

WUTHERING HEIGHTS



EMILY BRONTË

W708673

Wuthering Heights

Emily Brontë

*Abridged and simplified by
Evelyn Attwood*

Longman Simplified English Series

This book has been specially prepared to make enjoyable reading for people to whom English is a second or a foreign language. An English writer never thinks of avoiding unusual words, so that the learner, trying to read the book in its original form, has to turn frequently to the dictionary and so loses much of the pleasure that the book ought to give.

This series is planned for such readers. There are very few words used which are outside the learner's vocabulary¹. These few extra words are needed for the story and are explained in the glossary. Long sentences and difficult sentence patterns have been simplified. The resulting language is good and useful English, and the simplified book keeps much of the charm and flavour of the original.

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It is the aim of these two series to enable students of English to enjoy some of the best books written in the English language without great difficulty, and in doing so, to equip themselves to understand and appreciate any work written in English.

¹ The 2000 root words of the *General Service List of English Words* of the *Interim Report on Vocabulary Selection*. In 1975 the General Editor of the series compiled an appendix deleting some low frequency words and adding words whose frequency seems to have increased since the General Service List was first published.

Note on Author

EMILY BRONTË, born in 1818, was one of a clever but delicate family which included her sister Charlotte, who wrote *Jane Eyre*. Their mother died young and the children had a severe upbringing, receiving little affection from their father. Mr Brontë, an Irishman, was a priest of the Church of England, and had charge of a church in a wild part of Yorkshire, where the country people, at this time far from civilization, were often hard, unfriendly and violent. Emily's love of this part of the country, and her knowledge of its people, are reflected in *Wuthering Heights*, her only novel. She also wrote poems of high quality. Her mind and character were original and Charlotte wrote of her: 'Stronger than a man, simpler than a child, her nature stood alone.' In 1848 Emily died, like most of her sisters before her, of a disease of the lungs.

The Events in the Story

arranged in order of time

- 1757 Hindley Earnshaw is born. Nelly Dean's mother goes to Wuthering Heights as nurse, taking her baby daughter with her.
- 1762 Edgar Linton is born.
- 1765 Catherine Earnshaw is born.
- 1766 Isabella Linton is born.
- 1771 *Summer*. Old Mr Earnshaw brings the child Heathcliff from Liverpool.
- 1773 *Spring*. Old Mrs Earnshaw dies.
- 1774 Hindley is sent to college.
- 1777 *October*. Old Mr Earnshaw dies. Hindley comes home, with Frances, his wife.
End of November. Catherine's misadventure at Thrushcross Grange.
Christmas. Catherine returns home. Heathcliff is humiliated.
- 1778 *June*. Hareton Earnshaw, son of Hindley and Frances, is born.
A little later, Frances dies, and Nelly Dean has charge of Hareton.
- 1780 *Summer*. Catherine promises to marry Edgar Linton, and Heathcliff disappears.
Catherine's first illness.
Old Mr and Mrs Linton die.
- 1783 *March*. Edgar marries Catherine. Ellen Dean goes to Thrushcross Grange with her mistress.
September. Heathcliff returns.
- 1784 *January*. Quarrel among Edgar, Catherine and Heathcliff.
Heathcliff runs off with Isabella, and marries her.
Catherine's second illness.

March. Heathcliff and Isabella return. Heathcliff visits Catherine.

March 20th. Catherine dies, and her daughter Catherine is born.

March 25th. Catherine is buried, and Heathcliff visits the grave.

March 26th. Isabella escapes.

September. Hindley dies, and Heathcliff takes possession of Wuthering Heights.

October. Linton, son of Heathcliff and Isabella, is born.

1797 Isabella dies.

Cathy's first visit to Wuthering Heights.

Linton Heathcliff is fetched by his uncle Edgar, and is claimed by his father.

1800 *March 20th.* Cathy's second visit to the Heights. Letters pass between Cathy and Linton Heathcliff.

Autumn. Edgar Linton catches cold and becomes ill.

October Cathy's third visit to the Heights.

The next three weeks. Cathy visits the Heights secretly.

1801 *August.* Cathy meets her cousin Linton on the moors.

Heathcliff gets Cathy to the Heights, and she marries Linton.

September. Edgar Linton dies. Heathcliff visits Catherine's grave again. Linton Heathcliff, as heir, becomes owner of Thrushcross Grange, and of his uncle's lands and money.

October. Linton Heathcliff dies. Heathcliff takes over his son's property.

November. Heathcliff rents Thrushcross Grange to Mr Lockwood for a year. Mr Lockwood visits the Heights. He becomes ill.

1802 *January.* Mr Lockwood leaves Thrushcross Grange for London.

February. Mrs Dean goes back to Wuthering Heights.

Easter Monday. Cathy and Hareton become friends.

April. Heathcliff dies.

September. Mr Lockwood revisits Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights.

1803 *January 1st.* Hareton Earnshaw marries Cathy.

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Introduction

A Peculiar Household (November 1801)

Told by Mr Lockwood, tenant of Thrushcross Grange

Chapter 1

A rough welcome

I have just returned from a visit to my landlord, the only neighbour I shall have for many miles. In all England, I don't believe I could have fixed on a country house more completely removed from society.

Mr Heathcliff and I are a suitable pair to share this loneliness. As I rode up, his black eyes stared suspiciously at me from under his dark forehead.

'Mr Heathcliff?' I said.

He nodded.

'I am Mr Lockwood, your new tenant at Thrushcross Grange, sir. I do myself the honour of calling as soon as possible after my arrival.'

He made no offer to shake hands. His fingers remained in his pocket.

'Walk in!'

He spoke with closed teeth, and continued to lean over the gate. When he saw my horse's chest pushing against it, he did take out his hand to unchain it, and then went before me up the stone path, calling, as we entered the yard:

'Joseph, take Mr Lockwood's horse, and bring up some wine.'

'There must be only one servant,' I thought. 'No wonder the grass grows up between the stones, and cattle seem to be the only hedge-cutters.'

Joseph seemed a disagreeable old man.

'The Lord help us!' he murmured in a displeased voice, as he took my horse.

Wuthering Heights is the name of Mr Heathcliff's house. 'Wuthering' is a local word, used to describe the wildness of the weather in this lonely part of Yorkshire in time of storm. One may guess the power of the north wind blowing over the hillside, by the angle of a few poorly grown trees at the end of the house, and by a row of thorn bushes all stretching their branches one way, as if begging the warmth of the sun.

The house is strongly built. The narrow windows are deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large stones outside.

Before I entered, I paused to admire some curious ornamental stonework over the front. Above it I saw the date '1500' and the name 'Hareton Earnshaw'. I would have asked for a few details about the place, but the owner appeared impatient.

One step brought us into the family sitting room. On the wall at one end there was row after row of immense metal dishes, with silver pots and drinking cups right up to the roof. There was no ceiling. Above the fireplace were several evil-looking guns. The floor was of smooth white stone. The chairs were high-backed and painted green. In a corner lay an enormous dog and her young ones. Other dogs haunted other corners.

The room and furniture would have been nothing extraordinary if they had belonged to a simple Yorkshire farmer, but Mr Heathcliff seems out of place in his home and way of living. He is a dark-skinned gypsy in appearance, but in manners and dress a gentleman: that is, as much a gentleman as many country landowners—rather careless of his dress, perhaps, but upright and good looking. His expression is rather severe and unsmiling.

I took a seat by the fire and filled up a few minutes of silence by trying to make friends with the mother dog.

'You'd better leave her alone,' said Heathcliff roughly, pushing the animal away with his foot, as she showed me

all her teeth. Then, crossing to a side door, he shouted again, 'Joseph!'

Joseph murmured in the room below, but gave no sign of returning, so his master dived down after him, leaving me face to face with the mother dog and a pair of sheepdogs, who watched all my movements. I sat still, but couldn't help showing my dislike of the animals, and soon the biggest leapt at my knees. I threw her back, and got the table between us. This excited the whole three. Others came out and joined in. I was surrounded, and had to call for help.

Mr Heathcliff and his man were slow to answer. Luckily, a big strong woman from the kitchen, with bare arms and cheeks red from cooking, rushed in and drove off the attack with a cooking pan. Heathcliff entered shortly after.

'What the devil is the matter?' he asked.

I gave him my opinion of his dogs.

'They won't interfere with persons who touch nothing,' he remarked, putting a bottle before me, and putting the table back into position. 'The dogs are right to be watchful. Take a glass of wine.'

'No, thank you.'

'Not bitten, are you?'

'If I had been, I would have left my mark on the biter!'

Heathcliff laughed.

'Come, come,' he said, 'you are upset, Mr Lockwood. Here, take a little wine. Guests are so rare in this house that I and my dogs, I'm willing to admit, hardly know how to receive them. Your health, sir!'

I bowed, beginning to see that it was foolish to be annoyed by a lot of badly-behaved dogs, and feeling, too, unwilling to provide my host with further amusement by losing my temper.

He probably realized the foolishness of offending a good tenant. He began to talk with greater politeness, and on a subject that he supposed might interest me. I found him very intelligent, and before I went home I was ready to offer another visit tomorrow. He showed no further wish for my company, but I shall go in spite of this.

Chapter 2

Less welcome still

Yesterday afternoon was misty and cold. I nearly decided to spend it by my sitting room fire, but on coming up from dinner I found the servant still trying to light it. I took my hat, and after a four miles' walk, arrived at Heathcliff's garden gate just in time to escape the first light feathers of a shower of snow.

On that cold hilltop, the earth was frozen hard, and the air made me shiver. I knocked in vain on the front door, and the dogs began to make a noise.

I knocked a second time. The head of unfriendly Joseph appeared out of a round window of the storehouse.

'What do you want?' he shouted. 'The master's down at the farm.'

'Is there nobody to open the door?' I called.

'There's only the mistress, and she won't open, if you shout till night time.'

'Why? Can't you tell her who I am?'

'It's not my business.' His head disappeared.

The snow began to fall thickly. I was about to knock a third time, when a young man without a coat and carrying a spade came from the yard behind. He called to me to follow him, and after marching through a wash-house, and an area containing a coal-house, a pump and a pigeon-house, we at last arrived in the huge, warm, cheerful room in which I was received before.

An immense fire was burning, and near the table, which was laid for a plentiful evening meal, I was pleased to see the 'mistress'.

I bowed and waited, thinking she would ask me to take a seat. She looked at me, leaning back in her chair, and remained silent and motionless.

'It's rough weather,' I remarked. 'I had hard work, Mrs Heathcliff, to make your servant hear me.'

She never opened her mouth, but kept her eyes on me in a cool manner, extremely disagreeable.

'Sit down,' said the young man roughly. 'He'll be in soon.'
I obeyed.

One of the dogs now came up in a more friendly manner than the first time.

'A beautiful animal,' I began again. 'Do you intend to keep the little ones, Mrs Heathcliff?'

'They are not mine,' said my hostess, more rudely than Heathcliff himself.

I repeated my remark on the wildness of the weather.

'You shouldn't have come out,' said the lady, rising and reaching two painted tea tins from the shelf above the fireplace.

Her position, before, had been sheltered from the light. Now, I had a clear view of her whole face and figure. She seemed little more than a girl, with an admirable form, and the most delicate little face that I had ever had the pleasure of seeing.

The tins were almost out of her reach. I made a movement to assist her. She turned on me.

'I don't want your help,' she said sharply.

I hastily begged her pardon.

'Were you asked to tea?' she demanded, standing with a spoonful of tea held over the pot.

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

She threw the tea back, spoon and all, and returned to her chair. Her under-lip was pushed out, like a child's, ready to cry.

Meanwhile the young man had put on some sort of a jacket, and, standing before the fire, was looking down on me fiercely. I began to doubt his being a servant. Both his dress and his speech were rough, his hair uncut, and his hands as brown as a farm worker's; still, his manner was free, almost proud, and he showed no sign of waiting on the lady of the house.

Five minutes later, Heathcliff arrived.

'I wonder that you should choose the thick of a snow-

storm to walk out in,' he said, shaking the white powder from his clothes. 'Do you know you run a risk of being lost? Even people familiar with these moors often miss their way on an evening like this.'

'Perhaps I can get a guide from among your boys? Could you spare me one?'

'No, I could not.'

'Are you going to make the tea?' asked the young man, looking at the lady.

'Is *he* to have any?' she asked, turning to Heathcliff.

'Get it ready, will you?' was the answer, so fiercely spoken that I moved in surprise.

When the preparations were completed, he invited me with:

'Now, sir, bring forward your chair.'

We all drew round the table, and the meal began without further speech.

Chapter 3

No rooms for visitors

It seemed impossible that they should sit every day so unfriendly and silent. I thought, if I had caused the cloud, it was my duty to try to drive it away.

'Many could not imagine living in happiness so far from society,' I began, 'but you, Mr Heathcliff, with your wife and family ...'

'My wife is no longer alive, sir.'

I realized that I had made a mistake. I looked at the young man.

'Mrs Heathcliff is my daughter-in-law.' As he spoke, Heathcliff turned a peculiar look of hate in her direction.

'And this young man ...'

'Is not my son. My son is dead.'

The youth became red in the face.

'My name is Hareton Earnshaw,' he said roughly, 'and I advise you to respect it!'

He fixed his eye on me in a threatening manner. I began to feel very much out of place in this strange family circle, and I determined to be cautious in risking my presence beneath its roof a third time.

When the business of eating was over, I approached the window. Dark night was coming on, and sky and hills were hidden from sight by the wild turning movement of wind and snow.

'I don't think it possible for me to get home now without a guide,' I said.

'Hareton, drive those dozen sheep into shelter. They'll be covered if left out all night,' said Heathcliff, rising.

'What must I do?' I continued.

There was no reply, and looking round I saw only Joseph bringing in the dogs' food, and Mrs Heathcliff leaning over the fire.

'Mrs Heathcliff,' I said earnestly, 'you must excuse me for troubling you. Do point out some landmarks by which I may know my way home.'

'Take the road you came by,' she answered, settling herself in a chair with a book and a candle. 'I can't show you the way. They wouldn't let me go beyond the garden wall.'

'Are there no boys at the farm?'

'No. There are only Heathcliff, Earnshaw, Zillah, Joseph and myself.'

'I hope this will be a lesson to you, to make no more foolish journeys on these hills,' cried the voice of Heathcliff from the kitchen. 'As for staying here, I don't keep rooms for visitors. You must share a bed with Hareton or Joseph.'

'I can sleep on a chair in this room.'

'No! A stranger is a stranger, whether he be rich or poor. It will not suit me to have anyone wandering round this place when I am not on guard.'

With this insult, my patience was at an end. I pushed past him into the yard. It was so dark that I could not see the way out.

Joseph was milking the cows by the light of a lamp. I

seized it, and calling that I would send it back the next day, rushed to the nearest gate.

‘Master, master, he’s stealing the lamp!’ shouted the old man. ‘Hold him, dogs, hold him!’

Two hairy animals sprang at my throat, bringing me to the ground and putting out the light, while rude laughter from Heathcliff and Hareton increased the force of my fury and humiliation. There I was forced to lie, till they called the dogs off.

The violence of my anger started a bleeding of the nose. Heathcliff continued to laugh, and I continued to scold. At last Zillah, the big woman servant, came out to see what was happening.

‘Are we going to murder people right on our doorstep? Look at that poor young gentleman—he can hardly breathe! Come in, and I’ll cure that.’

With these words, she suddenly threw some icy water down my neck, and pulled me into the kitchen.

I felt sick and faint. Heathcliff told Zillah to give me a glass of something strong to drink, after which I seemed a little better. I then allowed her to lead me to bed.

Chapter 4

A disturbed night

On the way upstairs, Zillah advised me to make no noise, as the master had some curious idea about the room she was taking me to, and would never willingly allow anyone to sleep there.

I fastened my door and looked around. The whole furniture was made up of a chair, a long heavy box for clothes, and a large wooden case, with squares cut in the top, like carriage windows. I looked inside this piece of furniture, and found it was a strange ancient kind of bed, forming a little room of its own, close to a window, the broad edge of which conveniently served as a table. I slid back the doors, got in with my light, and pulled them together again.

The shelf, on which I placed my candle, had a few old books piled up in one corner, and was covered with writing scratched on the paint. This writing was nothing but a name repeated many times—'Catherine Earnshaw', sometimes changed to 'Catherine Heathcliff', and then again to 'Catherine Linton'.

I leant my head against the window and continued to read over the names till my eyes closed. I had not rested five minutes, however, before I discovered that my candle had fallen on one of the books, which was giving off a smell of burning. I sat up and examined it. It had the name 'Catherine Earnshaw' on the first page, and a date about a quarter of a century old. I shut it, and took up another book, and another, till I had examined all.

The books had been well used, though not always for the usual purpose. Every bit of blank space was filled with childish writing, parts of which took the form of a record of daily happenings. At the top of an extra page I was highly amused to find an excellent drawing of Joseph. I felt an immediate interest in the unknown Catherine, and I began at once to spell out the faded words:

A terrible Sunday. I wish my father were alive again. Hindley is hateful. His treatment of Heathcliff is shameful.

All day it has been pouring with rain. We could not go to church. While Hindley and his wife sat downstairs by a comfortable fire, we were commanded to take our prayer books and go up to the top of the house to listen to Joseph praying and preaching. We stayed there three hours, yet my brother thought we came down too soon.

'Remember that you have a master here,' he said. 'I'll kill the first that puts me out of temper. Oh, boy? Was that you? Frances, pull his hair as you go by.'

Frances did so, and then went and sat with her husband. They were like two babies talking nonsense. We hid ourselves in a corner but were soon driven out by Joseph, who said we were wicked to start playing on a Sunday. I found a pot of ink and wrote in this book for twenty minutes, but my companion is impatient and suggests that we should