



Tikrit University

Collage of Education for Women

English department

Stage: Third Class

Subject: Novel

Lecture title: Plot, Theme and Analysis of the first two Chapters of "Wuthering Heights"

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## **Plot, Theme and Analysis of the first two Chapters of "Wuthering Heights"**

Through this lecture, we will go to explain the theme and plot of "*Wuthering Heights*" as a part of studying the classical novel in the nineteenth century. Also, we will make the summaries for the first two chapters with analysis.

### **The Plot**

A servant in the house of Wuthering Heights tells a traveller the unfortunate tale of lovers Cathy and Heathcliff. This tragic love story of an adopted boy named Heathcliff and his spoiled stepsister Cathy. Her hasty drive to have a good life drove Heathcliff away for several years, only to ironically have found wealth beyond their wildest dreams. Cathy can't hide her pride and admits she still loves him, and it eventually takes a toll on the both of them.

### **The theme of the novel**

Major themes from Wuthering Heights, including childhood, nature, love, religion, duality, isolation, gender roles, feminism, marriage and more. The novel's use of supernatural elements, as examples of violence and death. The whole novel falls under the theme of violence. It presents the deep passionate of love as well as it focus on the dark and evil nature of human. Not just the story of love but enormously fervent story of love and fixation. The entire story contains deep emotion, eating the hearts (jealous) and panic, anxious love, gloomy and degraded Heathcliff. The story revolves around the behaviors and characters and a life which is warped by fate. Somehow the characters are responsible for their tragic end. Wuthering Heights is gothic imagery and passions with a bleak, gloomy and horror landscape. The theme of the evil and revenge covered the all events in the novel, which represents and simulates the social problems as a classical literary work.

The novel has two themes the love and revenge as the meaning of contrast situations, because the failing love led to the violence and revenge.

## **Summary and Analysis Chapter 1**

### **Summary**

*Wuthering Heights* opens with Mr. Lockwood, a new tenant at Thrushcross Grange, writing in his diary about his visit to his landlord, Mr. Heathcliff. While entering Wuthering Heights. Lockwood, an unwelcome guest, soon meets Joseph, a servant, and a pack of dogs that have overrun the farmhouse. Heathcliff seems not to trust Lockwood, and leaves him alone in a room with a group of snarling dogs. Lockwood is saved from the hounds by a ruddy-cheeked housekeeper. Although he receives no encouragement from his host, Lockwood decides to make a return visit.

### **Analysis**

*Wuthering Heights* opens with a date that signifies the setting as well as the form of the narrative. The present is 1801; however, the primary story line has taken place years ago. Most of the action in the novel occurs in Wuthering Heights, Thrushcross Grange, or the moors in between the two houses. All three locations are "completely removed from the stir of society," and each house symbolizes its habitants:

- Wuthering Heights tend to be strong, wild, and passionate.
- Thrushcross Grange are passive, civilized, and calm.
- Heathcliff is the personification of Wuthering Heights.

In *Wuthering Heights*, stories are often told within stories, with much of the information being revealed second-handed. Lockwood is an outsider who serves as the impetus for Nelly first to tell the story of Heathcliff and Catherine, and then to relate the story of their respective children. Lockwood seems an unreliable narrator to the reader because he tries

to make sense of his surroundings and his landlord. His impressions provide reader with the first glimpse of Heathcliff, the main character.

So, the writer focused more time on Heathcliff by Lockwood's descriptions, like Heathcliff a gentleman and that "grass grows up between the flags, and cattle are the only hedge cutters", but erroneously assumes that Heathcliff has a "whole establishment of domestics." At the close of the chapter, Lockwood recognizes that Heathcliff has no desire to see him again, yet he plans to visit again nonetheless. Lockwood draws comparisons between Heathcliff and himself, and the line "I have gained the reputation of deliberate heartlessness" foreshadows the telling of past heartless actions by Heathcliff. Lockwood is clearly blind to the reality of the situation, although the extent of his misinterpretations is not fully realized. He is the first of many narrators to tell the story from a point of view that is neither omniscient nor unbiased.

## **Summary and Analysis Chapter 2**

### **Summary**

On a chilly afternoon not long after his first visit, Lockwood plans to lounge before the fire in his study, but he finds a servant dustily sweeping out the fireplace there, so instead he makes the four-mile walk to Wuthering Heights, arriving just as a light snow begins to fall. He knocks, but no one lets him in, and Joseph, an old servant who speaks with a thick Yorkshire accent, calls out from the barn that Heathcliff is not in the house. Eventually a rough-looking young man comes to let him in, and Lockwood goes into a sitting room where he finds a beautiful girl seated beside a fire. Lockwood assumes she is Heathcliff's wife. He tries to make conversation, but she responds rudely. When Heathcliff arrives, he corrects Lockwood: the young woman is his daughter-in-law. Lockwood then assumes that the young man who let him in must be Heathcliff's son.

Heathcliff corrects him again. The young man, Hareton Earnshaw, is not his son, and the girl is the widow of Heathcliff's dead son.

The snowfall becomes a blizzard, and when Lockwood is ready to leave, he is forced to ask for a guide back to Thrushcross Grange. No one will help him. He takes a lantern and says that he will find his own way, promising to return with the lantern in the morning. Joseph, seeing him make his way through the snow, assumes that he is stealing the lantern, and looses the dogs on him. Pinned down by the dogs, Lockwood grows furious, and begins cursing the inhabitants of the house. His anger brings on a nosebleed, and he is forced to stay at Wuthering Heights. The housekeeper, Zillah, leads him to bed.

### **Analysis**

From the beginning of the novel the feeling of the gothic mystery or gothic literature is very clear. There is contrast between the seemingly lower class rough young man and higher-class beautiful but haughty woman. The second person narrator (Lockwood) met the people in Wuthering Heights have a strange behaviors. More Gothic elements. A ghost haunting Heathcliff foreshadows future events, as does the woman's hope for revenge on Heathcliff. Note how the storm intensifies along with the passions in the house. The ghosts symbolize lost souls, memory, and the past in Wuthering Heights. Nature opposite civilization, Lockwood comes off, quite simply, as a weak. He can't handle the passions in "Wuthering Heights", and also can't handle either the storm or the dogs. Emily Bronte used the elements of the gothic literature like horror, mystery, harsh, ghosts, dark and dogs attack to add the suspense element to her novel. Moreover, Dogs are a symbol of violence, it is used by Heathcliff to control on Cathy to stay in Wuthering Heights to complete his revenge.

### **Some suggested questions**

How to explain the use of gothic literature by the writer? And why?

Explain Lockwood's descriptions for Heathcliff, briefly.

What dogs symbolize in "Wuthering Heights"?

Discuss the theme of Wuthering Heights as love and revenge.

Discuss the contrast in the character of Heathcliff.