

Summary: Chapter I

But Mr. Heathcliff forms a singular contrast to his abode and style of living. He is a dark-skinned gypsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman. . . .

(See [Important Quotations Explained](#))

Writing in his diary in 1801, Lockwood describes his first days as a tenant at Thrushcross Grange, an isolated manor in thinly populated Yorkshire. Shortly after arriving at the Grange, he pays a visit to his landlord, Mr. Heathcliff, a surly, dark man living in a manor called Wuthering Heights—"wuthering" being a local adjective used to describe the fierce and wild winds that blow during storms on the moors. During the visit, 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. When Heathcliff returns, Lockwood is angry, but eventually warms toward his taciturn host, and—though he hardly feels that he has been welcomed at Wuthering Heights—he volunteers to visit again the next day.

Summary: Chapter II

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.

Summary: Chapter III

Catherine Earnshaw . . . Catherine Heathcliff . . . Catherine Linton. . . a glare of white letters started from the dark, as vivid as spectres—the air swarmed with Catherines. . . .

(See [Important Quotations Explained](#))

Zillah leads Lockwood to an out-of-the-way room from which Heathcliff has forbidden all visitors. He notices that someone has scratched words into the paint on the ledge by the bed. Three names are inscribed there repeatedly: *Catherine Earnshaw*, *Catherine Linton*, and *Catherine Heathcliff*. He also finds a diary written approximately twenty-five years earlier. Apparently the diary belonged to Catherine Earnshaw, and Lockwood reads an entry that describes a day at Wuthering Heights shortly after her father died, during which her cruel older brother Hindley forces her and Heathcliff to endure Joseph's tedious sermons. Catherine and Heathcliff seem to have been very close, and Hindley seems to have hated Heathcliff. The diary even describes Hindley telling his wife, Frances, to pull the boy's hair.

Lockwood falls asleep and enters into a pair of nightmares. He awakes from the second when the cone from a fir branch begins tapping on his window. Still half asleep, he attempts to break off the branch by forcing his hand through the window glass. But instead of a branch, he finds a ghostly hand, which seizes his own, and a voice, sobbing the name Catherine Linton, demands to

be let in. To free himself, Lockwood rubs the ghost's wrist on the broken glass until blood covers the bed sheets. The ghost releases him, and Lockwood tries to cover the hole in the window with a pile of books. But the books begin to fall, and he cries out in terror. Heathcliff rushes into the room, and Lockwood cries out that the room is haunted. Heathcliff curses him, but, as Lockwood flees from the room, Heathcliff cries out to Catherine, begging her to return. There are no signs that the ghost was ever at the window. In the morning, Heathcliff treats his daughter-in-law cruelly. He later escorts Lockwood home, where the servants, who believed their master dead in the storm, receive him with joy. Lockwood, however, retreats into his study to escape human company.

Summary: Chapter IV

Having rejected human contact the day before, Lockwood now becomes lonely. When his housekeeper, Nelly Dean, brings him his supper, he bids her sit and tell him the history of the people at Wuthering Heights. She attempts to clarify the family relationships, explaining that the young Catherine whom Lockwood met at Wuthering Heights is the daughter of the Catherine who was Nelly's first mistress at Wuthering Heights, and that Hareton Earnshaw is young Catherine's cousin, the nephew of the first Catherine. The first Catherine was the daughter of Mr. Earnshaw, the late proprietor of Wuthering Heights. Now young Catherine is the last of the Lintons, and Hareton is the last of the Earnshaws. Nelly says that she grew up as a servant at Wuthering Heights, alongside Catherine and her brother Hindley, Mr. Earnshaw's children.

Nelly continues by telling the story of her early years at Wuthering Heights. When Catherine and Hindley are young children, Mr. Earnshaw takes a trip to Liverpool and returns home with a scraggly orphan whom the Earnshaws christen "Heathcliff." Mr. Earnshaw announces that Heathcliff will be raised as a member of the family. Both Catherine and Hindley resent Heathcliff at first, but Catherine quickly grows to love him. Catherine and Heathcliff become inseparable, and Hindley, who continues to treat Heathcliff cruelly, falls into disfavor with his family. Mrs. Earnshaw continues to distrust Heathcliff, but Mr. Earnshaw comes to love the boy more than his own son. When Mrs.

Earnshaw dies only two years after Heathcliff's arrival at Wuthering Heights, Hindley is essentially left without an ally.

Summary: Chapter V

Time passes, and Mr. Earnshaw grows frail and weak. Disgusted by the conflict between Heathcliff and Hindley, he sends Hindley away to college. Joseph's fanatical religious beliefs appeal to Mr. Earnshaw as he nears the end of his life, and the old servant exerts more and more sway over his master. Soon, however, Mr. Earnshaw dies, and it is now Catherine and Heathcliff who turn to religion for comfort. They discuss the idea of heaven while awaiting the return of Hindley, who will now be master of Wuthering Heights.

Summary: Chapter VI

Hindley and his new wife, a simpering, silly woman named Frances, return to Wuthering Heights in time for Mr. Earnshaw's funeral. Hindley immediately begins to take his revenge on Heathcliff, declaring that Heathcliff no longer will be allowed an education and instead will spend his days working in the fields like a common laborer. But, for the most part, Catherine and Heathcliff are able to escape Hindley's notice, and when Heathcliff is free from his responsibilities they go off onto the moors together to play.

One evening, when Heathcliff and Catherine disappear, Hindley orders that the doors be bolted and that the children not be allowed into the house. Despite his charge, Nelly waits for them, and receives a shock when Heathcliff returns alone. He tells her that he and Catherine made the trip to Thrushcross Grange to spy on and tease Edgar and Isabella Linton, Mr. Linton's children. Before they could succeed in their mission, Skulker, the Lintons' guard dog, took them by surprise and chased them, biting Catherine's ankle. Unable to return home, Catherine was taken inside Thrushcross Grange by a servant. However, the Lintons, repelled by Heathcliff's rough appearance, forbade her playmate to stay with her. The following day, Mr. Linton pays a visit to Wuthering Heights to explain matters to Hindley and upbraids the young man

for his mismanagement of Catherine. After Mr. Linton leaves, the humiliated Hindley furiously tells Heathcliff that he may have no further contact with Catherine.

Summary: Chapter VII

Catherine spends five weeks recuperating at the Grange. Mrs. Linton determines to transform the girl into a young lady and spends her time educating Catherine in manners and social graces. Catherine returns to Wuthering Heights at Christmastime, wearing a lovely dress. Hindley says that Heathcliff may greet Catherine “like the other servants,” and, when he does so, she says he is dirty in comparison with the Linton children, to whom she has grown accustomed. Heathcliff’s feelings are wounded, and he storms out of the room, declaring that he will be as dirty as he likes. The Linton children come for dinner at Wuthering Heights the next day. Nelly helps Heathcliff to wash himself and put on suitable clothes after the boy declares his intention to be “good,” but Mrs. Linton has allowed Edgar and Isabella to attend under the condition that Heathcliff be kept away from them. Accordingly, Hindley orders that Heathcliff be locked in the attic until the end of dinner. Before the boy can be locked away, however, Edgar makes a comment about Heathcliff’s hair, and Heathcliff angrily flings hot applesauce in his face. Catherine clearly appears unhappy with Hindley’s treatment of Heathcliff, and after dinner she goes up to see him. Nelly frees the boy and gives him some supper in the kitchen. Heathcliff confides to Nelly that he intends to seek revenge on Hindley.

At this point, Nelly interrupts her narrative and rises to go, remarking that the night is growing late. Lockwood says that he intends to sleep late the next day and wishes to hear the rest of her story now. He urges her to continue in minute detail.

Summary: Chapter VIII

Nelly skips ahead a bit in her story, to the summer of 1778, several months after the Lintons’ visit and twenty-three years before Lockwood’s arrival at the

Grange. Frances gives birth to a baby boy, Hareton, but she dies not long afterwards, the strain of childbirth having aggravated her chronic consumption. Hindley assigns Nelly the task of raising the baby, as he takes no interest in the child. Miserable at Frances's death, Hindley begins to drink excessively and behaves abusively toward his servants—especially toward Heathcliff, who takes great pleasure in Hindley's steady decline. Catherine continues to spend time with Edgar Linton, and she behaves like a proper lady while with him. However, when she is with Heathcliff, she acts as she always has. One afternoon, when Hindley is out of the house, Heathcliff declares that he will stay home from the fields and spend the day with Catherine. She tells him ruefully that Edgar and Isabella are planning to visit. When Heathcliff confronts her about the amount of time she spends with Edgar, she retorts that Heathcliff is ignorant and dull. At that moment, Edgar enters—without Isabella—and Heathcliff storms away.

Catherine asks Nelly to leave the room, but Nelly refuses, having been instructed by Hindley to act as Catherine's chaperone in Edgar's presence. Catherine pinches her and then slaps her, and when Hareton begins to cry, she shakes him. Edgar, appalled at Catherine's behavior, attempts to restore order, and Catherine boxes his ears. Edgar is unable to cope with Catherine's unladylike temper and hurries out of the house. On his way out, however, he catches a last glimpse of Catherine through the window; lured by her beauty, he comes back inside. Nelly now leaves them alone and interrupts them only to tell them that Hindley has arrived home, drunk and in a foul temper. When she next enters the room, she can tell that Catherine and Edgar have confessed their love for one another. Edgar hurries home to avoid Hindley, and Catherine goes to her chamber. Nelly goes to hide little Hareton and takes the shot out of Hindley's gun, which he is fond of playing with in his drunken rages.

Summary: Chapter IX

Heathcliff . . . shall never know how I love him . . . he's more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same. . . .

(See [Important Quotations Explained](#))

Nelly is in the midst of hiding Hareton from Hindley when Hindley bolts in and seizes the boy. Stumbling drunkenly, he accidentally drops Hareton over the banister. Heathcliff is there to catch him at the bottom of the stairs.

Later that evening, Catherine seeks out Nelly in the kitchen and confides to her that Edgar has asked her to marry him, and that she has accepted. Unnoticed by the two women, Heathcliff listens to their conversation. Heathcliff hears Catherine tell Nelly that she cannot marry him because Hindley has cast him down so low; to marry him now would be to degrade herself. Heathcliff withdraws in a rage of shame, humiliation, and despair, and thus is not present to hear Catherine say that she loves him more deeply than anything else in the world. She says that she and Heathcliff are such kindred spirits that they are essentially the same person. Nonetheless, she insists, she must marry Edgar Linton instead.

That night, Heathcliff runs away from Wuthering Heights. Catherine spends the night outdoors in the rain, sobbing and searching for Heathcliff. She catches a fever, and soon she nears death. The Lintons take her to Thrushcross Grange to recuperate, and Catherine recovers. However, both Mr. and Mrs. Linton become infected and soon die. Three years later, Catherine and Edgar marry. Nelly transfers to Thrushcross Grange to serve Catherine, leaving Hareton in the care of his drunken father and Joseph, the only servant now remaining at Wuthering Heights.

Noticing the clock, Nelly again interrupts her narrative, saying that it is half past one, and that she must get some sleep. Lockwood notes in his diary—the same book in which he has set down Nelly’s story—that he, too, will go to bed now.

Summary: Chapter X

Lockwood becomes sick after his traumatic experience at Wuthering Heights, and—as he writes in his diary—spends four weeks in misery. Heathcliff pays

him a visit, and afterward Lockwood summons Nelly Dean and demands to know the rest of her story. How did Heathcliff, the oppressed and reviled outcast, make his fortune and acquire both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange? Nelly says that she does not know how Heathcliff spent the three years that he was away and that it was at this time that he apparently acquired his wealth. But she agrees to continue with her tale.

About six months after Catherine's marriage to Edgar Linton, Heathcliff returns home, surprising Nelly at Thrushcross Grange. When he comes indoors, Catherine becomes almost giddy with happiness at the sight of him, and their obvious affection for one another makes Edgar uncomfortable and jealous. Heathcliff has grown into a polished, gentlemanly, and physically impressive man, though some hint of savagery remains in his eyes. He announces that Hindley has invited him to stay at Wuthering Heights. This surprises both Catherine and Nelly, but Heathcliff tells Catherine that when he sought Nelly at Wuthering Heights earlier that day, he came across Hindley in a card game with his rough friends. Heathcliff joined them in the gambling, and, because his reckless bids seemed to bespeak a great wealth, Hindley excitedly invited him to return.

Catherine and Isabella begin to visit Wuthering Heights quite often, and Heathcliff returns the favor by calling at the Grange. Isabella begins to fall in love with Heathcliff, who, despite his obvious love for Catherine, does nothing to discourage her sister-in-law's affections. Nelly suspects that he harbors wicked and vengeful motives, and vows to watch him closely.

Summary: Chapter XI

Nelly travels to Wuthering Heights to talk with Hindley, but instead she finds Hareton, who throws stones at her and curses. Nelly learns from Hareton that Heathcliff has taught the boy to swear at his father, Hindley, and has forbidden the curate, who offered to educate Hareton, to set foot on the property. Heathcliff appears, and Nelly flees.

The next day, at the Grange, Nelly observes Heathcliff embracing Isabella. In the kitchen, Catherine demands that Heathcliff tell her his true feelings about Isabella. She offers to convince Edgar to permit the marriage if Heathcliff truly loves the woman. Heathcliff scorns this idea, however, declaring that Catherine has wronged him by marrying Edgar, and that he intends to exact revenge. Nelly informs Edgar of the encounter occurring between Catherine and Heathcliff in the kitchen, and Edgar storms in and orders Heathcliff off of his property. When Heathcliff refuses to leave, Edgar summons his servants for help. However, Catherine locks herself and the two men inside the kitchen and throws the key into the fire, forcing Edgar to confront Heathcliff without the help of additional men. Overcome with fear and shame, Edgar hides his face. Still, Catherine's taunts goad Edgar into striking Heathcliff a blow to the throat, after which Edgar exits through the garden. In terror of the larger and stronger Heathcliff, Edgar hurries to find help, and Heathcliff, deciding that he cannot fight three armed servants, departs.

In a rage, Edgar declares that Catherine must choose between Heathcliff and himself. Catherine refuses to speak to him, locking herself in a room and refusing to eat. Two days pass in this way, and Edgar warns Isabella that if she pursues Heathcliff, he will cast her out of the Linton family.

Summary: Chapter XII

At last, Catherine permits the servants to bring her food. Hysterical, she believes that she is dying, and cannot understand why Edgar has not come to her. She rants about her childhood with Heathcliff on the moors, and speaks obsessively about death. Nelly, worried that her mistress will catch a chill, refuses to open the window. Catherine manages to stumble to the window and force it open; from the window, she believes she can see Wuthering Heights. Catherine says that even though she will die, her spirit will never be at rest until she can be with Heathcliff. Edgar arrives and is shocked to find Catherine in such a weak condition. Nelly goes to fetch a doctor. The doctor professes himself cautiously optimistic for a successful recovery.

That very night, Isabella and Heathcliff elope. Furious, Edgar declares that Isabella is now his sister only in name. Yet he does not disown her, saying instead that she has disowned him.

Summary: Chapter XIII

Edgar and Nelly spend two months nursing Catherine through her illness, and, though she never entirely recovers, she learns that she has become pregnant. Six weeks after Isabella and Heathcliff's marriage, Isabella sends a letter to Edgar begging his forgiveness. When Edgar ignores her pleas, she sends a letter to Nelly, describing her horrible experiences at Wuthering Heights. In her letter, she explains that Hindley, Joseph, and Hareton have all treated her cruelly, and that Heathcliff declares that since he cannot punish Edgar for causing Catherine's illness, he will punish Isabella in his place. Isabella also tells Nelly that Hindley has developed a mad obsession with Heathcliff, who has assumed the position of power at Wuthering Heights. Hindley hopes that somehow he will be able to obtain Heathcliff's vast fortune for himself, and he has shown Isabella the weapon with which he hopes to kill Heathcliff—a pistol with a knife attached to its barrel. Isabella says that she has made a terrible mistake, and she begs Nelly to visit her at Wuthering Heights, where she and Heathcliff are now living.

Summary: Chapter XIV

Nelly grants Isabella's request and goes to the manor, but Edgar continues to spurn his sister's appeals for forgiveness. When Nelly arrives, Heathcliff presses her for news of Catherine and asks if he may come see her. Nelly refuses to allow him to come to the Grange, however, and, enraged, Heathcliff threatens that he will hold Nelly a prisoner at Wuthering Heights and go alone. Terrified by that possibility, Nelly agrees to carry a letter from Heathcliff to Catherine.

Summary: Chapter XV

Four days after visiting Wuthering Heights, Nelly waits for Edgar to leave for church, and then takes the opportunity to give Heathcliff's letter to the ailing Catherine. Catherine has become so weak that she cannot even hold the letter, but nearly as soon as Nelly tells her that it is from Heathcliff, Heathcliff himself enters the room. Heathcliff and Catherine enter into a dramatic, highly charged conversation during which Catherine claims that both Heathcliff and Edgar have broken her heart. She says that she cannot bear dying while Heathcliff remains alive, and that she never wants to be apart from him. She begs his forgiveness. He says that he can forgive her for the pain she has caused him, but that he can never forgive her for the pain that she has caused herself—he adds that she has killed herself through her behavior, and that he could never forgive her murderer.

The church service over, Edgar reaches the house, but Catherine pleads with Heathcliff not to leave. He promises to stay by her side. As Edgar hurries toward Catherine's room, Nelly screams, and Catherine collapses. Heathcliff catches her, and forces her into Edgar's arms as he enters the room, demanding that Edgar see to Catherine's needs before acting on his anger. Nelly hurries Heathcliff out of the room, promising to send him word about Catherine's condition in the morning. Heathcliff swears that he will stay in the garden, wanting to be near her.

Summary: Chapter XVI

At midnight, Catherine gives birth to young Catherine two months prematurely. She dies within two hours of giving birth. Nelly solemnly declares that her soul has gone home to God. When Nelly goes to tell Heathcliff what has happened, he seems to know already. He curses Catherine for the pain she has caused him, and pleads with her spirit to haunt him for the rest of his life. She may take any form, he says, and even drive him mad—as long as she stays with him. Edgar keeps a vigil over Catherine's body. At night, Heathcliff lurks in the garden outside. At one point, Edgar leaves, and Nelly permits Heathcliff a moment alone with the body. Afterwards, Nelly finds that he has opened the locket around her neck and replaced a lock of Edgar's hair with a lock of his

own. Nelly twines Edgar's lock around Heathcliff's, and leaves them both in the locket.

Hindley is invited to Catherine's funeral but does not come, while Isabella is not invited at all. To the surprise of the villagers, Catherine is not buried in the Linton tomb, nor by the graves of her relatives. Instead, Edgar orders that she be buried in a corner of the churchyard overlooking the moors that she so loved. Nelly tells Lockwood that now, years later, Edgar lies buried beside her.

Summary: Chapter XVII

Not long after the funeral, Isabella arrives at Thrushcross Grange, out of breath and laughing hysterically. She has come at a time when she knows Edgar will be asleep, to ask Nelly for help. Isabella reports that the conflict between Hindley and Heathcliff has become violent. Hindley, she says, tried to stay sober for Catherine's funeral, but could not bear to go. Instead, he began drinking heavily that morning. While Heathcliff kept a vigil over Catherine's grave, Hindley locked him out of the house and told Isabella that he planned to shoot him. Isabella warned Heathcliff about Hindley's plan, and when Hindley aimed his knife-gun out the window at Heathcliff, the latter grabbed it and fired it back at its owner's wrist, wounding Hindley. Heathcliff forced his way in the window, then beat Hindley severely. The next morning, Isabella reminded Hindley what Heathcliff had done to him the previous night. Hindley grew enraged, and the men began fighting again. Isabella fled to Thrushcross Grange, seeking a permanent refuge from Wuthering Heights.

Soon after her visit to Nelly, Isabella leaves for London, where she gives birth to Heathcliff's son, Linton. Isabella corresponds with Nelly throughout the following twelve years. Heathcliff learns of his wife's whereabouts, and of his son's existence, but he doesn't pursue either of them. Isabella dies when Linton is twelve years old.

Six months after Catherine's death, Hindley dies. Nelly returns to Wuthering Heights to see to the funeral arrangements, and to bring young Hareton back

to Thrushcross Grange. She is shocked to learn that Hindley died deeply in debt, and that Heathcliff, who had lent Hindley large amounts of money to supply his gambling addiction, now owns Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff does not allow Hareton to return to Thrushcross Grange with Nelly, saying that he plans to raise him on his own. He also intimates that he plans to recover his son Linton at some point in the future. And so, Nelly tells Lockwood, Hareton, who should have lived as the finest gentleman in the area, is reduced to working for his keep at Wuthering Heights. A common, uneducated servant, he remains friendless and without hope.

Summary: Chapter XVIII

Young Catherine grows up at Thrushcross Grange, and by the time she is thirteen she is a beautiful, intelligent girl, but often strong-willed and temperamental. Her father, mindful of the tormented history of the neighboring manor, does not allow young Catherine off the grounds of Thrushcross Grange, and she grows up without any knowledge of Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff, or Hareton. She longs to visit the fairy caves at Penistone Crag, but Edgar refuses her request. He receives word one day, however, that Isabella is dying, and he hurries to London to take charge of young Linton. While he is gone, Catherine is left in Nelly's care, and she is able to escape the confines of the Grange.

She travels toward Penistone Crag but stops at Wuthering Heights, where she meets Hareton and takes an instant liking to him. She and Hareton spend a delightful day playing near the crags. Nelly arrives in pursuit of her charge, and tries to hurry her back to Thrushcross Grange. But Catherine refuses to go. Nelly tells Catherine that Hareton is not the son of the master of Wuthering Heights—a fact that makes the girl contemptuous of him—but she also reveals that he is Catherine's cousin. Catherine tries to deny this possibility, saying that her cousin is in London, that her father has gone to retrieve him there. Nelly, however, explains that a person can have more than one cousin. At last, Nelly prevails upon her to leave, and Catherine agrees not to mention the

incident to her father, who might well terminate Nelly's employment in rage if he knew she had let Catherine learn of Wuthering Heights.

Summary: Chapter XIX

Edgar brings young Linton to the Grange, and Catherine is disappointed to find her cousin a pale, weak, whiny young man. Not long after he arrives, Joseph appears, saying that Heathcliff is determined to take possession of his son. Edgar promises that he will bring Linton to Wuthering Heights the following day.

Summary: Chapter XX

Nelly receives orders to escort the boy to the Heights in the morning. On the way, she tries to comfort Linton by telling him reassuring lies about his father. When they arrive, however, Heathcliff does not even pretend to love his son—he calls Linton's mother a slut, and he says that Linton is his property. Linton pleads with Nelly not to leave him with such a monster, but Nelly mounts her horse and rides away hurriedly.

Summary: Chapter XXI

Young Catherine despairs over her cousin's sudden departure from Thrushcross Grange. Nelly tries to keep up with the news of young Linton, quizzing the housekeeper at Wuthering Heights whenever she meets her in the nearby town of Gimmerton. She learns that Heathcliff loathes his sniveling son and cannot bear to be alone with him. She also learns that Linton continues to be frail and sickly.

One day, when young Catherine is sixteen, she and Nelly are out bird-hunting on the moors. Nelly loses sight of Catherine for a moment, then finds her conversing with Heathcliff and Hareton. Catherine says that she thinks she has met Hareton before and asks if Heathcliff is his father. Heathcliff says no, but that he does have a son back at the house. He invites Catherine and Nelly to pay a visit to Wuthering Heights to see the boy. Nelly, always suspicious of

Heathcliff, disapproves of the idea, but Catherine, not realizing that this son is her cousin Linton, is curious to meet the boy, and Nelly cannot keep her from going. At Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff tells Nelly that he hopes Catherine and his son will be married someday. For their part, the cousins do not recognize one another—they have changed much in three years—and because Linton is too sickly and self-pitying to show Catherine around the farm, she leaves with Hareton instead, all the while mocking the latter's illiteracy and lack of education. Heathcliff forces Linton to go after them.

At Thrushcross Grange the next day, Catherine tells her father about her visit and demands to know why he has kept her relatives secret. Edgar tries to explain, and eventually Catherine comes to understand his disdain for Heathcliff. But although Edgar gently implores her not to have any contact with Linton, Catherine cannot resist exchanging letters with the boy covertly. Nelly discovers the correspondence, and, much to Catherine's dismay, destroys Linton's letters to her. She then sends a note to Wuthering Heights requesting that Linton desist in his part of the correspondence. However, she does not alert Edgar to the young people's relationship.

Summary: Chapter XXII

Edgar's health begins to fail, and, as a result, he spends less time with Catherine. Nelly attempts in vain to fill the companionship role formerly played by the girl's father. One winter day, during a walk in the garden, Catherine climbs the wall and stretches for some fruit on a tree. In the process, her hat falls off her head and down to the other side of the wall. Nelly allows Catherine to climb down the wall to retrieve it, but, once on the other side, Catherine is unable to get back over the wall by herself. Nelly looks for the key to the gate, and suddenly Heathcliff appears, telling Catherine that it was cruel of her to break off her correspondence with Linton. He accuses her of toying with his son's affections, and he urges her to visit Linton while he is away the following week. He claims that Linton may be dying of a broken heart. Catherine believes him and convinces Nelly to take her to Wuthering Heights the next

morning. Nelly assents in the hope that the sight of Linton will expose Heathcliff's lie.

Summary: Chapter XXIII

The following morning, Catherine and Nelly ride in the rain to Wuthering Heights, where they find Linton engaged in his customary whining. He speaks to Catherine about the possibility of marriage. Annoyed, Catherine shoves his chair in a fit of temper. Linton begins to cough and says that Catherine has assaulted him and has injured his already fragile health. He fills Catherine with guilt and requests that she nurse him back to health herself. After Nelly and Catherine ride home, Nelly discovers that she has caught a cold from traveling in the rain. Catherine nurses both her father and Nelly during the day, but, by night, she begins traveling in secret to be with Linton.

Summary: Chapter XXIV

After Nelly recuperates, she notices Catherine's suspicious behavior and quickly discovers where she has been spending her evenings. Catherine tells Nelly the story of her visits to Wuthering Heights, including one incident in which Hareton proves to her that he can read a name inscribed above the manor's entrance: it is his own name, carved by a distant ancestor who shared it. But Catherine asks if he can read the date—1500—and he must confess that he cannot. Catherine calls him a dunce. Enraged, Hareton interrupts her visit with Linton, bullying the weak young man and forcing him to go upstairs. In a later moment of contrition, he attempts to apologize for his behavior, but Catherine angrily ignores him and goes home. When she returns to Wuthering Heights a few days later, Linton blames her for his humiliation. She leaves, but she returns two days later to tell him that she will never visit him again. Distressed, Linton asks for her forgiveness. After she has heard Catherine's story, Nelly reveals the girl's secret to Edgar. Edgar immediately forbids her from visiting Linton again, but he agrees to invite Linton to come to Thrushcross Grange.

Summary: Chapter XXV

At this point, Nelly interrupts her story to explain to Lockwood its chronology: the events that she has just described happened the previous winter, only a little over a year ago. Nelly says that the previous year, it never crossed her mind that she would entertain a stranger by telling him the story. But she wonders how long he will remain a stranger, speculating that he might fall in love with the beautiful young Catherine. Lockwood confesses that he might, but says that he doubts his love would ever be requited. Besides, he says, these moors are not his home; he must return soon to the outside world. Still, he remains enraptured by the story, and he urges Nelly to continue. She obliges.

Young Catherine agrees to abide by her father's wishes and stops sneaking out to visit Linton. But Linton never visits the Grange, either—he is very frail, as Nelly reminds Edgar. Edgar worries over his daughter's happiness, and over the future of his estate. He says that if marrying Linton would make Catherine happy, he would allow it, despite the fact that it would ensure that Heathcliff would inherit Thrushcross Grange. Edgar's health continues to fail, as does Linton's. Eventually, Edgar agrees to allow Catherine to meet Linton, not at Wuthering Heights, but on the moors, not realizing that the young man is as close to death as he is himself.

Summary: Chapter XXVI

When Catherine and Nelly ride to their meeting with Linton, they do not find him in the agreed-upon spot—he has not ventured far from Wuthering Heights. He appears frail and weak, but he insists that his health is improving. The youth seems nervous and looks fearfully over his shoulder at the house. At the end of their visit, Catherine agrees to meet Linton again on the following Thursday. On the way home, Catherine and Nelly worry over Linton's health, but they decide to wait until their next meeting before coming to any conclusions.

Summary: Chapter XXVII

During the next week, Edgar's health grows consistently worse. Worried for her father, young Catherine only reluctantly rides to her meeting with Linton on the moors. Nelly comes with her. The cousins talk, and Linton seems even more nervous than usual. He reveals that his father is forcing him to court Catherine, and that he is terrified of what Heathcliff will do if Catherine rejects him. Heathcliff arrives on the scene and questions Nelly about Edgar's health. He says that he worries that Linton will die before Edgar. Heathcliff asks Catherine and Nelly to walk back to Wuthering Heights, and, though Catherine reminds him that she is forbidden to do so by her father, she agrees because she is afraid of Heathcliff. Heathcliff seems full of rage toward Linton, who is practically weeping with terror. Once he has Nelly and Catherine inside Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff locks them inside the house and refuses to allow them to leave until Catherine has married Linton. He allows Catherine to leave the bedroom in which they are locked, but he keeps Nelly imprisoned there for five days. During this time, the only soul Nelly sees is Hareton, who is ordered to guard and attend her.

Summary: Chapter XXVIII

At last, the housekeeper, Zillah, frees Nelly from her imprisonment, telling her that the villagers in Gimmerton have spread the news that both Nelly and Catherine have been lost in Blackhorse Marsh. Nelly searches through the house until she finds Linton, who tells her that Catherine is locked away in another room. The two are now husband and wife. Linton gloats over this development, claiming that all of Catherine's possessions are now his, as Edgar is dying quickly. Fearing discovery by Heathcliff, Nelly hurries back to Thrushcross Grange. Here, she tells the dying Edgar that Catherine is safe and will soon be home. She sends a group of men to Wuthering Heights to retrieve Catherine, but they fail in their task. Edgar plans to change his will, placing Catherine's inheritance in the hands of trustees and thus keeping it from Heathcliff. He summons Mr. Green, his lawyer, to the Grange. Nelly hears someone arriving and believes it to be Mr. Green, but it is Catherine. Thus Edgar sees his daughter once more before he dies, believing that his daughter is happily married to Linton, and knowing nothing about her

desperate circumstances. Shortly after Edgar's death, Mr. Green arrives, and dismisses all of the servants except Nelly. He tries to have Edgar buried in the chapel, but Nelly insists that he obey Edgar's will, which states that he wishes to be buried in the churchyard next to his wife.

Summary: Chapter XXIX

"I got the sexton, who was digging Linton's grave, to remove the earth off her coffin lid, and I opened it. . . ."

(See [Important Quotations Explained](#))

Heathcliff appears at Thrushcross Grange shortly after the funeral in order to take young Catherine to her new home. He tells her that he has punished Linton for having helped her escape, and says that she will have to work for her keep at Wuthering Heights. Catherine angrily retorts that she and Linton are in fact in love, despite Linton's bad-temperedness, while Heathcliff has no one to love him. Thus no matter how miserable Heathcliff makes the young couple, Catherine says, they shall have the revenge of knowing that his cruelty arises from his greater misery.

As Catherine is packing her things, Nelly asks Heathcliff for Zillah's position at Wuthering Heights, desperate to remain with Catherine. But Heathcliff interrupts Nelly to tell her his astonishing deed of the day before. While the sexton was digging Edgar's grave, Heathcliff had him remove the earth from his beloved Catherine's, and he opened her coffin to gaze upon her face, which he says is still recognizable. Heathcliff asserts that Catherine will not crumble to dust until he joins her in the ground, at which point they will share the transformation together. He says that he forced the sexton to remove one whole side of her coffin—the side not facing Edgar—and that when he dies, he will require in his will that the corresponding side of his coffin be removed, so that he and Catherine might mingle in the earth. Nelly chastises him for disturbing the dead, and Heathcliff tells her that Catherine's ghost has tormented him every night for the last eighteen years. He explains that he has

felt her presence without being able to reach her. As they leave, Catherine asks Nelly to visit her soon, but Heathcliff tells Nelly that she must never call at Wuthering Heights, noting that if he wishes to see her he will come to Thrushcross Grange.

Summary: Chapter XXX

Nelly has not seen Catherine since she left, and her only source of information about her is Zillah. Zillah says that Heathcliff refused to allow anyone at Wuthering Heights to be kind or helpful to Catherine after her arrival, and that Catherine tended to Linton by herself until the day he died. Since Linton's death, Catherine has remained aloof from Zillah and from Hareton, with whom she has been in constant conflict. Desperate to help her, Nelly tells Lockwood that she has taken a cottage herself and wants to bring Catherine to live with her, but she knows that Heathcliff will not allow it. The only thing that could save Catherine would be another marriage, says Nelly, but she does not have the power to bring about such a thing.

Writing in his diary—where all of Nelly's story has been recorded—Lockwood says that this is the end of Nelly's story, and that he is finally recovering from his illness. He writes that he plans to ride out to Wuthering Heights and to inform Heathcliff that he will spend the next six months in London, and that Heathcliff may look for another tenant for the Grange. He emphatically states that he has no desire to spend another winter in this strange company.

Summary: Chapter XXXI

Lockwood, true to his word, travels to Wuthering Heights to end his tenancy at the Grange. He brings young Catherine a note from Nelly. Hareton first appropriates the note, but when Catherine cries, he gives it back to her. He has been struggling to learn to read and to acquire an education. Meanwhile, Catherine has been starving for books, as Heathcliff confiscated her collection. Catherine mocks Hareton's struggles to learn, angering him, but she admits that she does not want to hinder his education. Still, Hareton feels humiliated, and he throws his books into the fire.

Heathcliff returns, and on entering the house, he notes that Hareton has begun increasingly to resemble his aunt Catherine—so much so that he can hardly bear to see him. Lockwood passes a cheerless meal with Heathcliff and Hareton, and then departs the manor. As he leaves, he considers what a bleak place it is, full of dreary people. He muses further that it would have been like a fairy tale for young Catherine had she fallen in love with him and left Wuthering Heights for a more pleasant environment.

Summary: Chapter XXXII

About six months later—Lockwood remained at the Grange until late winter, 1802, and it is now September, 1802—Lockwood writes in his diary that he has traveled again to the vicinity of the moors. There, he tries to pay a visit to Nelly at Thrushcross Grange, but discovers that she has moved back to Wuthering Heights. He rides to the manor, where he talks to Nelly and hears the news of the intervening months. Zillah has departed Wuthering Heights, and Heathcliff has given the position to Nelly. Catherine has admitted to Nelly that she feels guilty for having mocked Hareton's attempt to learn to read. One day, Hareton accidentally shoots himself, and is forced to remain indoors to recuperate. At first, he and Catherine quarrel, but they finally make up and agree to get along. To show her good will, Catherine gives Hareton a book, promising to teach him to read and never to mock him again. Nelly says that the two young people have gradually grown to love and trust each other, and that the day they are married will be her proudest day.

Summary: Chapter XXXIII

"In every cloud, in every tree—filling the air at night, and caught by glimpses in every object by day, I am surrounded with her image!"

(See [Important Quotations Explained](#))

At breakfast the morning after Catherine gives Hareton the book, she and Heathcliff become embroiled in an argument over her inheritance and her relationship with Hareton. Heathcliff seizes her and nearly strikes her, but,

looking into her face, he suddenly lets her go—apparently having seen something in her eyes that reminds him of her mother. Nelly speculates to Lockwood that so many reminders of the dead Catherine seem to have changed Heathcliff. In fact, he has confided to Nelly that he no longer has the desire to carry out his revenge on young Catherine and Hareton.

Summary: Chapter XXXIV

As time passes, Heathcliff becomes more and more solitary and begins to eat less and less, eventually taking only one meal a day. A few days after the incident at breakfast, he spends the entire night out walking, and he returns in a strange, wildly ebullient mood. He tells Nelly that last night he stood on the threshold of hell but now has reached sight of heaven. He refuses all food. He also insists that he be left alone—he wants to have Wuthering Heights to himself, he says. He seems to see an apparition before him, and to communicate with it, though Nelly can see nothing. Heathcliff's behavior becomes increasingly strange; he begins to murmur Catherine's name, and insists that Nelly remember his burial wishes. Soon, Nelly finds him dead. She tells Lockwood that he has since been buried, and that young Catherine and Hareton shall soon marry. They will wed on New Year's Day and move to Thrushcross Grange.

The young lovers now return to the house from outside, and Lockwood feels an overpowering desire to leave. He hurriedly exits through the kitchen, tossing a gold sovereign to Joseph on his way out. He finds his way through the wild moors to the churchyard, where he discovers the graves of Edgar, Catherine, and Heathcliff. Although the villagers claim that they have seen Heathcliff's ghost wandering about in the company of a second spirit, Lockwood wonders how anyone could imagine unquiet slumbers for the persons that lie in such quiet earth.