

Penguin



Readers

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**WUTHERING
HEIGHTS**

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CHAPTER ONE

A new tenant

1801 – Two days ago, I visited my new **landlord**, Mr Heathcliff, at Wuthering Heights. I rode across the **moor** in a cold November wind that carried bits of snow. I was feeling excited about meeting the other man who lived in this wild place. I hoped we would find a lot to talk about.

He was standing at the front of the house when I arrived. As I walked up the path, he put his hands in his pockets and stared at me with angry, black eyes. He was tall, with black hair and dark skin, and his clothes were expensive. They were the clothes of a gentleman.

“Mr Heathcliff?” I said.

He nodded his head but did not smile.

“I am Mr Lockwood, your new **tenant**, **sir**. I have just moved into Thrushcross Grange. I want to introduce myself.”

“Come in!” said Mr Heathcliff, but he said it quickly, and he did not seem happy to see me. Then he shouted, “Joseph, take Mr Lockwood’s horse and get a **jug** of **wine**.”

A **servant** appeared from a door. He was a very old man, with thin arms and legs. I reached out my hand to him, but he did not shake it. He had an angry look in his eyes.

As I followed my landlord into the large house with its thick stone walls and thin windows, I noticed the date 1500 and the name “Hareton Earnshaw” above the door. I knew that “wuthering” was a **Yorkshire** word meaning

“the **blowing** of the wind on the moor”. Because I have now seen how high the house stands on the moor, I understand its strange name. I wanted to ask Mr Heathcliff more about Wuthering Heights, but his unfriendly look made me stay quiet. I followed him into a huge, **bare** kitchen with a **dresser** at one end that had lots of plates on it.

A long wooden table stood in the middle of the kitchen with three tall chairs around it. A fire burned at one end. It had a row of old guns above it. The floor was made of bare white stone, and in the corner lay a dog. She **growled** at me if I came near.

A young woman sat in a wooden chair at one side of the fire, and a young man sat opposite her. The woman was **slim**, with a beautiful face and blonde hair. When she saw me, she did not smile but got tiredly to her feet.

“Get some tea,” said Mr Heathcliff.

“Is he having some?” she asked, pointing at me.

“Just get it!” he said, quickly.

She put some tea and bread in front of us. At that moment, the young man also stood up and came to join us at the table. He looked like a servant in his old clothes, and his hands were brown and **rough**, like a farm worker’s.

“Who are these people?” I thought to myself as we ate. “Is this beautiful woman the wife of Mr Heathcliff? Or is she married to this younger man?”

“It has started snowing outside,” said Mr Heathcliff, suddenly. “Why did you come to visit in weather like this, Mr Lockwood?”

I got up from the table and walked to the window. Outside, the sky was now black, and the air was thick with snow. It fell on to the garden and low stone walls. Around the house, the moor was slowly turning white.



“I will need someone to help me find my way home,” I said, “or I will get **lost**.”

“Take the road that brought you here,” replied the woman. “That is the best advice that I can give you.”

I turned to Mr Heathcliff. “Could your son—”

“He is not my son,” said Mr Heathcliff, quickly, and

laughed. "Hareton, go with Joseph and put those sheep in the barn before the snow covers them."

"But how will I get home?" I asked the woman again as Hareton and Joseph left.

"Who do you want to take you home?" she replied. "I can't go. They will not let me. There is Mr Heathcliff, Earnshaw, Zillah the **housekeeper** and Joseph. But none of them will take you."

"Are there any boys who work on the farm? Could one of them take me home?"

"No," she replied.

"Then I must stay here," I said. "I can't ride alone on the moor in this snow."

"Then learn it as a lesson!" shouted Mr Heathcliff. "You have to plan journeys on this moor in winter. I don't have rooms for guests. If you want to stay, you must share a bed with Hareton or Joseph."

When I heard this, I felt very angry with Mr Heathcliff, and I wanted to leave Wuthering Heights immediately. I got up and pushed past him. Throwing open the kitchen door, I walked into the garden to find Joseph holding a **lantern**. I immediately pulled it from his hand. "I'll bring it back tomorrow!" I said.

"Mr Heathcliff! Mr Heathcliff! He's stealing the lantern!" shouted Joseph. "Get him, Gnasher! Get him, Wolf!" The next moment, I heard growling, and then I felt some dogs on me, pulling me down. I could not move until Mr Heathcliff pulled them off me. Then I jumped

up quickly, feeling angry and frightened. Suddenly, my nose began to **bleed**. I heard Mr Heathcliff laugh, and then a woman's voice said, "What is going to happen next, Mr Heathcliff? Are we murdering people in our own garden now? Look at this **poor** man. Come inside now, and I'll stop that bleeding."

I guessed that this large lady with the kind voice was the housekeeper, Zillah. She immediately pulled me back into the kitchen and sat me down in a chair. Then, she held my nose hard. I felt sick and **confused**, and I knew I would have to stay at Wuthering Heights. I could not ride home on the moor feeling like this. Mr Heathcliff ordered Zillah to get me a glass of wine, and then he went into another room. I sat down until I felt a bit better, and then Zillah took me upstairs.

CHAPTER TWO

A ghost in the night

As she led me, Zillah told me to cover the lantern and stay quiet. “He has strange ideas about this room,” she said, opening a door. “He doesn’t let people sleep there, but I don’t know why. I’ve only lived here for a couple of years. A lot of strange things happen in this house.”

I was too tired and shocked to be interested at that moment. She showed me a small, bare room that had a chair and a small bed next to the only window. Then, she closed the door and left me.

I immediately got into bed and put my lantern on the window **ledge**. The ledge had a few old books at one end, and someone had **scratched** some words in its paint: *Catherine Earnshaw, Catherine Heathcliff, Catherine Linton.*

I quickly fell asleep and had many strange dreams before I was slowly woken by the sound of a branch knocking on the glass of the window. I sat up and tried to open it, but the window would not move. Feeling tired and angry, I pushed harder, and suddenly my hand went through the glass. But instead of a branch, a small, cold hand closed around mine. Then a girl’s voice cried, “Let me in! Let me in!”

I suddenly felt very frightened. “Who are you?” I asked and tried to pull my hand free, but those cold fingers held it hard. “Catherine Linton,” the voice replied. “I’ve been lost on the moor, but I’m home now!”