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## Victims of Heathcliff's Revenge in Bronte's Wuthering Heights A B S T R A C T

This paper "Victims of Heathcliff's revenge in Bronte's Wuthering Heights" is an attempt to explore the victim characters who are revenged on the hero of the novel "Wuthering Heights" written by Emily Bronte. It tries to show why and what has led him to make revenge on them all. It is also an endeavour to state that revenge leads to revenge and its impact on the social relationships in the community and the family itself.

Revenge is an evil act. It could lead one to hurt even the one whom he loves using different ways. What the hero of the novel has done is his best to make revenge on each character in a way fit for its relationship with him.

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## ضحايا انتقام هيثكليف في رواية برونتي "مرتفعات وذرينغ"

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### الخلاصة

هذا البحث (ضحايا انتقام هيثكليف في رواية برونتي مرتفعات وذرينغ) هو محاولة لاستعراض الشخصيات التي انتقم منها بطل رواية مرتفعات وذرينغ للكاتبة اميلي برونتي ولماذا وما الذي قاده الى الانتقام وكيف ان الانتقام لا يولد الا الانتقام ويمزق النسيج الاجتماعي والعلاقات بين افراد الاسرة الواحدة. الانتقام فعل شرير يمكن لصاحبه ان يدفعه لاىذاء حتى من يحب وبطرق مختلفة وقد مارس بطل الرواية كل مايستطيع لينتقم من كل شخصية بطريقة تتناسب وقربها منه أولاً وحجم الايذاء وسوء المعاملة التي تلقاها منهم او من ابائهم او اقاربهم ثانياً.

Keywords: Wuthering Heights, Revenge, Victim.

## 1- Aims

- 1) This study aims at shedding light upon the suffering of some characters in the novel of *Wuthering Heights* as a result of Heathcliff's revenge
- 2) To see if they deserve to be treated in the same manner of that persons who treated Heathcliff badly or not, even if he/she is one of his relatives; father, mother, brother etc.
- 3) To examine the scope of affection of this revenge on the social relationship among the family privately and the society in general.

## 2- Hypothesis

Isabella is the biggest victim among the victims of Heathcliff's revenge.

### 3-Introduction

Heathcliff is the hero of *Wuthering Heights*. The novel is written by Emile Bronte. Heathcliff the child, waif, foundling who Mr. Earnshaw has brought him from Liverpool, considering him as his son. Sometimes he seems to take care of him more than his children with which the problems of Heathcliff started, because of the jealousy of Mr. Earnshaw's children especially his son Hindley and Mrs. Earnshaw.

Heathcliff was only loved by Mr. Earnshaw, the father Catherine, whom she was the first spark of Heathcliff's revenge. She refused to marry him because of the social distinction and married Edgar, the man who would meet all her needs.

After this episode, Heathcliff became suspicious and didn't trust anyone around him. He started to collect a lot of money to become at the same distinction with Cathy and also planned to get revenge upon all those who treated him badly. So he began with Hindley by lending him money till he would fulfill *Wuthering Heights*, and Edgar by visiting Catherine in his house and also by eloping his sister Isabella who also gets her fortune of

revenge. Then he moved to the second generation with Hareton the son of Hindley by making him Ignorant and uneducated man and with Cathy the daughter of Catherine and Edgar, by enforcing her to marry his son Linton.

#### 4-Victims of Heathcliff's Revenge in *Wuthering Heights*

Anger is one of the emotions that most people experience every day. It is a negative habit. There are some reasons behind revenge, such as pain of rejection or bad treatment (Averill, 1982:15).

It seems that the character of Heathcliff is not quite normal. He is fully obsessed. Throughout the novel, two distinguished aspects noticed; love and revenge and that was the central point which portrayed the psychological analysis of his behavior towards most of the characters of the novel (Thomas, 1968:83).

#### 4-1-1-Hindley

Hindley is Mr.Earnshaw's son, The husband of Frances and the father of Hareton, he is the first person in Mr.Earnshaw's family who started to hate Heathcliff, immediately when he arrived to

Wuthering Heights. Hindley looks at Heathcliff as a peer at the time bringing him by his father to their house as a foundling child and begins the period of jealousy from Heathcliff. Mr. Earnshaw loves Heathcliff as if he was one of his children and sometimes he preferred him to them. So it was the reason behind Hindley's hatred to Heathcliff. Mr. Earnshaw sent Heathcliff to college (Sparknotes, 21 April, 2019).

After the death of Mr. Earnshaw, Hindley returned home and became the leader of Wuthering Heights. At that time he began to punish Heathcliff by treating him badly at Wuthering heights. This bad treatment led Heathcliff to entertain thoughts of bringing Hindley down and he would like to "Paint the house front with Hindley's blood".

#### 4-1-2-Manner of Revenge upon Hindley

When Heathcliff heard Catherine telling Nelly that she will marry Edgar, and she can not marry Heathcliff, he withdraws in a range of shame, and fled from Wuthering Heights. Three years later they get married.

Heathcliff spent the three years away from Wuthering Heights and got his huge fortune. He has grown into an educated,

gentleman and physically respected man(Bronte, 2019:311).

He announced that has been invited by Hindley to live at Wuthering Heights. Then, Nelly learned from Hareton-the son of Hindley-that Heathcliff has told him to call his father with names, Hindley and he have prohibited the clergyman, who asked to educate Hareton, to set foot on the whole property.

Hindley has led a great obsession with Heathcliff, who has given the occupation of power at Wuthering Heights, Hindley wishes that somehow he is going to be able to obtain Heathcliff's huge wealth for himself.

Heathcliff returned to Wuthering Heights filled with hatred and means to get revenge upon all who mistreated him. He started to practice his plan to revenge, first he helps Hindley to get money and buy drink and at the same time withdrew all his money, assuring that it will fasten his falling into the hell of alcohol, dept, and Hopelessness. Then he acquired lies on Wuthering Heights and turns Hareton against his father (Ibid,2019:412).

4-2-1-Edgar

He is the son of Mr. Linton, the husband of Catherine Earnshaw, the brother of Isabella, the father of Catherine the young. He stays at ThrushCrass Grange and easily falls as a victim to Heathcliff's revenge against his family.

He is a complete foil of Heathcliff as a character as shown by his tender, gentle, and weak personality as opposed to Heathcliff's savage tyrannical nature.

He is said to be physically pale, in addition to the quietness and mild throughout Linton family. He loves Catherine dearly, despite her passion to Heathcliff and adores her daughter Cathy (Stoneman, 1998:143).

He meets Catherine Earnshaw when they are children. After their marriage they live together at ThrushCrass Grange until she dies giving birth to their daughter. He shows himself to be kindly and tender husband but ultimately proves weaker than Heathcliff and unable to prevent his plan for revenge. He is also the master of ThrushCrass Grange. When Catherine dies, he finds happiness with their daughter Catherine, he wants her to stay away from Heathcliff, but he does not want to be alone after his death, so he allows her to spend time with Linton, not realizing how

ill and ill-tempered he is!. When he dies, his property goes to Linton, and Catherine wills it to Heathcliff(Bronte, 1995:393).

#### 4-2-2 The Manner of Revenge upon Edgar.

Heathcliff returned to Wuthering Heights with a plan to get revenge over all who treated him badly. One of that persons whom Heathcliff wants to get revenge upon them was Edgar Linton, simply because he married Catherine the women who Heathcliff loved and still.

After the seizing of Heathcliff on Wuthering Heights. Intent on breaking down of Edgar, he elopes with Edgar's sister, Isabella in order to make him suffer much and finally die.

The gash of Heathcliff by Edgar when the latter marries his lover, this encourages Heathcliff to hurt him by any way he can do it. And when the opportunity came Heathcliff will not lose it, simply because the chance comes only one time(Bronte, 1997:174).

Heathcliff seems to practice the theory which assumes "eye to eye and tooth to tooth", so he used the same weapon to get revenge, when Catherine refused to marry him and accept to marry Edgar because of

the social distinctions. Then Heathcliff gets revenge upon Edgar in the same way by eloping with his sister to make Edgar suffering and put him in the same position when they claim that he is (Ibid, 1997:180).

#### 4-3-1. Isabella

She is Mr. Linton's daughter, Edgar's sister, wife of Heathcliff, and the mother of Linton the young.

She was brought up in a rich and safety house, at Thrushcross Grange with her family. At the time, when Heathcliff returned to the neighborhood to get revenge upon the Linton's, Isabella the pure girl who has no experience in life, a goofy woman, falls in the traps of Heathcliff.

Catherine noticed that and being surprised and tried, in vain, to persuade and stop him and change his plan and not to exploit Isabella as she has no fault and being innocent woman.

Edgar was completely nervous about the return of Heathcliff the neighborhood of Wuthering Heights, but unfortunately does not have the to prevent of doing so (Holderness, 2003:123).

Isabella has run off with Heathcliff. After few months Heathcliff and Isabella

get married, but soon she understands her big mistake, telling Nelly everything in details how much she hatred Heathcliff, who has made it only to get the heir of the all Grange (Bronte, 1995:187).

She reduced to the status of the abused, hurt and degraded wife and missed the title of Miss Linton of ThrushCross Grange.

She still suffering the severity of her husband Heathcliff. After the death of Catherine there was a brawl between Heathcliff and Hindley, Isabella takes the opportunity to run away, leaving everything behind her. She went to "south of London" where she gives birth to Linton the young, who was as his mother in everything. They lived there for thirteen years. Edgar visits Isabella for one time, and she asks him to take care of her son and brought him up away from Heathcliff (Ibid, 1995:192).

#### 4-3-2-The Manner of Revenge upon Isabella.

Isabella the biggest and innocent victim of Heathcliff's revenge, because she was a dull and a goofy women who was easily attracted to him. Her love for him is true. But he does not have any love for her. Isabella's love is so strong that she goes against the opinions of Nelly and her

brother Edgar and elopes with Heathcliff, but later on, she finds monster in Heathcliff(Arp, Johnson, 2006:164).

Heathcliff beats her and makes her almost a servant. Edgar is socially degraded because of his sister's elopement. This treatment enforces her to run away from him to "the south of London". And she stayed there till her death(Jassim, 2006:74).

#### 4-4-1-Catherine Linton

She is the younger daughter of Catherine Earnshaw and Edgar Linton, she is as her father in most of her attitudes, with golden ringlets and fair skin. The only qualities that she inherits from her mother are the beautiful "Earnshaw eyes"(Ibid, 2006:117).

She is the wife of two characters in the novel; Linton and Hareton. First, she marries Linton Heathcliff according to Heathcliff desire, but soon Linton died, and the young lady becomes widow and feel lonely, so she started to pay court to her material cousin Hareton(Bronte, 1995:85).

#### 4-4-2-The manner of revenge upon the young Catherine

The young lady Cathy was also one of Heathcliff's revenge. Edgar presently falls

ill with distress, and Heathcliff keeps Cathy until she finally agrees to marry Linton. Edgar dies, kissing her daughter on the cheek, knowing that ThrushCross Grange, The Linton household, is now in the hands of his enemy.

Shortly after his marriage, Linton falls ill and his father even didn't call a doctor for him, so he dies. Heathcliff coerctions him just when he was occurring prior to death so as to leave everything to him, and leaving nothing to Catherine the young as a part of his plan for revenge (Watson, 1949:83).

#### 4-5-1-Hareton

He is the son of Frances and Hindley Earnshaw. His mother dies after giving him birth. His father Hindley, who was treating him badly because he was "the reason behind his mother died" as Hindley thought, dies after the decease of Catherine his sister.

Carelessness, loneliness and savage environment in which he grows up, the boy becomes an ignorant, dirty and uneducated man, unable to read and write. When Cathy Linton comes to Wuthering Heights sixteen years later, Hareton has not changed, but it is obviously that he considers

Heathcliff as his own father and loves him dearly (Bronte, 1995:197).

Hareton forms an attraction to Cathy, but she discusses it with disgust, insisting that he is a mindless, rude beast of a man. These thoughts of Cathy disappeared only after Linton Heathcliff, dies, The relationship between them changes, and Cathy decided to help him with his secret self-education by teaching him how to read and talk properly. At first Hareton is uneasy about this, but soon comes to be that the two falls in love (Kumar, 1999:92).

#### 4-5-2-The Manner of Revenge upon Hareton

Although Heathcliff has a secret regards for Hareton as well, but wishes him feel the same pain that himself experience in childhood.

As Hindley's dead body is being carried out of Wuthering Heights for burial, Heathcliff lifts Hareton, Hindley's son, and places the child on the table. Then he "muttered with peculiar gusto", "now my bonny lad you are mine and we'll see if one tree not grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it"

Heathcliff has taught the boy to swear at his father, Hindley, and has forbidden

the curate, who offered to educate Hareton. This means that Hareton grows up ignorant and uneducated person because of Heathcliff (Vargish, 1971:10).

## 5-Conclusion

We cannot judge Heathcliff as a villain or as a beast, since Heathcliff has his own reasons to get revenge.

The main thing which is not accepted of Heathcliff's revenge, that he is not only got revenge upon those who treated him badly, but also upon the innocent people, this behavior made his revenge injustice and unaccepted.

Isabella is the biggest victim of Heathcliff's revenge, simply because she loves him really with all her limbs and trusts him. But at the same time she deserves that revenge, because of her insistence to escape with Heathcliff, in spite of all the cautions.

Cathy Linton and Hareton are the innocent victims of Heathcliff's revenge. Cathy Linton, the daughter of Edgar; Hareton the son of his bitter enemy who was treating him with compassion.

Heathcliff never finds peace through his revenge. In fact, the only time he truly finds happiness is when he gives up his plan for retaliation. As Austin O'Malley states "Revenge is like biting a dog that bit you"

Finally Bronte corroborates that revenge is not only a harsh and rash way to live life, but is counterproductive and hurtful. The self-hurtful involved with vengeance shows there are better ways to solve conflicts than this way, and sending her there is no solution to obeying the spontaneous reaction of this negative reprisal.

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