



THE CHARACTER OF HEATHCLIFF AND EMILY BRONTE'S MYSTICAL VISION OF LIFE IN HER FAMOUS NOVEL "WUTHERING HEIGHTS"

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ABSTRACT

The present research work deals with Emily Bronte's mystical vision of life in her famous novel "Wuthering Heights" and the character of Heathcliff of Emily Bronte is a remarkable work. It was first published in London in 1847 under the pen name of Edis Bell. The action of the novel spans the year (1778-1802), an age which covers the early phases of both the "industrial revolution" in England. The theme of the novel is the co-existence of good and evil. This novel is concerned with the problem of men and destiny.

The interaction of the two families – the Earnshaw and the Lintons exemplifies the coexistence of truth and falsehood, of love and hatred, joy and sorrow, health and sickness, heaven and hell. The novel is about love and jealousy and revenge, about loss and desire. The story revolves around the hero of Wuthering Heights – Heathcliff – a man who is stormy and wild by nature. At last love triumphs over the desire for revenge in the story. In this essay, we discussed the mystical vision of life in Emily Bronte's famous novel "Wuthering Heights" and the character of Heathcliff in her famous novel "Wuthering Heights".

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INTRODUCTION

Emily Bronte was born in 30 July 1818 and died in 19 December 1848. Her full name was Emily Jane Bronte. Her pen name is Ellis Bell. She was an English Novelist and poet who is best known for her only novel, "Wuthering heights", now considered a classic of English literature.

Emily Bronte "Wuthering Heights" is a remarkably dramatized novel and a world classic. It is Bronte's only novel and was published in 1847 under the pen name of Ellis Bell. It is said that Emily came into this world in order to write her one remarkable book and then to die. It is an unorthodox novel and does not belong to the Victorian stream of fiction. It has no morality to

teach and no message to deliver. Emily was a mystic and she interoperated life in her own way. The novel is an expression of Bronte's mystic vision of life. It is the psychological study of an elemental man who is torn between love and hate.

Bronte's conceived the setting of the novel as a microcosm of the universal scheme. According to David Cecil, "There are two principles operating in this world, for Emily, these two principles are the principle of calm and the principle of storm." Neither is good nor is bad only when their earthy incarnations are diverted from their own nature do they become negative. On the one hand, we have the place called "Wuthering Heights". It is the place of storm. "Wuthering is an objective describing

disturbance in the atmosphere. It is the natural home of Earnshaw's family. Hindley and Catherine are the untamed children of the storm. On the other hand, stand Thrushcross Grange in the leafy valley below. It is the home of the calm – the Linton's. Edgar and Irabella are gentle, mild and timid. Together each group follows its own course. They both combine to form cosmic harmony. It is the destruction and the re-establishment of this harmony which is the theme of the story.

Discussion

"Wuthering Heights" is a tale of passionate love and cruel revenge. Heathcliff is both, the hero and the villain of the story. In fact Heathcliff is one of the most complex characters in English literature. He has the passion of Othello and the villainy of Iago. His very name evokes in us feelings of awe and fear. The name is a combination of two words 'heath' and 'cliff'. 'Heath is a wild, desolate place where the wind blows in full fury. 'Cliff' is the high rock with a steep fall. The two words form a mysterious combination. Heathcliff too is a child of the storm. His arrival at Wuthering Heights causes disturbance in the Earnshaw family. Since Heathcliff is an outsider, he is a source of discord in the house. He drives Mr. Earnshaw into conflict with his son, Hindley. Hindley ill-treats Heathcliff, and does not like the closeness between his sister and Heathcliff. But the affinity of natures between Heathcliff and Catherine makes them fall in love with each other. One day, Heathcliff overhears Catherine telling Nelly Dean of her intention to get married to Edgar. Unfortunately, Heathcliff overhears only a part of her conversation. He does not hear her passionate words: - "Nelly, Heathcliff is always, always in my mind."

The shock of Catherine's infidelity disturbs his natural harmony. He leaves the place and nobody knows where he has gone. The rest of the novel is the story of cruel revenge and destruction caused by Heathcliff.

Heathcliff suddenly appears on the scene again after a gap of three years. He is grown extremely rich. Besides he has acquired culture and manners. He comes to Wuthering Heights as a tenant. The situation here is completely changed. Mr. Earnshaw is dead. Hindley has married a girl

with the name of Frances, she too is dead now. Hindley is left with his son, Hareton. After the death of his wife, Hindley took to drinking and gambling. Heathcliff, encourages Hindley in his life of vice. Hindley mortgages Wuthering Heights to Heathcliff to pursue in life of drinking and gambling. Heathcliff becomes the owner of Wuthering Heights after Hindley's death. Hindley's son, Hareton is at his mercy when Heathcliff returns Edgar and Catherine have been married for few months. Catherine is happy at the arrival of Heathcliff. She says, "My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods". Till will change it I'm well aware, as winter changes the trees. My love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks, "beneath."

Heathcliff pays a secret visit to Catherine. They have a passionate scene. That very night Cathy dies after giving birth to a baby girl. The child is given the same name Catherine. Heathcliff is further maddened by the loss of his life's object. He says, "Oh, God! It is an unutterable! I cannot live without my life! I cannot live without my soul!"

In the mean while, Edgar's sister, Isabella had fallen in love with Heathcliff. Cathy has tried to persuade Isabella to forget Heathcliff but failed. She described him "As an un-reclaimed creature, without refinement, without cultivation: an arid wilderness furze and whim – stone".

Both of them clopped to London and got married these. Heathcliff now returns to Wuthering Heights and begins to ill-treat Isabella. Isabella departs for an unknown destination. She says to Nelly, "He's a lying friend, a monster and not a human being"

Later on a baby boy is born to her who is given the name of Linton. Thirteen years pass, Isabella dies and leaving her son under the care of her brother Edgar. Heathcliff brings his son Linton to Wuthering Heights. He proceeds to take revenge upon the next generation. He denies education to Hareton, so that he grows into a bore. He heaps 'Cruelties on Hareton as was done to him by Hindley. Linton grows into a sickly mind. Linton is suffering from consumption and Heathcliff knows that Linton is not going to live long. He makes him write love letter to Catherine the younger. One day Catherine is at Wuthering Heights and he forces

Linton to marry Catherine the younger. After sometime Linton dies and Catherine becomes a young widow and Heathcliff is already the owner of Wuthering Heights. Now with the death of Edgore he becomes the owner of Thrushcross Grange.

Heathcliff's revenge upon the two families is almost complete. He is the master of both the houses. The two children of Hindley and Catherine – Hareton and Catherine the younger are at his mercy. Heathcliff's revenge has now spent itself and he loses the capacity to destroy. He tells Nelly, "I have lost the faculty of enjoying their destruction"

So he becomes indifferent to the developing intimacy between Hareton and Catherine. Heathcliff could never find fulfillment in destruction. It has been a long fight should end Heathcliff's behavior is completely changed. Nelly tells, "It appeared to me not Mr. Heathcliff but a goblin."

His only desire is to be united with Catherine. He forgets his rage. He even forgets to satisfy his hunger. Within two days, his wish is fulfilled. He dies of starvation and his death removes the last hurdle to the establishment of harmony. It is said that the spirits of the two lovers are seen roaming together on the barren moors. Heathcliff is not an unredeemed villain like Iago. He is hero turned villain and then turned hero like Macbeth.

Conclusion:

Thus it is to be concluded that Bronte is succeeded in her porthole of mystical vision towards life. She succeeded in her narrative technique. Lockwood's nightmare indicated the novel is going to be the story of supernatural like Coleridge; Bronte succeeds in overcoming our disbelief in the supernatural. So, it may be considered the best classic novel in English literature.

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