/20/reader-i-married-him>

worlds, Tolkien-style.

At age 17, Emily was sent to a much nicer (and closer) boarding school to complete her education. Charlotte, her older sister, was already teaching there, so they knew she'd be treated well. Nevertheless, Emily only lasted a few months before becoming "literally ill with homesickness."¹ Charlotte herself later explained:

"My sister Emily loved the moors. Flowers brighter than the rose bloomed in the blackest of the heath for her;—out of a sullen hollow in a livid hill-side, her mind could make an Eden. She found in the bleak solitude many and dear delights; and not the least and best-loved was—liberty. Liberty was the breath of Emily's nostrils; without it she perished. The change from her own home to a school, and from her own very noiseless, very secluded, but unrestricted and unartificial mode of life, to one of disciplined routine (though under the kindest auspices), was what she failed in enduring. Her nature proved here too strong for her fortitude. Every morning, when she woke, the vision of home and the moors rushed on her, and darkened and saddened the day that lay before her. Nobody knew what ailed her but me. I knew only too well. In this struggle her health was quickly broken: her white face, attenuated form, and failing strength, threatened rapid decline. I felt in my heart she would die, if she did not go home, and with this conviction obtained her recall. She had only been three months at school..."⁴

Patrick wasn't going to force any of his children to remain at boarding school after what they'd been through, so Emily returned home, and her little sister, Anne, willingly took her place.

And thus, after a tragic childhood and blessedly uneventful adolescence, the four surviving Brontë siblings made it to their twenties. That's when Charlotte convinced the girls to spend part of their inheritance self-publishing a collection of their poetry. The aunt who moved in with them after their mother's death had recently passed,

¹ *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* by Emily Gaskell

² Auspices - Support; protection

³ Attenuated - Reduced in size or power

⁴ *The Life of Charlotte Brontë* by Emily Gaskell

leaving them £300 each, or around \$40,000 in today's value,¹ and they spent over a fourth of it self-publishing *Poems* by Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell in 1846.



Anne, Emily, and Charlotte Brontë by Branwell Brontë, *The National Portrait Gallery*, London. The ghostly figure in the middle is believed to be a self-portrait of Branwell, who later removed himself from the painting.
(Public Domain image via Wiki Commons)

¹ “Revealed: Smuggling Past of the Brontë Sisters’ Grandfather” by Dalya Alberge
<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2019/jun/29/bronte-grandfather-smuggling-past-financed-books-charlotte-emily-anne>

They published under the “Bell” names in the hope that they’d be mistaken for men, and thus sell more books, but *Poems* sold two copies in its first year.¹

“Ill-success failed to crush us,” Charlotte recalled. “The mere effort to succeed had given a wonderful zest into existence; it must be pursued.”² The girls switched from poetry to long-form fiction, sending their manuscripts to publishers across the country. Their persistence paid off a year later, when all three lived to see their work in print.

Jane Eyre came first, published that October under the name “Currer Bell.” It became an immediate bestseller, acclaimed by readers and critics alike.

But nobody wanted to touch *Wuthering Heights* or Anne’s novel, *Agnes Grey*, so Emily and Anne once again self-published, paying a whopping £50 to see their books in print that December. Critics didn’t care for either one, but we’ll stick to discussing *Wuthering Heights*. These are some of the reviews:

“The reader is shocked, disgusted, almost sickened by details of cruelty, inhumanity, and the most diabolical hate and vengeance...” -*Douglas Jerrod’s Weekly Newspaper*³

“How a human being could have attempted such a book as the present without committing suicide before he had finished a dozen chapters, is a mystery...” -*Graham’s Magazine*⁴

“It is wild, confused, disjointed, and improbable; and the people who make up the drama...are savages ruder than

¹ *The Oxford Companion to the Brontës* by Christine Alexander and Margaret Smith, 2018

² *Biographical Notice of Ellis and Acton Bell* by Charlotte Brontë <https://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/771/pg771-images.html>

³ “How *Wuthering Heights* Caused a Critical Stir When First Published in 1847” by Nick Collins, *The Telegraph*, <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/tvandradio/8396278/How-Wuthering-Heights-caused-a-critical-stir-when-first-published-in-1847.html>

⁴ “Five Things to Know About ‘*Wuthering Heights*,’ Author Emily Brontë’s Only Novel,” *Smithsonian Magazine*, <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/five-things-to-know-about-wuthering-heights-author-emily-brontes-only-novel-180988196/>

those who lived before the days of Homer.” -*The Examiner*¹

“Really horrible to people who have not iron nerves.”
-*Godey’s Lady’s Book*²

In the manner of all little sisters, however, I’m sure Emily’s favorite review came from Peterson’s Magazine:

“Read *Jane Eyre* is our advice, but burn *Wuthering Heights*.”³

HEARTBREAK AND DEATH

Emily was *still* undaunted in her ambition to become a successful authoress, but illness swept through the Brontë family with devastating consequences in 1848.

Branwell was the first to succumb. At ages 31 and 30, respectively, Branwell and Emily were the only two siblings still living at home at the time. She was absolutely devastated when he died that September. The cause of death was likely tuberculosis, exacerbated by years of drugs and alcoholism.

Tuberculosis is a strange disease in that it can remain dormant in the body for years, even decades. Nobody knows whether Emily contracted it as a child or while nursing Branwell, but the



A portrait from England’s National Portrait Gallery believed to be of Emily Brontë painted by her brother, Branwell.
Public domain image via Wiki Commons.

¹ “How *Wuthering Heights* Caused a Critical Stir When First Published in 1847,” *The Telegraph*

² *Godey’s Lady’s Book* 1855-09: Volume 51, Issue 3, https://archive.org/details/sim_godeys-magazine_1855-09_51_3

³ “Emily Brontë Never Knew How Successful She’d Become” by Jennifer Latson, *Time*, <https://time.com/3967659/emily-bronte-birthday-wuthering-heights/>

author of *Wuthering Heights* died just three months after her older brother.

"[Emily] was not buried ere Anne fell ill," Charlotte later wrote. And in May 1849, 29-year-old Anne Brontë died of the same infectious disease that claimed the lives of her siblings.

Three years after their publication of *Poems*, 33-year-old Charlotte and her 72-year-old father were the only surviving members of that famously literary family. Charlotte would die five years later, but Patrick would live to a staggering 84 years old, outliving his wife and all of his children.

CONCLUSION

Depressed yet? Good. You're in the perfect frame of mind to read *Wuthering Heights*. I'll be with you the whole time in the footnotes, whether it's to provide definitions, explanations, or generally commiserate with you and our characters.

-Erica Abbett
Texas, 2026

WUTHERING HEIGHTS



CHAPTER I

1801—I have just returned from a visit to my landlord—the solitary neighbour that I shall be troubled with. This is certainly a beautiful country!¹ In all England, I do not believe that I could have fixed on a situation so completely removed from the stir of society. A perfect misanthropist's² Heaven—and Mr. Heathcliff and I are such a suitable pair to divide the desolation³ between us. A capital fellow!⁴ He little imagined how my heart warmed towards him when I beheld his black eyes withdraw so suspiciously under their brows, as I rode up, and when his fingers sheltered themselves, with a jealous resolution, still further in his waistcoat, as I announced my name.

“Mr. Heathcliff?” I said.

A nod was the answer.

“Mr. Lockwood, your new tenant, sir. I do myself the honour of calling as soon as possible after my arrival, to express the hope that I have not inconvenienced you by my perseverance in soliciting the occupation of Thrushcross Grange: I heard yesterday you had had some thoughts—”⁵

“Thrushcross Grange is my own, sir,” he interrupted, wincing. “I should not allow any one to inconvenience me, if I could hinder it—

¹ First lines are always important! You are seeing an interesting paradox between the first two. Will this new home be troubling or beautiful?

² Misanthropist - Someone who doesn't like other people

³ Desolation - A miserable emptiness

⁴ Again, great paradoxes here. “How splendid! He hates people as much as I do.”

⁵ For a misanthrope, Mr. Lockwood is sure chatty.

walk in!"

The "walk in" was uttered with closed teeth, and expressed the sentiment, "Go to the Deuce!" even the gate over which he leant manifested no sympathising movement to the words; and I think that circumstance determined me to accept the invitation: I felt interested in a man who seemed more exaggeratedly reserved than myself.

When he saw my horse's breast fairly pushing the barrier, he did put out his hand to unchain it, and then sullenly preceded me up the causeway, calling, as we entered the court,—“Joseph, take Mr. Lockwood's horse; and bring up some wine.”²

“Here we have the whole establishment of domestics, I suppose,” was the reflection suggested by this compound order.³ “No wonder the grass grows up between the flags⁴, and cattle are the only hedgecutters.”

Joseph was an elderly, nay, an old man, very old, perhaps, though hale⁵ and sinewy⁶. “The Lord help us!” he soliloquised in an undertone of peevish⁷ displeasure, while relieving me of my horse: looking, meantime, in my face so sourly that I charitably conjectured he must have need of divine aid to digest his dinner, and his pious ejaculation had no reference to my unexpected advent^{8,9}.

Wuthering Heights is the name of Mr. Heathcliff's dwelling. “Wuthering” being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather.¹⁰ Pure, bracing ventilation they must have up there at all times, indeed: one may guess the power of the north wind, blowing

¹ Deuce - A euphemism for “devil” in this expression

² Heathcliff is a little humanized here. He notices the horse is distressed and makes sure it's tended to.

³ That he's telling the same servant to take care of the animals and bring them drinks suggests he has only one in his staff.

⁴ Flags - Short for flagstones (large stone slabs)

⁵ Hale - Strong and healthy

⁶ Sinewy - Lean and muscular

⁷ Peevish - Easily irritated, often by trivial things

⁸ Advent - Arrival

⁹ Ha! I already really like this Mr. Lockwood. The servant is so surly, he assumes the poor man must have a stomachache. “Can't have anything to do with me!”

¹⁰ Wuthering - Characterized by strong winds

over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few stunted firs at the end of the house; and by a range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms¹ of the sun. Happily, the architect had foresight to build it strong: the narrow windows are deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large jutting stones.²

Before passing the threshold, I paused to admire a quantity of grotesque carving lavished over the front, and especially about the principal door; above which, among a wilderness of crumbling griffins and shameless little boys, I detected the date "1500," and the name "Hareton Earnshaw." I would have made a few comments, and requested a short history of the place from the surly owner; but his attitude at the door appeared to demand my speedy entrance, or complete departure, and I had no desire to aggravate his impatience previous to inspecting the penetralium³.

One step brought us into the family sitting-room, without any introductory lobby or passage: they call it here "the house" pre-eminently. It includes kitchen and parlour, generally; but I believe at Wuthering Heights the kitchen is forced to retreat altogether into another quarter: at least I distinguished a chatter of tongues, and a clatter of culinary utensils, deep within; and I observed no signs of roasting, boiling, or baking, about the huge fireplace; nor any glitter of copper saucepans and tin cullenders on the walls.⁴ One end, indeed, reflected splendidly both light and heat from ranks of immense pewter dishes, interspersed with silver jugs and tankards, towering row after row, on a vast oak dresser, to the very roof. The latter had never been under-drawn: its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiring eye,⁵ except where a frame of wood laden with oatcakes and clusters of legs of beef, mutton, and ham, concealed it. Above the chimney

¹ Alms - Charity, often in the form of food or money, given to the less fortunate

² Such excellent atmosphere already.

³ Penetralium - Innermost reaches of a place, physical or spiritual

⁴ We're getting the impression of a place that was once grand and full of life, but is now almost entirely abandoned except for Mr. Heathcliff.

⁵ The dresser is very utilitarian, without concealed drawers or other ornament.

were sundry¹ villainous old guns, and a couple of horse-pistols;² and, by way of ornament, three gaudily painted canisters disposed along its ledge. The floor was of smooth, white stone; the chairs, high-backed, primitive structures, painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade. In an arch under the dresser reposed a huge, liver-coloured bitch pointer, surrounded by a swarm of squealing puppies; and other dogs haunted other recesses.³

The apartment and furniture would have been nothing extraordinary as belonging to a homely⁴, northern farmer, with a stubborn countenance, and stalwart limbs set out to advantage in knee-breeches and gaiters. Such an individual seated in his arm-chair, his mug of ale frothing on the round table before him, is to be seen in any circuit of five or six miles among these hills, if you go at the right time after dinner. But Mr. Heathcliff forms a singular contrast to his abode and style of living. He is a dark-skinned gipsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman: that is, as much a gentleman as many a country squire: rather slovenly⁵, perhaps, yet not looking amiss with his negligence, because he has an erect and handsome figure; and rather morose. Possibly, some people might suspect him of a degree of underbred pride;⁶ I have a sympathetic chord within that tells me it is nothing of the sort: I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion⁷ to showy displays of feeling—to manifestations of mutual kindness. He'll love and hate equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence⁸ to be loved or hated again. No, I'm running on too fast: I bestow my own attributes over-liberally on him. Mr. Heathcliff may have entirely dissimilar reasons for keeping his hand out of the

¹ Sundry - Various

² This is a literal example of "Chekhov's Gun," the storytelling framework which states that if a gun over the fireplace is introduced in Act One, it should go off by Act Three. More broadly, it says that there should be a "payoff" for anything the author introduces at the beginning of the story.

³ Besides Heathcliff and Joseph, the only other living creatures in the house seem to be an innumerable number of dogs.

⁴ Homely - Simple but comfortable (British definition)

⁵ Slovenly - Messy

⁶ Some people might think he's a little too haughty, considering his humble origins...

⁷ Aversion - Dislike

⁸ Impertinence - Rudeness; disrespect

way when he meets a would-be acquaintance, to those which actuate¹ me. Let me hope my constitution is almost peculiar: my dear mother used to say I should never have a comfortable home; and only last summer I proved myself perfectly unworthy of one.²

While enjoying a month of fine weather at the sea-coast, I was thrown into the company of a most fascinating creature: a real goddess in my eyes, as long as she took no notice of me. I “never told my love” vocally; still, if looks have language, the merest idiot might have guessed I was over head and ears: she understood me at last, and looked a return—the sweetest of all imaginable looks. And what did I do? I confess it with shame—shrunk icily into myself, like a snail; at every glance retired colder and farther; till finally the poor innocent was led to doubt her own senses, and, overwhelmed with confusion at her supposed mistake, persuaded her mamma to decamp^{3,4}.

By this curious turn of disposition I have gained the reputation of deliberate heartlessness; how undeserved, I alone can appreciate.

I took a seat at the end of the hearthstone opposite that towards which my landlord advanced, and filled up an interval of silence by attempting to caress the canine mother, who had left her nursery, and was sneaking wolfishly to the back of my legs, her lip curled up, and her white teeth watering for a snatch. My caress provoked a long, guttural gnarl.

“You’d better let the dog alone,” growled Mr. Heathcliff in unison, checking fiercer demonstrations with a punch of his foot.⁵ “She’s not accustomed to be spoiled—not kept for a pet.”⁶ Then, striding to a side door, he shouted again, “Joseph!”

Joseph mumbled indistinctly in the depths of the cellar, but gave

¹ Actuate - Motivate

² In attempting to describe Mr. Heathcliff, Mr. Lockwood is actually telling us about himself. He keeps saying he is reserved, but my guess is that something recently *made* him that way. He’s been “burned,” as they say, because he really doesn’t seem reserved by nature. He’s a chatty narrator and seemed perfectly affable with Heathcliff and Joseph, the servant.

³ Decamp - Leave

⁴ He isn’t so much a misanthrope as painfully shy, is my analysis.

⁵ Yikes. He noticed the horse needed tending to, but apparently that’s the extent of his compassion for animals.

⁶ Does he sell the dogs or something? Why does he have them, if not for pets?

no intimation¹ of ascending²; so his master dived down to him, leaving me *vis-à-vis*³ the ruffianly bitch and a pair of grim shaggy sheep-dogs, who shared with her a jealous guardianship over all my movements. Not anxious to come in contact with their fangs, I sat still; but, imagining they would scarcely understand tacit⁴ insults, I unfortunately indulged in winking and making faces at the trio, and some turn of my physiognomy⁵ so irritated madam, that she suddenly broke into a fury and leapt on my knees. I flung her back, and hastened to interpose⁶ the table between us. This proceeding aroused the whole hive: half-a-dozen four-footed fiends, of various sizes and ages, issued from hidden dens to the common centre. I felt my heels and coat-laps peculiar subjects of assault; and parrying off the larger combatants as effectually as I could with the poker, I was constrained to demand, aloud, assistance from some of the household in re-establishing peace.

Mr. Heathcliff and his man climbed the cellar steps with vexatious⁷ phlegm⁸: I don't think they moved one second faster than usual, though the hearth was an absolute tempest of worrying and yelping. Happily, an inhabitant of the kitchen made more dispatch; a lusty⁹ dame, with tucked-up gown, bare arms, and fire-flushed cheeks, rushed into the midst of us flourishing a frying-pan: and used that weapon, and her tongue, to such purpose, that the storm subsided magically, and she only remained, heaving like a sea after a high wind, when her master entered on the scene.¹⁰

"What the devil is the matter?" he asked, eyeing me in a manner that I could ill endure after this inhospitable treatment.

"What the devil, indeed!" I muttered. "The herd of possessed

¹ Intimation - Suggestion

² Ascending - Coming up

³ *Vis-à-vis* - Face-to-face (French)

⁴ Tacit - Silent; implied

⁵ Physiognomy - The supposed science of deducing one's character or personality based on their facial features

⁶ Interpose - Put (something) between

⁷ Vexatious - Irritated

⁸ Phlegm - Calmness

⁹ Lusty - Healthy; full of life

¹⁰ So there is another servant, after all! She works in the kitchens, presumably.

swine¹ could have had no worse spirits in them than those animals of yours, sir. You might as well leave a stranger with a brood of tigers!"

"They won't meddle with persons who touch nothing," he remarked, putting the bottle before me, and restoring the displaced table. "The dogs do right to be vigilant. Take a glass of wine?"

"No, thank you."

"Not bitten, are you?"

"If I had been, I would have set my signet² on the biter."³ Heathcliff's countenance relaxed into a grin.⁴

"Come, come," he said, "you are flurried, Mr. Lockwood. Here, take a little wine. Guests are so exceedingly rare in this house that I and my dogs, I am willing to own, hardly know how to receive them. Your health, sir?"

I bowed and returned the pledge; beginning to perceive that it would be foolish to sit sulking for the misbehaviour of a pack of curs⁵; besides, I felt loth to yield the fellow further amusement at my expense; since his humour took that turn. He—probably swayed by prudential consideration of the folly of offending a good tenant—relaxed a little in the laconic⁶ style of chipping off his pronouns and auxiliary verbs, and introduced what he supposed would be a subject of interest to me,—a discourse on the advantages and disadvantages of my present place of retirement. I found him very intelligent on the topics we touched; and before I went home, I was encouraged so far as to volunteer another visit to-morrow. He evidently wished no repetition of my intrusion. I shall go, notwithstanding.⁷ It is astonishing how sociable I feel myself compared with him.

¹ Swine - Pigs

² Signet - A ring with a special seal or emblem

³ Mr. Lockwood says he would've punched a dog that bit him (or, more loosely, struck it somehow).

⁴ This ridiculous situation—his guest being attacked, and threatening to attack his dogs in return—is the only time we've seen Mr. Heathcliff smile. Take note!

⁵ Curs - Aggressive or miserable dogs

⁶ Laconic - Using very few words

⁷ As I said, he's no misanthrope. Mr. Heathcliff is like, "Don't call me. I'll call you!" And Mr. Lockwood is like, "For sure! I'll call tomorrow at 10:00."

CHAPTER II

Yesterday afternoon set in misty and cold. I had half a mind to spend it by my study fire, instead of wading through heath and mud to Wuthering Heights. On coming up from dinner, however, (N.B.¹—I dine between twelve and one o'clock; the housekeeper, a matronly lady, taken as a fixture along with the house, could not, or would not, comprehend my request that I might be served at five)—on mounting the stairs with this lazy intention, and stepping into the room, I saw a servant-girl on her knees surrounded by brushes and coal-scuttles, and raising an infernal dust as she extinguished the flames with heaps of cinders. This spectacle drove me back immediately; I took my hat, and, after a four-miles' walk, arrived at Heathcliff's garden-gate just in time to escape the first feathery flakes of a snow shower.

On that bleak hill top the earth was hard with a black frost, and the air made me shiver through every limb. Being unable to remove the chain, I jumped over, and, running up the flagged causeway bordered with straggling gooseberry-bushes,² knocked vainly for admittance, till my knuckles tingled and the dogs howled.

"Wretched inmates!" I ejaculated, mentally, "you deserve perpetual isolation from your species for your churlish³ inhospitality. At least, I would not keep my doors barred in the day-time. I don't care—I will get in!" So resolved, I grasped the latch and shook it vehemently⁴.

¹ N.B. - "Nota bene" or "note well" (Latin)

² Despite acting like an old recluse, we're getting the sense that Mr. Lockwood is still young and in good condition. Some beautiful young woman recently fell in love with him, and he's agile enough to hop a fence in freezing weather.

³ Churlish - Rude and mean-spirited

⁴ Vehemently - In a forceful or intense way

Vinegar-faced Joseph projected his head from a round window of the barn.¹

"What are ye for?" he shouted. "T' maister's down i' t' fowld.² Go round by th' end o' t' laith, if ye went to spake to him."

"Is there nobody inside to open the door?" I hallooed, responsively.

"There's nobbut t' missis; and shoo'll not oppen 't an ye mak' yer flaysome dins till neeght."³

"Why? Cannot you tell her whom I am, eh, Joseph?"

"Nor-ne me! I'll hae no hend wi't," muttered the head, vanishing.

The snow began to drive thickly. I seized the handle to essay⁴ another trial; when a young man without coat, and shouldering a pitchfork, appeared in the yard behind. He hailed me to follow him, and, after marching through a wash-house, and a paved area containing a coal-shed, pump, and pigeon-cot, we at length arrived in the huge, warm, cheerful apartment where I was formerly received. It glowed delightfully in the radiance of an immense fire, compounded of coal, peat, and wood; and near the table, laid for a plentiful evening meal,⁵ I was pleased to observe the "missis," an individual whose existence I had never previously suspected. I bowed and waited, thinking she would bid me take a seat. She looked at me, leaning back in her chair, and remained motionless and mute.

"Rough weather!" I remarked. "I'm afraid, Mrs. Heathcliff, the door must bear the consequence of your servants' leisure attendance: I had hard work to make them hear me."

She never opened her mouth. I stared—she stared also: at any rate, she kept her eyes on me in a cool, regardless manner, exceedingly embarrassing and disagreeable.

"Sit down," said the young man, gruffly.⁶ "He'll be in soon."

¹ Ha! "Vinegar-faced" is one way of describing a sour expression.

² This is an example of diction, or writing the words in the unique way a character pronounces them.

³ There's a lady of the house, is there? Heathcliff's wife? Daughter? Was she the presumed servant girl who helped with the dogs?

⁴ Essay - Attempt

⁵ Interesting—quite the contrast to the cold appearance of abandonment the day before.

⁶ And who is this helpful young man?

I obeyed; and hemmed, and called the villain Juno, who deigned, at this second interview, to move the extreme tip of her tail, in token of owning my acquaintance.

"A beautiful animal!" I commenced again.¹ "Do you intend parting with the little ones, madam?"

"They are not mine," said the amiable hostess, more repellingly than Heathcliff himself could have replied.²

"Ah, your favourites are among these?" I continued, turning to an obscure cushion full of something like cats.

"A strange choice of favourites!" she observed scornfully.

Unluckily, it was a heap of dead rabbits.³ I hemmed once more, and drew closer to the hearth, repeating my comment on the wildness of the evening.⁴

"You should not have come out,"⁵ she said, rising and reaching from the chimney-piece two of the painted canisters⁶.

Her position before was sheltered from the light; now, I had a distinct view of her whole figure and countenance. She was slender, and apparently scarcely past girlhood: an admirable form, and the most exquisite little face that I have ever had the pleasure of beholding; small features, very fair; flaxen ringlets, or rather golden, hanging loose on her delicate neck; and eyes, had they been agreeable in expression, that would have been irresistible: fortunately for my susceptible heart, the only sentiment they evinced hovered between scorn and a kind of desperation,⁷ singularly unnatural to be detected there. The canisters were almost out of her reach; I made a motion to aid her; she turned upon me as a miser might turn if any one attempted to assist him in counting his gold.

¹ He's so polite. These animals practically killed him only the day before!

² Ha! I do enjoy this narrator's voice. Note the sarcasm in calling her an "amiable" (friendly) hostess.

³ What? There was just a heap of dead rabbits in the room? That can't be sanitary.

⁴ He's so relatable. Weather is always a safe topic, right?

⁵ I can't help but contrast this with *Ivanhoe*, which I recently annotated. It also begins with a big winter storm, but the host invites everyone into his castle—be they friend or enemy—saying nobody should be outside on such a night.

⁶ Canisters - Storage jars, usually decorated in some way

⁷ "I could've fallen in love with her on the spot, if her eyes expressed anything but disgust..."

"I don't want your help," she snapped; "I can get them for myself."

"I beg your pardon!" I hastened to reply.

"Were you asked to tea?" she demanded, tying an apron over her neat black frock, and standing with a spoonful of the leaf poised over the pot.

"I shall be glad to have a cup," I answered.

"Were you asked?" she repeated.

"No," I said, half smiling. "You are the proper person to ask me."

She flung the tea back, spoon and all, and resumed her chair in a pet¹; her forehead corrugated², and her red under-lip pushed out, like a child's ready to cry.

Meanwhile, the young man had slung on to his person a decidedly shabby upper garment, and, erecting himself before the blaze, looked down on me from the corner of his eyes, for all the world as if there were some mortal feud unavenged between us. I began to doubt whether he were a servant or not: his dress and speech were both rude, entirely devoid of the superiority observable in Mr. and Mrs. Heathcliff; his thick brown curls were rough and uncultivated, his whiskers encroached bearishly over his cheeks, and his hands were embrowned like those of a common labourer: still his bearing was free, almost haughty, and he showed none of a domestic's assiduity³ in attending on the lady of the house. In the absence of clear proofs of his condition, I deemed it best to abstain from noticing his curious conduct; and, five minutes afterwards, the entrance of Heathcliff relieved me, in some measure, from my uncomfortable state.

"You see, sir, I am come, according to promise!" I exclaimed, assuming the cheerful; "and I fear I shall be weather-bound for half an hour, if you can afford me shelter during that space."

"Half an hour?" he said, shaking the white flakes from his clothes; "I wonder you should select the thick of a snow-storm to ramble about in. Do you know that you run a risk of being lost in the marshes? People familiar with these moors often miss their road on such evenings; and I can tell you there is no chance of a change at present."

¹ Pet (adj.) - State of ill humor

² Corrugated - Wrinkled; furrowed

³ Assiduity - Close attention

"Perhaps I can get a guide among your lads, and he might stay at the Grange till morning—could you spare me one?"

"No, I could not."

"Oh, indeed! Well, then, I must trust to my own sagacity¹."

"Umph!"

"Are you going to mak' the tea?" demanded he of the shabby coat, shifting his ferocious gaze from me to the young lady.

"Is *he* to have any?" she asked, appealing to Heathcliff.

"Get it ready, will you?" was the answer, uttered so savagely that I started. The tone in which the words were said revealed a genuine bad nature. I no longer felt inclined to call Heathcliff a capital² fellow. When the preparations were finished, he invited me with—"Now, sir, bring forward your chair." And we all, including the rustic youth, drew round the table: an austere³ silence prevailing while we discussed our meal.

I thought, if I had caused the cloud, it was my duty to make an effort to dispel it. They could not every day sit so grim and taciturn⁴; and it was impossible, however ill-tempered they might be, that the universal scowl they wore was their every-day countenance.

"It is strange," I began, in the interval of swallowing one cup of tea and receiving another—"it is strange how custom can mould our tastes and ideas: many could not imagine the existence of happiness in a life of such complete exile from the world as you spend, Mr. Heathcliff; yet, I'll venture to say, that, surrounded by your family, and with your amiable lady as the presiding genius over your home and heart—"5

"My amiable lady!" he interrupted, with an almost diabolical⁶ sneer on his face. "Where is she—my amiable lady?"

"Mrs. Heathcliff, your wife, I mean."

"Well, yes—oh, you would intimate that her spirit has taken the

¹ Sagacity - Wisdom

² Capital - Great; splendid (old British slang)

³ Austere - Severe; strict

⁴ Taciturn - Saying little, usually because of some bad feeling

⁵ I can't help it. I really like how determined Mr. Lockwood is to be cheerful with his gloomy hosts.

⁶ Diabolical - Devilish

post of ministering angel, and guards the fortunes of Wuthering Heights, even when her body is gone. Is that it?"¹

Perceiving myself in a blunder, I attempted to correct it. I might have seen there was too great a disparity between the ages of the parties to make it likely that they were man and wife. One was about forty: a period of mental vigour at which men seldom cherish the delusion of being married for love by girls: that dream is reserved for the solace of our declining years. The other did not look seventeen.

Then it flashed upon me—"The clown at my elbow, who is drinking his tea out of a basin and eating his bread with unwashed hands, may be her husband: Heathcliff junior, of course. Here is the consequence of being buried alive: she has thrown herself away upon that boor² from sheer ignorance that better individuals existed! A sad pity—I must beware how I cause her to regret her choice."³ The last reflection may seem conceited; it was not. My neighbour struck me as bordering on repulsive; I knew, through experience, that I was tolerably attractive.

"Mrs. Heathcliff is my daughter-in-law," said Heathcliff, corroborating my surmise. He turned, as he spoke, a peculiar look in her direction: a look of hatred; unless he has a most perverse set of facial muscles that will not, like those of other people, interpret the language of his soul.

"Ah, certainly—I see now: you are the favoured possessor of the beneficent⁴ fairy," I remarked, turning to my neighbour.

This was worse than before: the youth grew crimson, and clenched his fist, with every appearance of a meditated assault. But he seemed to recollect himself presently, and smothered the storm in a brutal curse, muttered on my behalf: which, however, I took care not to notice.

"Unhappy in your conjectures⁵, sir," observed my host; "we neither of us have the privilege of owning your good fairy; her mate is dead. I said she was my daughter-in-law: therefore, she must have

¹ "Ah, you sense the presence of my dead wife, do you?"

² Boor - Unrefined person

³ Hahaha. "She must've married that pig of a farmhand because she didn't know superior men, such as I, exist."

⁴ Beneficent - Generous; good-natured

⁵ Conjectures - Guesses; conclusions

married my son."

"And this young man is—"

"Not my son, assuredly."

Heathcliff smiled again, as if it were rather too bold a jest to attribute the paternity of that bear to him.

"My name is Hareton Earnshaw," growled the other; "and I'd counsel you to respect it!"

"I've shown no disrespect," was my reply, laughing internally at the dignity with which he announced himself.¹

He fixed his eye on me longer than I cared to return the stare, for fear I might be tempted either to box his ears or render my hilarity audible. I began to feel unmistakably out of place in that pleasant family circle. The dismal spiritual atmosphere overcame, and more than neutralised, the glowing physical comforts round me; and I resolved to be cautious how I ventured under those rafters a third time.

The business of eating being concluded, and no one uttering a word of sociable conversation, I approached a window to examine the weather. A sorrowful sight I saw: dark night coming down prematurely, and sky and hills mingled in one bitter whirl of wind and suffocating snow.

"I don't think it possible for me to get home now without a guide," I could not help exclaiming. "The roads will be buried already; and, if they were bare, I could scarcely distinguish a foot in advance."

"Hareton, drive those dozen sheep into the barn porch. They'll be covered if left in the fold all night: and put a plank before them," said Heathcliff.

"How must I do?" I continued, with rising irritation.²

There was no reply to my question; and on looking round I saw only Joseph bringing in a pail of porridge for the dogs, and Mrs. Heathcliff leaning over the fire, diverting herself with burning a bundle of matches which had fallen from the chimney-piece as she restored the tea-canister to its place. The former, when he had deposited his burden, took a critical survey of the room, and in cracked

¹ Based on his haughty manner and unkempt appearance, I suspect there is quite the backstory to Hareton Earnshaw. What has reduced him to this state?

² Keep in mind that in those days, it was customary to let your guest stay the night (or longer) under those conditions.

tones grated out—"Aw wonder how yah can faishion to stand thear i' idleness un war, when all on 'ems goan out! Bud yah're a nowt, and it's no use talking—yah'll niver mend o'yer ill ways, but goa raight to t' divil, like yer mother afore ye!"

I imagined, for a moment, that this piece of eloquence was addressed to me; and, sufficiently enraged, stepped towards the aged rascal with an intention of kicking him out of the door. Mrs. Heathcliff, however, checked me by her answer.

"You scandalous old hypocrite!" she replied. "Are you not afraid of being carried away bodily, whenever you mention the devil's name? I warn you to refrain from provoking me, or I'll ask your abduction as a special favour!¹ Stop! look here, Joseph," she continued, taking a long, dark book from a shelf; "I'll show you how far I've progressed in the Black Art: I shall soon be competent to make a clear house of it.² The red cow didn't die by chance; and your rheumatism can hardly be reckoned among providential visitations!"³

"Oh, wicked, wicked!" gasped the elder; "may the Lord deliver us from evil!"

"No, reprobate!⁴ you are a castaway—be off, or I'll hurt you seriously! I'll have you all modelled in wax and clay!⁵ and the first who passes the limits I fix shall—I'll not say what he shall be done to—but, you'll see! Go, I'm looking at you!"

The little witch put a mock malignity into her beautiful eyes, and Joseph, trembling with sincere horror, hurried out, praying, and ejaculating "wicked" as he went. I thought her conduct must be prompted by a species of dreary fun; and, now that we were alone, I endeavoured to interest her in my distress.⁶

"Mrs. Heathcliff," I said earnestly, "you must excuse me for trou-

¹ So he was talking to Mrs. Heathcliff! Quite the language for a servant to use to the lady of the household. "You'll go right to the devil, just like your mother before you!"

² Uh... Well, I must say she doesn't help her case by bragging about how proficient she's becoming in the dark arts, a.k.a. witchcraft.

³ She's taking credit for killing a cow and giving him arthritis.

⁴ Reprobate - Unprincipled person

⁵ People who believed in witchcraft would make models out of wax or clay, then stick pins in them in the hope of causing harm to the person they were modeled after.

⁶ He thinks she's joking.

bling you. I presume, because, with that face, I'm sure you cannot help being good-hearted. Do point out some landmarks by which I may know my way home: I have no more idea how to get there than you would have how to get to London!"

"Take the road you came," she answered, ensconcing herself in a chair, with a candle, and the long book open before her. "It is brief advice, but as sound as I can give."

"Then, if you hear of me being discovered dead in a bog or a pit full of snow, your conscience won't whisper that it is partly your fault?"

"How so? I cannot escort you. They wouldn't let me go to the end of the garden wall."¹

"*You!* I should be sorry to ask you to cross the threshold, for my convenience, on such a night," I cried. "I want you to *tell* me my way, not to *show* it: or else to persuade Mr. Heathcliff to give me a guide."

"Who? There is himself, Earnshaw, Zillah, Joseph and I. Which would you have?"

"Are there no boys at the farm?"

"No; those are all."

"Then, it follows that I am compelled to stay."

"That you may settle with your host. I have nothing to do with it."

"I hope it will be a lesson to you to make no more rash journeys on these hills," cried Heathcliff's stern voice from the kitchen entrance. "As to staying here, I don't keep accommodations for visitors: you must share a bed with Hareton or Joseph, if you do."

"I can sleep on a chair in this room," I replied.

"No, no! A stranger is a stranger, be he rich or poor: it will not suit me to permit any one the range of the place while I am off guard!" said the unmannerly wretch.²

With this insult my patience was at an end. I uttered an expression of disgust, and pushed past him into the yard, running against Earnshaw in my haste. It was so dark that I could not see the means of exit; and, as I wandered round, I heard another specimen of their civil behaviour amongst each other. At first the young man appeared about to

¹ That seems controlling even for the 1800's...

² He's implying that Mr. Lockwood might steal something, if left alone in the living room all night!

befriend me.

"I'll go with him as far as the park," he said.

"You'll go with him to hell!" exclaimed his master, or whatever relation he bore. "And who is to look after the horses, eh?"

"A man's life is of more consequence than one evening's neglect of the horses: somebody must go," murmured Mrs. Heathcliff, more kindly than I expected.

"Not at your command!" retorted Hareton. "If you set store on him, you'd better be quiet."

"Then I hope his ghost will haunt you; and I hope Mr. Heathcliff will never get another tenant till the Grange is a ruin," she answered, sharply.¹

"Hearken, hearken, shoo's cursing on 'em!" muttered Joseph, towards whom I had been steering.

He sat within earshot, milking the cows by the light of a lantern, which I seized unceremoniously, and, calling out that I would send it back on the morrow, rushed to the nearest postern.

"Maister, maister, he's staling t' lantern!" shouted the ancient, pursuing my retreat. "Hey, Gnasher! Hey, dog! Hey Wolf, holld him, holld him!"

On opening the little door, two hairy monsters flew at my throat, bearing me down, and extinguishing the light; while a mingled guffaw from Heathcliff and Hareton put the copestone² on my rage and humiliation. Fortunately, the beasts seemed more bent on stretching their paws, and yawning, and flourishing their tails, than devouring me alive; but they would suffer no resurrection, and I was forced to lie till their malignant masters pleased to deliver me: then, hatless and trembling with wrath, I ordered the miscreants to let me out—on their peril to keep me one minute longer—with several incoherent threats of retaliation that, in their indefinite depth of virulency, smacked of King Lear.³

The vehemence of my agitation brought on a copious bleeding at

¹ Goodness, what a miserable family.

² Copestone - Finishing touch; highest stone in a wall or building

³ *King Lear* is a play by Shakespeare about a dysfunctional family and a mad king. Basically, Mr. Lockwood is no longer amused by his hosts' rudeness. He is angry.

the nose, and still Heathcliff laughed, and still I scolded. I don't know what would have concluded the scene, had there not been one person at hand rather more rational than myself, and more benevolent than my entertainer. This was Zillah, the stout housewife; who at length issued forth to inquire into the nature of the uproar. She thought that some of them had been laying violent hands on me; and, not daring to attack her master, she turned her vocal artillery against the younger scoundrel.

"Well, Mr. Earnshaw," she cried, "I wonder what you'll have agait next? Are we going to murder folk on our very door-stones? I see this house will never do for me—look at t' poor lad, he's fair choking! Wisht, wisht; you mun'n't go on so. Come in, and I'll cure that: there now, hold ye still."

With these words she suddenly splashed a pint of icy water down my neck, and pulled me into the kitchen. Mr. Heathcliff followed, his accidental merriment expiring quickly in his habitual moroseness.

I was sick exceedingly, and dizzy, and faint; and thus compelled perforce to accept lodgings under his roof. He told Zillah to give me a glass of brandy, and then passed on to the inner room; while she condoled with me on my sorry predicament, and having obeyed his orders, whereby I was somewhat revived, ushered me to bed.

CHAPTER III

While leading the way upstairs, she recommended that I should hide the candle, and not make a noise; for her master had an odd notion about the chamber she would put me in, and never let anybody lodge there willingly. I asked the reason. She did not know, she answered: she had only lived there a year or two; and they had so many queer¹ goings on, she could not begin to be curious.

Too stupefied to be curious myself, I fastened my door and glanced round for the bed. The whole furniture consisted of a chair, a clothes-press, and a large oak case, with squares cut out near the top resembling coach windows. Having approached this structure, I looked inside, and perceived it to be a singular sort of old-fashioned couch, very conveniently designed to obviate the necessity for every member of the family having a room to himself. In fact, it formed a little closet, and the ledge of a window, which it enclosed, served as a table.²

I slid back the panelled sides, got in with my light, pulled them together again, and felt secure against the vigilance of Heathcliff, and every one else.

The ledge, where I placed my candle, had a few mildewed books piled up in one corner; and it was covered with writing scratched on the paint. This writing, however, was nothing but a name repeated in all kinds of characters, large and small—*Catherine Earnshaw*, here and there varied to *Catherine Heathcliff*, and then again to *Catherine Linton*.³

¹ Queer - Strange (archaic definition)

² It's like a little room within a room.

³ Earnshaw, as is the farmhand with rude manners but a haughty disposition? Hareton Earnshaw?

In vapid¹ listlessness² I leant my head against the window, and continued spelling over Catherine Earnshaw—Heathcliff—Linton, till my eyes closed; but they had not rested five minutes when a glare of white letters started from the dark, as vivid as spectres³—the air swarmed with Catherines; and rousing myself to dispel the obtrusive name, I discovered my candle-wick reclining on one of the antique volumes, and perfuming the place with an odour of roasted calf-skin.

I snuffed it off, and, very ill at ease under the influence of cold and lingering nausea, sat up and spread open the injured tome on my knee. It was a Testament, in lean type, and smelling dreadfully musty: a fly-leaf bore the inscription—"Catherine Earnshaw, her book," and a date some quarter of a century back.

I shut it, and took up another and another, till I had examined all. Catherine's library was select, and its state of dilapidation⁴ proved it to have been well used, though not altogether for a legitimate purpose: scarcely one chapter had escaped a pen-and-ink commentary—at least the appearance of one—covering every morsel of blank that the printer had left. Some were detached sentences; other parts took the form of a regular diary, scrawled in an unformed, childish hand. At the top of an extra page (quite a treasure, probably, when first lighted on) I was greatly amused to behold an excellent caricature of my friend Joseph,—rudely, yet powerfully sketched. An immediate interest kindled within me for the unknown Catherine, and I began forthwith to decipher her faded hieroglyphics.⁵

"An awful Sunday," commenced the paragraph beneath. "I wish my father were back again. Hindley is a detestable substitute—his conduct to Heathcliff is atrocious—H. and I are going to rebel—we took our initiatory step this evening.

"All day had been flooding with rain; we could not go to church, so Joseph must needs get up a congregation in the garret⁶; and, while Hindley and his wife basked downstairs before a comfortable fire—doing anything but reading their Bibles, I'll answer for it—Heathcliff,

¹ Vapid - Empty

² Listlessness - Lacking energy or enthusiasm

³ Spectres - Ghosts

⁴ Dilapidation - State of decay or disrepair

⁵ I'm still really enjoying his sarcastic voice.

⁶ Garret - Attic

myself, and the unhappy ploughboy were commanded to take our prayer-books, and mount: we were ranged in a row, on a sack of corn, groaning and shivering, and hoping that Joseph would shiver too, so that he might give us a short homily for his own sake.¹ A vain idea! The service lasted precisely three hours; and yet my brother had the face to exclaim, when he saw us descending, 'What, done already?'² On Sunday evenings we used to be permitted to play, if we did not make much noise; now a mere titter is sufficient to send us into corners.

"'You forget you have a master here,' says the tyrant. 'I'll demolish the first who puts me out of temper! I insist on perfect sobriety and silence. Oh, boy! was that you? Frances darling, pull his hair as you go by: I heard him snap his fingers.'³ Frances pulled his hair heartily, and then went and seated herself on her husband's knee, and there they were, like two babies, kissing and talking nonsense by the hour—foolish palaver⁴ that we should be ashamed of. We made ourselves as snug as our means allowed in the arch of the dresser. I had just fastened our pinafores together, and hung them up for a curtain, when in comes Joseph, on an errand from the stables. He tears down my handiwork, boxes my ears, and croaks:

"'T' maister nobbut just buried,⁵ and Sabbath not o'ered, und t' sound o' t' gospel still i' yer lugs, and ye darr be laiking! Shame on ye! sit ye down, ill childer! there's good books enough if ye'll read 'em: sit ye down, and think o' yer sows!⁶

"Saying this, he compelled us so to square our positions that we might receive from the far-off fire a dull ray to show us the text of the lumber he thrust upon us. I could not bear the employment. I took my dingy volume by the scroop, and hurled it into the dog-kennel, vowing I hated a good book. Heathcliff kicked his to the same place. Then there was a hubbub!

"'Maister Hindley!' shouted our chaplain. 'Maister, coom hither!

¹ Did Joseph used to be the local minister?

² So Hindley, who treats Heathcliff horribly, is her brother.

³ And Frances must be Hindley's wife.

⁴ Palaver - Lengthy and pointless discussion

⁵ Is her father dead? She said she wished he were back, but perhaps he's gone for good.

⁶ That's Joseph, alright. I recognize the diction.

Miss Cathy's riven th' back off "Th' Helmet o' Salvation," un' Heathcliff's pawed his fit into t' first part o' "T' Brooad Way to Destruction!" It's fair flaysome that ye let 'em go on this gait. Ech! th' owd man wad ha' laced 'em properly—but he's goan!

"Hindley hurried up from his paradise on the hearth, and seizing one of us by the collar, and the other by the arm, hurled both into the back-kitchen; where, Joseph asseverated¹, 'owd Nick' would fetch us as sure as we were living;² and, so comforted, we each sought a separate nook to await his advent. I reached this book, and a pot of ink from a shelf, and pushed the house-door ajar to give me light, and I have got the time on with writing for twenty minutes; but my companion is impatient, and proposes that we should appropriate the dairywoman's cloak, and have a scamper on the moors, under its shelter. A pleasant suggestion—and then, if the surly old man come in, he may believe his prophecy verified—we cannot be damper, or colder, in the rain than we are here."³

* * * * *

I suppose Catherine fulfilled her project, for the next sentence took up another subject: she waxed lachrymose⁴.

"How little did I dream that Hindley would ever make me cry so!" she wrote. "My head aches, till I cannot keep it on the pillow; and still I can't give over. Poor Heathcliff! Hindley calls him a vagabond, and won't let him sit with us, nor eat with us any more; and, he says, he and I must not play together, and threatens to turn him out of the house if we break his orders. He has been blaming our father (how dared he?) for treating H. too liberally; and swears he will reduce him to his right place—"⁵

* * * * *

I began to nod drowsily over the dim page: my eye wandered

¹ Asseverated - Declared

² He was just saying the same thing to the younger Mrs. Heathcliff...He hasn't changed a bit.

³ Joseph said the devil would come get them, so Heathcliff suggests they go. Perhaps Joseph will believe his warning has come true.

⁴ Lachrymose - Tearful; full of sadness

⁵ Based on Heathcliff and Catherine's relationship, we can infer that her father treated Heathcliff with kindness, perhaps like a member of the family. But now that her father is dead, Hindley is reminding everyone that Heathcliff isn't actually an Earnshaw.

from manuscript to print. I saw a red ornamented title—"Seventy Times Seven,"¹ and the First of the Seventy-First.² A Pious Discourse delivered by the Reverend Jabez Branderham, in the Chapel of Gimmerden Sough." And while I was, half-consciously, worrying my brain to guess what Jabez Branderham would make of his subject, I sank back in bed, and fell asleep. Alas, for the effects of bad tea and bad temper! What else could it be that made me pass such a terrible night? I don't remember another that I can at all compare with it since I was capable of suffering.

I began to dream, almost before I ceased to be sensible of my locality. I thought it was morning; and I had set out on my way home, with Joseph for a guide. The snow lay yards deep in our road; and, as we floundered on, my companion wearied me with constant reproaches that I had not brought a pilgrim's staff: telling me that I could never get into the house without one, and boastfully flourishing a heavy-headed cudgel, which I understood to be so denominated. For a moment I considered it absurd that I should need such a weapon to gain admittance into my own residence. Then a new idea flashed across me. I was not going there: we were journeying to hear the famous Jabez Branderham preach, from the text—"Seventy Times Seven;" and either Joseph, the preacher, or I had committed the "First of the Seventy-First," and were to be publicly exposed and excommunicated³.

We came to the chapel. I have passed it really in my walks, twice or thrice; it lies in a hollow, between two hills: an elevated hollow, near a swamp, whose peaty moisture is said to answer all the purposes of embalming on the few corpses deposited there.⁴ The roof has been kept whole hitherto; but as the clergyman's stipend is only twenty pounds per annum⁵, and a house with two rooms, threatening speedily to determine into one, no clergyman will undertake the duties of pastor: especially as it is currently reported that his flock would

¹ A reference to when Jesus told Peter to forgive someone not just seven times, but seventy times seven.

² A.K.A. "the unpardonable sin" or "when to stop forgiving"

³ Excommunicated - Officially excluded from church (and therefore heaven)

⁴ What an atmosphere for a church, yeesh. He's referencing the ancient practice of throwing people in bogs for reasons we don't fully understand—probably as a punishment or to appease the gods. Their bodies are preserved like mummies, and people still discover them.

⁵ Per annum - Per year

rather let him starve than increase the living by one penny from their own pockets. However, in my dream, Jabez had a full and attentive congregation; and he preached—good God! what a sermon; divided into *four hundred and ninety* parts,¹ each fully equal to an ordinary address from the pulpit, and each discussing a separate sin!² Where he searched for them, I cannot tell. He had his private manner of interpreting the phrase, and it seemed necessary the brother should sin different sins on every occasion. They were of the most curious character: odd transgressions that I never imagined previously.

Oh, how weary I grew. How I writhed, and yawned, and nodded, and revived! How I pinched and pricked myself, and rubbed my eyes, and stood up, and sat down again, and nudged Joseph to inform me if he would *ever* have done. I was condemned to hear all out: finally, he reached the "*First of the Seventy-First*." At that crisis, a sudden inspiration descended on me; I was moved to rise and denounce Jabez Branderham as the sinner of the sin that no Christian need pardon.

"Sir," I exclaimed, "sitting here within these four walls, at one stretch, I have endured and forgiven the four hundred and ninety heads of your discourse. Seventy times seven times have I plucked up my hat and been about to depart—Seventy times seven times have you preposterously forced me to resume my seat. The four hundred and ninety-first is too much. Fellow-martyrs, have at him! Drag him down, and crush him to atoms, that the place which knows him may know him no more!"

"*Thou art the Man!*" cried Jabez, after a solemn pause, leaning over his cushion. "Seventy times seven times didst thou gapingly contort thy visage³—seventy times seven did I take counsel with my soul—Lo, this is human weakness: this also may be absolved! The First of the Seventy-First is come. Brethren, execute upon him the judgment written. Such honour have all His saints!"⁴

With that concluding word, the whole assembly, exalting their pilgrim's staves, rushed round me in a body; and I, having no weapon to raise in self-defence, commenced grappling with Joseph, my nearest

¹ A.K.A. seventy times seven

² The sermon lasted forever, basically.

³ Visage - Face

⁴ Both men are accusing one another of having transgressed 491 times. "I've forgiven you 490 times; I won't do it again!"

and most ferocious assailant, for his.¹ In the confluence of the multitude, several clubs crossed; blows, aimed at me, fell on other sconces. Presently the whole chapel resounded with rappings and counter rappings: every man's hand was against his neighbour; and Branderham², unwilling to remain idle, poured forth his zeal in a shower of loud taps on the boards of the pulpit, which responded so smartly that, at last, to my unspeakable relief, they woke me. And what was it that had suggested the tremendous tumult? What had played Jabez's part in the row? Merely the branch of a fir-tree that touched my lattice as the blast wailed by, and rattled its dry cones against the panes!³ I listened doubtingly an instant; detected the disturber, then turned and dozed, and dreamt again: if possible, still more disagreeably than before.

This time, I remembered I was lying in the oak closet, and I heard distinctly the gusty wind, and the driving of the snow; I heard, also, the fir bough repeat its teasing sound, and ascribed it to the right cause: but it annoyed me so much, that I resolved to silence it, if possible; and, I thought, I rose and endeavoured to unhasp the casement. The hook was soldered into the staple: a circumstance observed by me when awake, but forgotten. "I must stop it, nevertheless!" I muttered, knocking my knuckles through the glass, and stretching an arm out to seize the importunate⁴ branch; instead of which, my fingers closed on the fingers of a little, ice-cold hand!

The intense horror of nightmare came over me: I tried to draw back my arm, but the hand clung to it, and a most melancholy voice sobbed,

"Let me in—let me in!"

"Who are you?" I asked, struggling, meanwhile, to disengage myself.

"Catherine Linton," it replied, shiveringly (why did I think of *Linton*? I had read *Earnshaw* twenty times for Linton)—"I'm come home:

¹ This dream is, frankly, bizarre.

² Branderham - Jabez Branderham

³ The tree branches tapping against the window inspired some of the sounds from his dream.

⁴ Importunate - Annoyingly persistent

I'd lost my way on the moor!"¹

As it spoke, I discerned, obscurely, a child's face looking through the window. Terror made me cruel; and, finding it useless to attempt shaking the creature off, I pulled its wrist on to the broken pane, and rubbed it to and fro till the blood ran down and soaked the bed-clothes:² still it wailed, "Let me in!" and maintained its tenacious³ gripe, almost maddening me with fear.

"How can I!" I said at length. "Let *me* go, if you want me to let you in!"

The fingers relaxed, I snatched mine through the hole, hurriedly piled the books up in a pyramid against it, and stopped my ears to exclude the lamentable prayer.

I seemed to keep them closed above a quarter of an hour; yet, the instant I listened again, there was the doleful⁴ cry moaning on!

"Begone!" I shouted. "I'll never let you in, not if you beg for twenty years."

"It is twenty years," mourned the voice: "twenty years. I've been a waif⁵ for twenty years!"

Thereat began a feeble scratching outside, and the pile of books moved as if thrust forward.

I tried to jump up; but could not stir a limb; and so yelled aloud, in a frenzy of fright.

To my confusion, I discovered the yell was not ideal: hasty footsteps approached my chamber door; somebody pushed it open, with a vigorous hand, and a light glimmered through the squares at the top of the bed. I sat shuddering, yet, and wiping the perspiration from my forehead: the intruder appeared to hesitate, and muttered to himself.

At last, he said, in a half-whisper, plainly not expecting an answer,

"Is any one here?"

I considered it best to confess my presence; for I knew Heathcliff's

¹ He read *three* last names for Catherine—Earnshaw, Heathcliff, and Linton—and thinks it's strange that his dream identified her as Catherine Linton, when he saw the other last names more often.

² Oh my gosh.

³ Tenacious - Persistent; unwilling to let go

⁴ Doleful - Mournful

⁵ Waif - A neglected or abandoned person

accents, and feared he might search further, if I kept quiet.

With this intention, I turned and opened the panels. I shall not soon forget the effect my action produced.¹

Heathcliff stood near the entrance, in his shirt and trousers; with a candle dripping over his fingers, and his face as white as the wall behind him. The first creak of the oak startled him like an electric shock: the light leaped from his hold to a distance of some feet, and his agitation was so extreme, that he could hardly pick it up.

"It is only your guest, sir," I called out, desirous to spare him the humiliation of exposing his cowardice further. "I had the misfortune to scream in my sleep, owing to a frightful nightmare. I'm sorry I disturbed you."

"Oh, God confound you, Mr. Lockwood! I wish you were at the—" commenced my host, setting the candle on a chair, because he found it impossible to hold it steady. "And who showed you up into this room?" he continued, crushing his nails into his palms, and grinding his teeth to subdue the maxillary² convulsions. "Who was it? I've a good mind to turn them out of the house this moment!"

"It was your servant Zillah," I replied, flinging myself on to the floor, and rapidly resuming my garments. "I should not care if you did, Mr. Heathcliff; she richly deserves it. I suppose that she wanted to get another proof that the place was haunted, at my expense. Well, it is—swarming with ghosts and goblins! You have reason in shutting it up, I assure you. No one will thank you for a doze in such a den!"³

"What do you mean?" asked Heathcliff, "and what are you doing? Lie down and finish out the night, since you *are* here; but, for Heaven's sake! don't repeat that horrid noise: nothing could excuse it, unless you were having your throat cut!"

"If the little fiend had got in at the window, she probably would have strangled me!" I returned. "I'm not going to endure the persecutions of your hospitable ancestors again. Was not the Reverend Jabez Branderham akin to you on the mother's side? And that minx, Cather-

¹ I wonder if the servant told Heathcliff that Mr. Lockwood would be staying there? She told him to hide his candle, and that Heathcliff never lets anyone in that room...

² Maxillary - Relating to the jawbone

³ Mr. Lockwood genuinely thinks it's haunted, and that Zillah put him there to scare him.

ine Linton, or Earnshaw, or however she was called—she must have been a changeling¹—wicked little soul! She told me she had been walking the earth these twenty years: a just punishment for her mortal transgressions, I’ve no doubt!”

Scarcely were these words uttered when I recollected the association of Heathcliff’s with Catherine’s name in the book, which had completely slipped from my memory, till thus awakened. I blushed at my inconsideration: but, without showing further consciousness of the offence, I hastened to add—“The truth is, sir, I passed the first part of the night in—” Here I stopped afresh—I was about to say “perusing those old volumes,” then it would have revealed my knowledge of their written, as well as their printed, contents; so, correcting myself, I went on—“in spelling over the name scratched on that window-ledge. A monotonous occupation, calculated to set me asleep, like counting, or—”

“What *can* you mean by talking in this way to *me*!” thundered Heathcliff with savage vehemence. “How—how *dare* you, under my roof?—God! he’s mad to speak so!” And he struck his forehead with rage.

I did not know whether to resent this language or pursue my explanation; but he seemed so powerfully affected that I took pity and proceeded with my dreams; affirming I had never heard the appellation of “Catherine Linton” before, but reading it often over produced an impression which personified itself when I had no longer my imagination under control. Heathcliff gradually fell back into the shelter of the bed, as I spoke; finally sitting down almost concealed behind it. I guessed, however, by his irregular and intercepted breathing, that he struggled to vanquish an excess of violent emotion. Not liking to show him that I had heard the conflict, I continued my toilette rather noisily, looked at my watch, and soliloquised on the length of the night: “Not three o’clock yet! I could have taken oath it had been six. Time stagnates here: we must surely have retired to rest at eight!”²

“Always at nine in winter, and rise at four,” said my host, suppressing a groan: and, as I fancied, by the motion of his arm’s shadow, dashing a tear from his eyes. “Mr. Lockwood,” he added, “you may

¹ Changeling - A child believed to have been substituted for a fairy child during infancy (so not a real human child)

² Mr. Lockwood is politely rambling, giving Mr. Heathcliff time to collect himself.

go into my room: you'll only be in the way, coming downstairs so early: and your childish outcry has sent sleep to the devil for me."

"And for me, too," I replied. "I'll walk in the yard till daylight, and then I'll be off; and you need not dread a repetition of my intrusion. I'm now quite cured of seeking pleasure in society, be it country or town. A sensible man ought to find sufficient company in himself."

"Delightful company!" muttered Heathcliff. "Take the candle, and go where you please. I shall join you directly. Keep out of the yard, though, the dogs are unchained; and the house—Juno mounts sentinel there, and—nay, you can only ramble about the steps and passages. But, away with you! I'll come in two minutes!"¹

I obeyed, so far as to quit the chamber; when, ignorant where the narrow lobbies led, I stood still, and was witness, involuntarily, to a piece of superstition on the part of my landlord which belied², oddly, his apparent sense.³ He got on to the bed, and wrenched open the lattice, bursting, as he pulled at it, into an uncontrollable passion of tears. "Come in! come in!" he sobbed. "Cathy, do come. Oh, do—*once* more! Oh! my heart's darling! hear me *this* time, Catherine, at last!" The spectre showed a spectre's ordinary caprice:⁴ it gave no sign of being; but the snow and wind whirled wildly through, even reaching my station, and blowing out the light.

There was such anguish in the gush of grief that accompanied this raving, that my compassion made me overlook its folly, and I drew off, half angry to have listened at all, and vexed at having related my ridiculous nightmare, since it produced that agony; though *why* was beyond my comprehension. I descended cautiously to the lower regions, and landed in the back-kitchen, where a gleam of fire, raked compactly together, enabled me to rekindle my candle. Nothing was stirring except a brindled, grey cat, which crept from the ashes, and saluted me with a querulous⁵ mew.

Two benches, shaped in sections of a circle, nearly enclosed the

¹ He didn't even want to leave Mr. Lockwood alone in the living room before. Now, he's like, "Go to my bedroom, wherever you want, just let me be!"

² Belied - Contradicted; failed to truly represent

³ He seemed like a sensible, serious fellow, but...

⁴ "Ghosts gonna ghost."

⁵ Querulous - Whining

hearth; on one of these I stretched myself, and Grimalkin¹ mounted the other. We were both of us nodding ere² any one invaded our retreat, and then it was Joseph, shuffling down a wooden ladder that vanished in the roof, through a trap: the ascent to his garret, I suppose. He cast a sinister look at the little flame which I had enticed to play between the ribs, swept the cat from its elevation, and bestowing himself in the vacancy, commenced the operation of stuffing a three-inch pipe with tobacco. My presence in his sanctum was evidently esteemed a piece of impudence³ too shameful for remark: he silently applied the tube to his lips, folded his arms, and puffed away. I let him enjoy the luxury unannoyed; and after sucking out his last wreath, and heaving a profound sigh, he got up, and departed as solemnly as he came.

A more elastic footstep entered next; and now I opened my mouth for a "good-morning," but closed it again, the salutation unachieved; for Hareton Earnshaw was performing his orison *sotto voce*, in a series of curses directed against every object he touched,⁴ while he rummaged a corner for a spade or shovel to dig through the drifts. He glanced over the back of the bench, dilating his nostrils, and thought as little of exchanging civilities with me as with my companion the cat. I guessed, by his preparations, that egress⁵ was allowed, and, leaving my hard couch, made a movement to follow him. He noticed this, and thrust at an inner door with the end of his spade, intimating by an inarticulate sound that there was the place where I must go, if I changed my locality.

It opened into the house, where the females were already astir; Zillah urging flakes of flame up the chimney with a colossal bellows; and Mrs. Heathcliff, kneeling on the hearth, reading a book by the aid of the blaze.⁶ She held her hand interposed between the furnace-heat and her eyes, and seemed absorbed in her occupation; desisting from

¹ Grimalkin - A generic term for "cat" popularized by the witches of *Macbeth*

² Ere - Before

³ Impudence - Bold disrespect

⁴ Ha! More sarcasm. Mr. Lockwood says Hareton Earnshaw is doing his morning prayers in a quiet voice (*sotto voce*), the prayers consisting of cursing at everything he bumps into.

⁵ Egress - Exiting

⁶ Has he been sitting with the cat for hours? Or are they all up at 3:00 in the morning?

it only to chide the servant for covering her with sparks, or to push away a dog, now and then, that snoozled its nose overforwardly into her face. I was surprised to see Heathcliff there also. He stood by the fire, his back towards me, just finishing a stormy scene with poor Zillah; who ever and anon interrupted her labour to pluck up the corner of her apron, and heave an indignant groan.

"And you, you worthless—" he broke out as I entered, turning to his daughter-in-law, and employing an epithet¹ as harmless as duck, or sheep, but generally represented by a dash—.² "There you are, at your idle tricks again! The rest of them do earn their bread—you live on my charity! Put your trash away, and find something to do. You shall pay me for the plague of having you eternally in my sight—do you hear, damnable jade³?"⁴

"I'll put my trash away, because you can make me if I refuse," answered the young lady, closing her book, and throwing it on a chair. "But I'll not do anything, though you should swear your tongue out, except what I please!"⁵

Heathcliff lifted his hand, and the speaker sprang to a safer distance, obviously acquainted with its weight. Having no desire to be entertained by a cat-and-dog combat, I stepped forward briskly, as if eager to partake the warmth of the hearth, and innocent of any knowledge of the interrupted dispute. Each had enough decorum to suspend further hostilities: Heathcliff placed his fists, out of temptation, in his pockets; Mrs. Heathcliff curled her lip, and walked to a seat far off, where she kept her word by playing the part of a statue during the remainder of my stay. That was not long. I declined joining their breakfast, and, at the first gleam of dawn, took an opportunity of escaping into the free air, now clear, and still, and cold as impalpable⁶ ice.

My landlord halloed for me to stop ere I reached the bottom of the garden, and offered to accompany me across the moor. It was well he did, for the whole hill-back was one billowy, white ocean; the swells

¹ Epithet - Curse word

² Nobody really knows what is being omitted with "—" here. Wretch? Cow?

³ Jade - Bad-tempered or disreputable woman

⁴ Good grief, he's horrible to his family.

⁵ At least she gives it right back...

⁶ Impalpable - Difficult to feel or comprehend

and falls not indicating corresponding rises and depressions in the ground: many pits, at least, were filled to a level; and entire ranges of mounds, the refuse of the quarries, blotted from the chart which my yesterday's walk left pictured in my mind. I had remarked on one side of the road, at intervals of six or seven yards, a line of upright stones, continued through the whole length of the barren: these were erected and daubed with lime on purpose to serve as guides in the dark, and also when a fall, like the present, confounded the deep swamps on either hand with the firmer path: but, excepting a dirty dot pointing up here and there, all traces of their existence had vanished: and my companion found it necessary to warn me frequently to steer to the right or left, when I imagined I was following, correctly, the windings of the road.

We exchanged little conversation, and he halted at the entrance of Thrushcross Park, saying, I could make no error there. Our adieux were limited to a hasty bow, and then I pushed forward, trusting to my own resources; for the porter's lodge is untenanted as yet. The distance from the gate to the Grange is two miles; I believe I managed to make it four, what with losing myself among the trees, and sinking up to the neck in snow: a predicament which only those who have experienced it can appreciate. At any rate, whatever were my wanderings, the clock chimed twelve as I entered the house; and that gave exactly an hour for every mile of the usual way from Wuthering Heights.

My human fixtue and her satellites rushed to welcome me;¹ exclaiming, tumultuously², they had completely given me up: everybody conjectured that I perished last night; and they were wondering how they must set about the search for my remains. I bid them be quiet, now that they saw me returned, and, benumbed to my very heart, I dragged upstairs; whence, after putting on dry clothes, and pacing to and fro thirty or forty minutes, to restore the animal heat, I adjourned to my study, feeble as a kitten: almost too much so to enjoy the cheerful fire and smoking coffee which the servant had prepared for my refreshment.

¹ A reference to the housekeeper and other servants.

² Tumultuously - In a loud, confused way