

Love and Revenge in Wuthering Heights

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ABSTRACT

*The main goal of this paper is to discuss the concept of love and revenge in Emily Bronte's novel **Wuthering Heights**, as well as to learn how some aspects of her life are reflected in her novel, as she created a motherless character because she lost her mother to cancer when she was three years old. Many critics regarded her novel as a novel of vengeance because so many factors influenced and shaped her life.*

*The paper includes three sections. The first of them deals with Emily Bronte's life and a glimpse at her major works. The second section is allotted to afford on a summary of the novel **Wuthering Heights**. Moreover, section three sheds light on the concept of love and revenge and examples of in Emily Bronte's novel **Wuthering Heights**. The paper ends with a conclusion that sums up the findings of the study, followed by a list of references and cited works.*

INTRODUCTION

Certainly, the compelling relationship between the characters Catherine and Heathcliff commands the reader's immediate attention in Emily Bronte's **Wuthering Heights**. The entire novel is, in fact, structured around Bronte's powerful depiction of that relationship, and a keen reader must acknowledge its centrality in the work. The relationship, however, is one of almost complete self-obsession on the part of each of these characters, rather than one of love. Furthermore, focusing solely on the Catherine-Heathcliff emotional axis, as well as their numerous self-serving acts and casual cruelty, may detract from other significant and noteworthy aspects of the novel. **Wuthering Heights** is indeed a novel of manners, offering the reader a rich and varied portrait of life in provincial English society during the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The social setting of the work is one to which many current readers are unaccustomed.

The novel's use of multiple narrators is an unusual feature. Mr. Lockwood, the narrator, tells the reader a story about the Earnshaws and the Lintons that he is told by another narrator, Mrs. Ellen ("Nelly" or "Elly"). Dean, who works for both families, is a servant. Mrs. Dean sometimes relies upon other characters to fill in parts of the "history" of the families and their relationships,

thus introducing into the complex mixture a three-times-removed observer who may use an epistolary form or reported speech to add details that advance the plot. **Wuthering Heights** is a "frame-tale," that is, the story of the two families within the "frame" of Mr. Lockwood's visit to the Yorkshire district and his subsequent bizarre encounters with his landlord, Mr. Heathcliff, and with a ward of Heathcliff's household, Cathy, to whom Lockwood, an unmarried man, is attracted.

CHAPTER ONE

Biography Emily Bronte

Emily Jane Bronte was born in the village of Thornton, near Bradford, on July 30, 1818. She grew up on the Yorkshire moors in England's industrial north. She is Reverend Patrick and Maria Bronte's daughter. Her father was an Anglican priest. Her mother was a lady from Penzance, Cornwall, who married a curate in 1812 and gave birth to six children. There are five daughters and one son. Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, Barnwell, Emily, and Anne are some of the characters. Emily was the family's fifth child and fourth daughter. After the birth of Anne in April 1820, the family relocated to Haworth, where Mr. Bronte accepted a position as perpetual curate (Bloom, 2008:10).

Haworth was a small isolated town on the Yorkshire moors, attractive in the summer and spring, but unappealing in the winter, when the weather was cool, dark, and damp, and rude when sudden storms blew in from the west. People were separated from one another in the mid-nineteenth century, large towns were few, and the moor land remained uncovered under the sky as it had for thousands of years (Coles,1987:1). In September 1821 Emily's mother died from cancer, and the six children left motherless with ages scoping from eight to one. Then their Aunt Branwell came to look after the children and keep the house. She was a formally known spinster, thrifty, she raised the children up (ibid)

Emily's sisters, Maria and Elizabeth, are little known because they died when they were young. Charlotte and Emily were literary geniuses and intellectuals. The youngest, Anne, was also a publisher, and Patrick Branwell, known simply as Branwell, had a penchant for both writing and painting (Coles, 1987:1). Because of their isolated situation, the Bronte family dislikes mentioning or even discussing their private lives, and they dislike being in the company of others or having many friends. Moreover, little information is known about Emily's childhood (Coles, 1987:2).

Emily attended Cowan Bridge school in 1824 with her three elder sisters (Charlotte, Maria, and Elizabeth) for teaching the daughters of the local clergy by a rev. This school was like any other Victorian school in that the curriculum was strict and the students' living conditions were difficult. The tuberculosis then took over the school, sickening Maria and Elizabeth. They went back home to die. Maria died on May 6, 1825, and Emily and Charlotte returned home after their summer vacation on June 1. Elizabeth Bronte died on June 15, 1825. (Coles, 1987:4).

Emily attended this school for a short time between 1824 and 1825. Her aunt and father educated her the majority of the time at home. She and her sisters spent six years of their education at home, thanks to the abundance of books and magazines in the parsonage (Bloom,2008:10). Conversation topics at their house include poetry, history, and politics. Such talk fueled the children's active imaginations. Branwell, the son, was given a box of wooden soldiers one day, and the children immediately adopted the soldier's life as their own.

Emily played a descendant of Sir Walter Scott, the Scottish romantic poet and novelist who was one of her notable heroes, led by her eldest daughters Charlotte and Branwell. The children began to write and produced little plays about the soldiers and imaginary worlds in which they lived. These plays became stories, copied in to tiny booklets, and finally developed into two ongoing sages, one composed largely by Charlotte and other set on unreal island of Gondal by Emily and Anne, Gondal was populated by character who seemed to be rude, brave type. In their own town Emily will still to write about Gondal for the rest of her life (Jobnson,2004:45).

Emily's personality was the most notable and peculiar. She was cautious, reclusive, calm, quite in company, polite but with a drawl. Her deepest thoughts were always kept hidden from the rest of the world, and she was tall, slender, pale, with grey eyes and an unappealing complexion. She dressed strangely, she is pleasant enough to live with understanding the other, and she is a very kind, very strong country girl. She was drawn to nature, and while wandering through the moors, she came to life. She spent a great deal of time alone in the moors walking, thinking, and may be forming some of her poetry in the free and open air. Furthermore, she has the talents that make the literary artist great (Jobnson,2004:46).

Emily's later life revolves around her failed attempt to make a living on her own. Some of the jobs presented to the Bronte girls. Emily enrolled in (Miss Woolers school) at Roe Head in 1835, but she became ill because she was so far away from the moors. Then she returned to Haworth when her health began to fail again. She stayed at home for five years and at this period she and her two sister plan to made their own school at parsonage with their aunt lending them money, but the next year their aunt and Mr. William who had been a favorite with girls both died, and the girls returned to their home and their hopes of building the school failed (Coles,1987:6)

Emily was concerned about her optimistic vision of the future, in which she imagined herself and her sisters leading a school and living in busy harmony, but the school never opened, and she only briefly left Haworth. Their adult lives were then spent writing rather than teaching (Bloom,2008:128). Emily became ill, both mentally and physically. In the period between (1838-1842) she wrote many poems

and kept them for herself, but in 1845 Charlotte her sister discovered these poems and tried to persuade her sister to publish her work (Jobnson,2004:48)

In May, the three sisters, Emily, Charlotte, and Anne, published a small volume containing a selection of verse from all three, wishing to remain anonymous because their work would not receive serious attention if they were known to be women, so they published under the names of Emily, Charlotte, and Anne (Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell). Names that were bearing the initials letters of their own names (Coles,1987:55). In their first try they published *Dismal Failure* poems but it received no suitable critical attention and only two copies were sold. Nevertheless, they didn't stop their hopes, each of three girls wrote a novel; Charlotte produce *Jane*, Emily produce *Wuthering Heights* and Anne produce *Agnes Grey* publishing them in 1847 (Coles,1987:8).

Wuthering Heights, Emily Bronte's novel, was initially planned for being unreasonable, gloomy, and cruel. As a result, only a few copies of the first edition were sold (Bloom,2008:123). Despite the fact that she only wrote one novel, she maintained an uncertain relationship with nineteenth-century thoughtful traditions that support humanistic values, either by advancing individual claims or by carrying on community claims (ibid:89). Emily and her sister Anne wrote numerous diary papers and journal articles as a description of their lives, each with a future date on which they read the account and then wrote an incidental one (ibid:128). Moreover, it is worth noting that Emily was born after the apex of the romantic period in the Victorian era, in the midst of the Industrial Revolution. Yet, she had always a desire to return back to the earlier era and that is notable in her novel *Wuthering Heights* (Jobnson,2004:49).

Emily began writing a second novel in 1848, after her brother Branwell died of tuberculosis. Emily caught a cold at his funeral, which turned into a serious illness, and she ignored herself, refusing all medical advice; she couldn't breathe without coughing. After two months, she broke down and told Charlotte that she needed to see a doctor, but she died before help could arrive. She died on December 19, 1848 at the age of thirty, her body was very thin and her coffin was only sixteen inches wide (Jobnson, 2004:50). After Emily's death and not earlier than the

twentieth century her novel of *Wuthering Heights* started to be regarded as a masterpiece in which gothic romantic units were dealing with huge sources and poetic power (Bloom,2008:123).

CHAPTER TWO

The Summary of the Novel

The story begins with a man named Lockwood visiting his landlord, Heathcliff, to rent the house known as Thrushcross Grange. Heathcliff lived in Wuthering Heights, which was about four miles away from Thrushcross Grange. Lockwood was intrigued by Wuthering Heights and everything within it, so he asked Nelly Dean, a servant in Thrushcross Grange who used to be a servant in *Wuthering Heights*, to tell him the story (www.cliffsnotes.com).

Nelly told the story and then went back in time. As a young girl, Nelly began working as a servant for Mr. Earnshaw (the owner of *Wuthering Heights*). Mr. Earnshaw took a trip to Liverpool one day and brought home an orphan named Heathcliff. Mr. Earnshaw raised Heathcliff alongside his own children, Hindley and Catherine. Catherine loved him, but Hindley did not like him because of his jealousy toward Heathcliff for what his father had done to him. After Mrs. Earnshaw died, Mr. Earnshaw sent Hindley away to college in order to make Heathcliff safe from Hindley. He kept Heathcliff nearby and became his favourite son. A few moments later, Mr. Earnshaw died and Hindley returned back to Wuthering Heights with his wife, Frances. Having a long time for college did not change Hindley's cruelty toward Heathcliff. Hindley decided to make Heathcliff's life miserable and treated him as a servant. On the other side, Catherine and Heathcliff became closer (ibid).

One night, Catherine and Heathcliff played and wandered to Thrushcross Grange. They're lived Linton family. Suddenly, Catherine was bitten by a dog and she was forced to stay in Thrushcross Grange by Mrs. Linton. Stayed in Thrushcross Grange for five weeks, Catherine became closer with Edgar and her relationship with Heathcliff became more complicated (www.sparknotes.com).

Frances died when she was born a baby boy named Hareton. Hindley became alcoholic because his wife

was dead and became more abusive toward Heathcliff. Heathcliff became more miserable when his only love, Catherine engaged to Edgar Linton because of social class. Heathcliff decided to stay away from Wuthering Heights, he went away for three years, and then came back with much money. He found out that Catherine have married with Edgar Linton. His return was to take revenge toward Hindley. Heathcliff lent money to Hindley because he knew that Hindley could not pay the debts therefore when Hindley died, he could acquire Wuthering Heights. Relationship was more complicated when Heathcliff married Isabella Linton. Heathcliff did not really love her, he just wanted to acquire Thruscross Grange and Edgar's wealth (ibid).

Catherine was ill and soon died after giving birth to baby girl who was also named Catherine. Unable to resist Heathcliff's cruelty any longer, Isabella runaway to London and was born a Babyboy named Linton Heathcliff. One day little Catherine wandered through the moors and discovered Wuthering Heights. In Wuthering Heights she met Hareton and became friend with him. Hareton became grunting and uneducated man because of Heathcliff's revenge toward Hindley (www.enotes.com).

After that, Isabella Linton died and Linton Heathcliff came back to Wuthering Heights and lived with Heathcliff. One day, little Catherine visited Wuthering Heights and met Linton. She began to start a secret romance with him. One day little Catherine went to Wuthering Heights because Linton asked her to visit and nursed him. Later, it was revealed that Linton asked little Catherine to nursed him because he was forced by Heathcliff. Sick Linton would be used by Heathcliff as a reason for revenge because if Linton married little Catherine, his claim upon Thruscross Grange would be legal and his revenge upon Edgar Linton would be complete (www.enotes.com).

One day, Heathcliff arranged meeting between Linton and little Catherine, when they met Heathcliff imprisoned little Catherine and forced her to marry Linton. Soon after, Edgar died and sick Linton also died. After that, Heathcliff controlled both Wuthering Heights and Thruscross Grange. Little Catherine lived in Wuthering Heights as a common servant and Thruscross Grange was rented to Mr. Lockwood (ibid).

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CHAPTER THREE

The Concept of Love in the Novel

The love between Heathcliff, and Catherine holds a solid foundation. In essence, they both belong to one kind of people who abounds in love and full of fiery passion and life energy. They dare love and hate, say and act. They despise the social customs and long for freedom. The feelings between them do not mingle with benefits, sympathy, and condolence. (Marianne.,2012:45). Most of all, they both realize they are the other party of themselves, as Catherine said to Nelly:

If All else perished. and he remained, I should still continue to be; and if all else. remained, and he were annihilated, the universe would turn to a mighty stranger: I should not seem apart of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the wood: time will change it, I am well aware, as winter changes the threes. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath a source a little visible, but necessary.

Heathcliff is the disordering cause which creates disaster in two families. In his wake, he carries passion, hate, jealousy and revenge. Without him Cathy's marriage would no doubt have proceeded calmly enough, and nothing would have changed at the Heights or Grange. But as Heathcliff injects violence, so also, he brings energy; the turmoil he causes in both families is in the end a new source of strength for the second generation. Emily deliberately demonstrates Heathcliff's brutality, and Cathy's childish willfulness, yet it is difficult not to feel that her own sympathies were weighted in favor of the Height. Her imagination is more passionately engaged by those who belong to the moors than by those in the valley, or even by those who in the end combine the two. This is not to say that she rejects the need to harmonize the wild and the tame, the fierce and the gentle; but her own personal

love for the wild and untamable led her sympathies in that direction (Marianne.,2012:46).

Heathcliff comes back for his love and hatred. The first time they meet, Catherine blames him, as she says, "To be absent and silent for three years, and never to think of me" (Bronte, 1982:264). Heathcliff answers "A little more than you have thought of me" (ibid:225). Such chief answer is sufficient to indicate Catherine has always been in his mind and his love towards her is the same as before. Catherine uses her own way to love and try to help. Heathcliff. Though her plan is failed. Catherine does not want Heathcliff to take revenge. Love originally is the product of human evolution, but if it is inhibited with exterior forces for a long time, it is prone to cause men some wild behaviors.

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To conclude Hareton and Catherine are the children of love, and so combine the positive "good" qualities of their respective parents: the kindness and constancy of calm, the strength and courage of storm. Linton, on the other hand, is a child of hate, and combines the negative "bad" qualities of his two parents - the cowardice and weakness of calm, the cruelty and ruthlessness of storm. Heathcliff obtains power over all three children. Catherine is married to her natural antipathy, Linton; so that her own nature diverted from its purpose, grows antagonistic to her natural affinity – Hareton (ibid).

The Concept of Revenge in the Novel

Heathcliff makes no secret to Catharine of his intention to revenge himself, and he begins his revenge with plans for taking over the property and

wealth of both the Earnshaw and Linton families. When the quarrel over Isabella begins, we do not hear the whole of it, but we do know that, to some extent, he -and Cathy are quarrelling over the disposition of the Linton aside (Chitham,2001:34).

His revenge will also be in terms of social degradation, as well as in taking over of property. So, Isabella is degraded. When Nelly visits her after her marriage' she already partook of the pervading spirit of neglect which encompassed her. Her pretty hair uncurled ... So much had circumstances altered their positions, that he (Heathcliff) would certainly have struck a stranger as a born and bred gentleman, and his wife a thorough little!' (Emily,1995:34). Hareton 'was reduced to a state of complete dependence on his father's inveterate enemy; and lives in his own house as a servant' (ibid:56).

But, just as Heathcliff considers that his own nature was perverted by his rejection, so her revenge himself in terms of a similar perversion of others. His means of revenge come through his perception of the nature of others of Isabella's love for him, of the young Cathy's love for Linton. He destroys Hindley by encouraging his vices of drinking and gambling, he attempts to destroy the lovable nature of the young Cathy: 'the only sentiment they (her eyes) evinced hovered between scorn and a kind of desperation, singularly unnatural to be detected there (ibid:96). The pleasure he takes in what he has done to Hareton derives not only from the degradation of the heir to the heights and the fact that he is a servant on what was his own property, but from the fact that he perceives that Hareton has a fine nature which he has destroyed:

If he were a born fool I should not enjoy it half so much. But he's no fool; and I can sympathize with all his feelings, having felt them myself... and he'll never be able to emerge from his bathos of coarseness and ignorance. I've got him faster than his sound scoundrel of a father secured me, and lower; for he takes a pride in his brutishness (Wuthering Heights. Ch.3)

And just as the person he loved most was taken from him, so Heathcliff inflicts pain by serving those human relationships which involves love. Edgar Linton loses sister, wife, and daughter through his machinations. Heathcliff's evil and violent nature and the success with which he carries out his revenge

transform him eventually from a credible being into a friend. In his ability to paralyze anything good and pervert the most ordinary and decent nature.

CONCLUSION

Emily Bronte's novel *Wuthering Heights* was published in 1847. Many people thought it was a love story, but the theme of vengeance takes center stage. Heathcliff is *Wuthering Heights*' arch-villain. The concept of vengeance is born as a result of his presence. People who are motivated to seek power, authority, or a statue are more vengeful, according to this novel. This is more apparent in Hindley's character. Other types of people who wanted to seek vengeance are those who believe they are lacking in certain areas of their lives. This made them feel helpless, and it is for this reason that they react aggressively to those who make them feel helpless. This idea is evident in Heathcliff's character. Jealousy and envy are the two sides of the same coin that caused revenge accompanied by the fear of losing what one owns and the pain of not having what others have; all these reasons were behind the revenge in this novel.

The concept of vengeance stems from one or more desires for vengeance, and the result is a cycle of vengeance that appears to be endlessly repeated. In this novel, there are two revengers, but only one of them, Heathcliff, was able to exact his revenge on everyone who wronged him. The theme of vengeance focuses on Heath Cliff's character and his bad nature by referring to his relationships with the Earnshaws and the Lintons. Heathcliff was able to exact his vengeance and become the owner of *Wuthering Heights*, Thrush Cross Grange, and the last heir of the two families under his control.

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