

Wuthering Heights Summary

By Emily Brontë, 1847

Chapter 27

During the week that follows, Edgar's health continues to deteriorate so it is grudgingly that Cathy visits Linton, who is also deteriorating. During the visit, Heathcliff is curious to know if Edgar is truly dying, which worries him that Linton may die sooner than his uncle.

- Edgar and Linton seem to be more synchronized than ever, since both their death is impending from being too weak.

Heathcliff asks Cathy to walk her cousin back to Wuthering Heights, although she meekly reminds Heathcliff that she is forbidden from visiting the farmhouse, but disobeys her father, regardless. Linton's cries of anguish and Heathcliff's rage, which is directed toward Linton, convince both Cathy and Nelly to accompany them.

- Linton is extremely pathetic and obviously terrified of Heathcliff, although the way he speaks to her after she is lured to Wuthering Heights removes almost all sympathy we may have for him.

After they're inside, Heathcliff imprisons Cathy and Nelly and will not release them until after Linton and she are married. Overnight, Heathcliff locks Cathy in a bedroom, but in the morning he frees her from the room, but keeps Nelly prisoner for five days, only seeing Hareton who is serving as her jailor.

- After Cathy is locked inside, Linton reveals to her Heathcliff's plans, and a sense of inescapable doom exists.
- This kidnapping is the first time Heathcliff does something entirely against the law, which is an act of desperation on his part, to get Linton to marry Cathy before Edgar's death and before Linton's for Heathcliff to solidify a claim on Thrushcross Grange.
 - Cathy and Linton do get married, without Nelly as a witness.

Chapter 28

Zillah enters the bedroom on the fifth day of Nelly's imprisonment, telling her that the village gossip is that Nelly and Cathy are lost in the marshes. Nelly finds Linton, who tells her that Cathy is being held prisoner and cannot be released. Unable to get Cathy free she returns to the Grange.

- Linton's words to Nelly echo his father's in regards to how he should treat his wife.
 - However, despite his weakness as a character, he finally stands up to him when he enables Cathy to escape.

She assures Edgar that Cathy is safe and will be home soon. She also dispatches servants to Wuthering Heights to bring her home, but they return empty handed. Edgar sends for his lawyer, Mr. Green, to change his will. Nelly thinks she hears him arrive, but it is Cathy, who with Linton's help was able to escape.

- Once again, Nelly favours lying instead of the truth, but this is probably advantageous for all involved, for nothing can be gained at this time by telling the truth to Edgar.

Edgar and Cathy are reunited, and Edgar dies content, thinking his daughter is happily married. Later that evening, Mr. Green arrives and immediately takes charge of the Grange. He dismisses all servants, except for Nelly, and attempts to have Edgar buried in the chapel, but Nelly knows well that he was to be buried next to his wife. Cathy is permitted to stay at the Grange until after her father's funeral.

- Mr. Green symbolizes the extent of Heathcliff's interference, using money and influence to bend the laws, encouraging a lawyer to sacrifice one client for another.
 - Mr. Green attempts to have Edgar buried away from his wife, which is most likely Heathcliff's doing.
 - Heathcliff's abduction of Nelly is his way of being practical as well as rewarding her for showing what he considers to be loyalty.

Chapter 29

Heathcliff arrives to escort Cathy home, informing her that he has punished Linton for his role in helping her escape. He refuses to allow Cathy to live at the Grange because he wants her to work for her keep, especially after Linton dies.

- Legally, both Linton and Heathcliff have greater claims on her home than she does, so she has no choice but to obey the directive of her father-in-law.
- It is now clear, the extent of Heathcliff's cruelty shown in what he does to Linton.

Cathy speaks out against Heathcliff, stating her love for Linton and that Heathcliff is alone in the world. As she is packing her things, Heathcliff confides in Nelly that he believes in ghosts, particularly the ghost of Catherine. Ever since her death 18 years ago, he has been seeing and feeling her presence. As he leaves, Heathcliff instructs Nelly not to visit Wuthering Heights, for she is not welcome.

- Although he punishes his son, he is not entirely without feelings.
 - The loss of Catherine has tormented him, and oddly enough, after all Heathcliff has done to other characters, we tend to sympathize with him for what he has endured.
 - We excuse him slightly, because he is a made monster.
 - Heathcliff is haunted by the idea of having to wait to be reunited with Catherine when it is the one joy besides his passion for revenge, which has almost been completely executed.
 - His longing to be with Catherine for eternity is the mark of a romantic, of a man truly in love, which is the one quality that makes him human and makes us empathize with him.

Chapter 30

Following Heathcliff's orders, Zillah refused to help Cathy when she first came to Wuthering Heights; Hareton was not able to do anything for her, either. Until the day Linton dies, Cathy tends to him

herself. After his death, Cathy is not willing to let Zillah or Hareton be nice to her.

- This chapter is the end of Nelly's narrative since she is no longer welcome at Wuthering Heights, Zillah now serves as Nelly's source of information about Cathy.
 - This brings the story full circle, back to chapter 1, when she first started discussing her story with Lockwood.
- Because of the cold reception she received after the father's death, Cathy is not friendly with either Zillah, not Hareton, however a mild attraction between Hareton and Cathy exists.
 - He offers her food, and a seat by the fire, and she allows him to help her retrieve books that are out of reach.
 - Neither wants to admit having any interest in the other, whatsoever, but they both remember fondly their first meeting.
- Heathcliff wants to prevent any friendship from developing between Hareton and Cathy because Hindley destroyed the relationship between Catherine and himself.
 - Since he is miserable, he tried to ensure that no one else is happy.

At the end of the chapter, Lockwood, who is now better, informs Nelly that Heathcliff may look for another tenant for the Grange.

Chapter 31

Lockwood makes a trip to Wuthering Heights and carries a note from Nelly to Cathy. Hareton takes the note at first, but noticing Cathy's tears, returns it to her. She in turn still treats him coolly and makes fun of his attempts at reading. Embarrassed, Hareton flings his books into the fire.

- This chapter provides a foreshadowing for the end of the novel; Heathcliff and Hareton are softening and Heathcliff's plan for total revenge no longer seems as important to him.
- Cathy and Hareton's developing friendship is still fueled by rage and arguments, but less and less harsh as the days go by.

When Heathcliff returns, he comments that Hareton favours Catherine more and more each day. This is something Heathcliff did not foresee and it seems to disturb him greatly. Now, in addition to the memories of his lost love, Heathcliff must also deal with Hareton's resemblance to his aunt Catherine.

- Both the memories and physical reminders are beginning to take their toll on Heathcliff.
- Lockwood, still the outsider, is now the primary narrator.

Chapter 32

6 months later, Lockwood is in the area and returns to the Grange, only to find that Nelly is now living at Wuthering Heights. He travels there, and Nelly tells him what has happened since. 2 weeks after he departed, Nelly was summoned back to be Cathy's companion because Zillah has left. While Nelly is there, Cathy feels remorse for having made fun of Hareton since he is now avoiding her. Heathcliff withdraws from everyone.

- 1802 opens this chapter, calling to mind the first chapter and indicates the passage of time from whence Lockwood initially began his diary.

- Lockwood comments on the differences of the moors in the summer and winter.
 - Again, the theme of opposites and the romantic ideals of nature are apparent.
 - When he arrives he doesn't encounter a lock, and the fragrance of flowers and fruit is also noticed.
 - This is probably signifies that Heathcliff is dead, which is admitted by Nelly before explaining what he missed.

After Hareton accidentally shoots himself and has to stay inside, he and Cathy argue but eventually make up and agree to be cousins. As a peace offering, she wraps up a book and has Nelly give it to him. If he accepts the book, Cathy will teach him to read and vows never to tease him again.

- Forgiveness occurs for the first time in a scene very similar to Catherine's death, Cathy begs Hareton for forgiveness.
 - It is Hareton this time, not Heathcliff who must decide.
 - With Cathy and Hareton becoming allies, the second generation is doomed not to repeat the mistakes of the first.
 - All that needs to fall into place is Heathcliff's death.
- Cathy begins to educate Hareton, a process which leads to them falling in love, much to Lockwood's chagrin: "I overheard no further distinguishable talk, but on looking around again, I perceived two such radiant countenances bent over the page of the accepted book, that I did not doubt the treaty had been ratified, on both sides, and the enemies were, thenceforth, sworn allies" (Bronte 229).
 - Hareton and Cathy are to be married on New Year's Day.
 - Represents the reconciliation of Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights and all that the houses represented; a diminution of the strife between desire and socialization and a brighter future based on love, education and social improvement.
 - Cathy leads Hareton towards a different, more harmonious, more feminised world, associated with education, proper husbandry, companionship, and mutual respect.

Chapter 33

At breakfast the next morning, Hareton takes Cathy's side in an argument against Heathcliff, right when he is about to strike her, but stops himself when he looks into Cathy's eyes. Later that night, he sees Hareton and Cathy sitting together. Cathy's eyes and Hareton's entire being remind him of Catherine. At this moment, he admits to Nelly that he does not have the desire to complete his revenge. Everywhere at Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff is constantly being reminded of Catherine and it is tormenting him.

- As Cathy and Hareton become friends, Heathcliff loses his desire for revenge. He refuses to speak of Cathy, but Hareton is the embodiment of Catherine and himself, which dulls his hatred and inside makes him lose himself in haunted nostalgia.
 - He seeks solitude more and more often in an attempt to find the strength to complete his revenge.

Chapter 34

Heathcliff continues to seek solitude and only eats once a day. One night, a few days later, he leaves and is out all night. When he returns in the morning, Cathy remarks that he is actually quite pleasant. He rejects all food and Nelly encourages him to send for a minister. He scoffs at her and reminds her of his burial wishes. The following night, Nelly finds Heathcliff's dead body. Hareton is the only one to mourn him and they bury Heathcliff according to his wishes, and villagers swear that he and another walk the moors.

- The growing love between Cathy and Hareton serves to identify Heathcliff's loss.
 - He, like Catherine, takes no food as he nears death.
 - This is a ritual fasting, for food no longer sustains him; he needs to be nourished by something more.
- Heathcliff is consumed with pain as he longs to be reunited with Catherine.
- We as readers easily forgive and forget what a monster Heathcliff turned out to be.
- The incompleteness of his revenge sends a universal positive note, that love conquers all hate.