Stockholm University
Department of Literature and History of Ideas
Literature Studies

“I am Heathcliff!”
Paradoxical Love in Brontë’s Wuthering Heights

Nina Levin

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Abstract

This essay is an analysis of Emily Brontë’s novel “Wuthering Heights” and revolves mainly around the love between the two main characters, Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, and how they express this love, either through words or through actions. Paradoxes concerning their love and paradoxes concerning the narration of the novel are of interest as well. The analysis employs Genette’s theories and terminology in the narrative analysis.

The essay first discusses the effect of the narrative levels and paradoxes that can be found concerning these narratives and then investigates some events in “Wuthering Heights” that are linked to the two main characters’ love for one another. The events are analyzed in chronological order and discuss the paradoxes found in those events.

The essay concludes by giving a short summary of the way Catherine and Heathcliff expresses their love for one another and the paradoxes found concerning this love. The narration is of importance since its complex structure allows for the entire novel to be read as one paradox. Disregarding the narration, the paradoxes found are many. The paradoxical love of Catherine and Heathcliff concern their love for one another in the sense that Catherine chooses to marry Edgar instead of Heathcliff and that she claims that Heathcliff killed her. They concern the way the act upon their love for one another in the sense that Catherine was double natured. The most prominent paradox, however, is the one concerning Catherine’s statement that she is Heathcliff. It is the most prominent because it is referred to throughout the novel in different ways.
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Introduction

In this essay I will examine love as a theme. The love between the two main characters of "Wuthering Heights", Catherine and Heathcliff, is central. Furthermore any paradoxes that exist around this love will be discussed. I have chosen this topic because I think “Wuthering Heights” is a novel in which there are many paradoxes relating to the theme of love. Love was chosen as the theme through which to find paradoxes because love is essentially what links Catherine and Heathcliff to each other. The way they express their love for one another is at times quite paradoxical. Of course there are many other paradoxes to be found in this novel relating to other subjects. I find love particularly interesting because it is not the type of love one usually comes across in novels, in my opinion, and there is much to be said about the love these two characters hold for one another.

In this essay a rather broad understanding of “paradoxes” will be used. Any type of contradiction in what either of these two characters says about the other or expressions of contradictive emotions, or even contradictive actions, will be viewed as a paradox. These statements, thoughts or actions will then be analyzed and discussed to fully explain how and why they can be viewed as paradoxical.

The narration of the novel will be taken into consideration as well since it is somewhat complex. The novel is narrated by several characters and the narration constantly shifts its perspective of time. This makes the narration difficult and unreliable, and it can be seen in a way to further the paradoxes found in the novel, though this will be further explained at a later point.

Background and material

“Wuthering Heights” was first published in 1847, written by Emily Brontë (1818–1848). Emily was the fifth of six children, five girls and one boy. The two eldest girls died due to poor conditions at the school Emily and her three elder sisters attended. Emily and her only living sister remaining at the school were sent back home to be educated by their father together with the two other younger siblings still left at home. When they were young all the siblings wrote stories together and later they split up to write together in pairs. Emily and her two sisters, Charlotte and Anne, who were both authors as well, published their first book in 1846 under the pseudonyms of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell, a book containing the sisters’ poetry. Emily died of tuberculosis a year after “Wuthering Heights” had been published.¹

“Wuthering Heights” was published during the early period of what is called the Victorian Age in England, an era that ranged from 1830 to 1901. The period was named after Queen Victoria who ruled nearly the entire period, she ascended to the throne in 1837, seven years after the beginning of the Victorian Age, and the era ended when Victoria died in 1901. The Victorian Age was an age of many changes and developments in many areas, England was for example the first country to become industrialized and therefore reaped not only the benefits of it, but also the negative aspects of industrialization. One great issue of the time was that of the role of women. The “Woman Question” as the Victorians themselves called it, had a lot to do with women’s rights and these rights underwent a lot of changes during this period, at the end of it the women had a quite different position in the community than they had had at the beginning of the era. Literature went through some changes during this era as well, it became both easier and cheaper to print books, the literacy rates also increased a lot during the Victorian Age. The genres and styles of the era were very diverse, and the Brontë sisters belong to the group of writers of Gothic romances.

All in all England underwent a lot of changes in many ways during this period, it was expanding and both profiting and experiencing losses due to the rapid changes.

**Theory and method**

Theodor Wolpers suggests that there are two considerations that may be of use when defining a literary theme. The first being that a literary theme contributes to the general meaning of a work and must be something that helps form the text. A theme is not something that a critic or reader adds to the text. The second being that a literary theme sometimes manifests itself in the text in the form of a value, and it manifests itself either explicitly or implicitly. Other times two, or more, values are placed in contrast with each other. This latter manifestation can be found in “Wuthering Heights” and will be discussed further later on.

Gérard Genette makes distinctions between three aspects of narration: story, narrative and narrating, where story stands for the events that are being narrated, the narrative is the narrative text that tells these events, and the narrating is the process of producing the

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2 Greenblatt, page 979.
3 Ibid., page 980.
4 Ibid., page 979-980.
5 Ibid., page 990-993.
6 Ibid., page 993.
7 Ibid., page 995.
discourse, the retelling of the events. Furthermore Genette divides the examination of the narration into three categories, tense, mood and voice. Tense deals with order, speed and frequency, different relations between the story and narrative in other words, mood deals with the degrees and forms of which the narrative is represented, and finally voice deals with the act of narrating.

**Purpose**

The objective of this essay is to analyze the relationship between the two main characters in “Wuthering Heights”, Catherine Earnshaw and Heathcliff, to see how the love they hold for one another is expressed, either in words or through actions. This essay also aims to see if there are any paradoxes to be found in relation to this love and to discuss these paradoxes.

The different levels of narration that exist in the novel are important for this essay as well since there are many levels through which these characters and their feelings and relationship are conveyed. The difficulties that can be found in the characterization of these two characters through the narration makes the narration an important aspect of this essay, as well as if and how the narration might contribute with paradoxes.

This essay is limited to mainly focusing on these two characters, Catherine and Heathcliff, and paradoxes surrounding them and their love. The only exception revolves around the narration and the paradoxes that can be found in that area. The different paradoxes that can be found concerning other characters, places, events or even conditions are of no relevance in this essay, even though there certainly is a lot to be said for those things as well. However, the main characters are Heathcliff and Catherine and there is quite a lot to be discussed by mainly focusing on just the two of them, and that is what this essay will therefore do. It has also been limited in the sense that nothing else that the author has written, nor any other fictional works from the Victorian Era, or up until today whether in the same genre or not, will be included in any comparisons, nor will the Era itself be.

I will base the essay around the following questions:

How do Catherine and Heathcliff verbally express their love for one another?

What do their actions say of their love for one another?

What paradoxes can be found in relation to this?

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10 Ibid., page 31.
How does the narration add paradoxes to the story?

I will try to answer these questions by analyzing certain parts of the novel in which these two characters express their feelings for one another in some way, such as when Heathcliff was first brought to the Heights, when Catherine gives her famous “I am Heathcliff” speech, or when Catherine dies.

**Previous research and material**

The Norton critical edition of “Wuthering Heights” from 2003 is the version of the novel that will be used in this essay. In that critical edition there are some articles, or part of some articles, about “Wuthering Heights”. One of them is written by A. Stuart Daley, “A Chronology of Wuthering Heights”, and contains the dates of birth and death for most of the characters, if these dates are known, as well as a list of dates concerning important events that transpired in the novel. Part of J. Hillis Miller’s “Repetition and the ‘Uncanny’ ” can be found in the Norton critical edition as well, and Miller’s text revolves among other things on the repetitions and opposites that can be found in “Wuthering Heights”, oppositions surrounding the descriptions of the two houses and surrounding the actions of, for example, Heathcliff. “Wuthering Heights: the Romantic Ascent” by Martha Nussbaum can also be found in the critical edition. Nussbaum discusses “Wuthering Heights” in relation to Christianity, heaven, hell, redemption, and so on, and how the different characters relate to these things.

John Allen Stevenson takes up the many problematic issues surrounding likeness in “Wuthering Heights” in “”Heathcliff is me!”: Wuthering Heights and the Question of Likeness”. He mentions that it is difficult to see just what the similarities between Catherine and Heathcliff are because these similarities are not specifically expressed in the novel. He also mentions how this likeness is difficult to apply since we do not know much about Heathcliff, and we do not know much about what caused Cathy and Heathcliff to become so close, making it even more difficult to see exactly what these similarities could be.

**Analysis**

In this part of the essay I will discuss the narration, theme and paradoxes that I have found concerning Catherine and Heathcliff. In order to do so I must occasionally first give an account of the background of the characters and some events that have passed. The characters mentioned are the main characters, Catherine and Heathcliff. Catherine’s brother Hindley Earnshaw will be mentioned as well, and his son, Hareton. Catherine married the neighbor Edgar Linton, and Heathcliff married Edgar’s sister, Isabella. Catherine and Edgar had a
daughter, Catherine Linton, and Heathcliff and Isabella had a son, Linton Heathcliff. Other characters mentioned are Nelly, first a servant to the Earnshaws at Wuthering Heights who later became the servant at Thrushcross Grange once Catherine and Edgar married, as well as one of the narrators, Lockwood, Heathcliff’s tenant at Thrushcross Grange. Since there are two characters named Catherine in this novel I have decided to make a distinction between the two by referring to them by using different names. The first Catherine, Catherine Earnshaw, will hereafter be referred to as “Cathy”, since that is what Heathcliff usually called her, and Cathy’s daughter Catherine Linton will simply be referred to as Catherine. This way any confusion as to which Catherine is being mentioned might be avoided.

It might be of some importance to give a brief account of the two houses. Wuthering Heights is the house where the Earnshaws lived, it was located on the moors on a hilltop, as the very name of it suggests. Thrushcross Grange is where the Lintons lived, and it was surrounded by trees and a garden and was not located on a hill like Wuthering Heights, and there was some distance between the two houses.

Briefly stated the novel revolves around Cathy and Heathcliff and their relationship to one another. Heathcliff is found on the streets by Cathy’s father and brought to live with the Earnshaws at Wuthering Heights. He is treated badly by everyone except Cathy, though Mr Earnshaw treated him well for as long as he was alive. Cathy is more like Heathcliff than any other character, wild and savage-like. The two take to each other and form a deep bond. This bond seems to be able to withstand even the greatest challenges. Heathcliff leaves when Cathy decides to marry Edgar, but upon his return he still cares deeply for Cathy. However the two are still separated, and Heathcliff eventually marries Isabella. Cathy falls ill and Heathcliff manages to see her one last time. Cathy dies not long after Heathcliff is forced to leave, though before she dies she gives birth to her daughter, Catherine. Isabella soon flees Heathcliff and later gives birth to their son, Linton. Heathcliff takes Linton into his home when Isabella dies many years later, and forces Catherine to marry Linton so that the Grange would fall into Heathcliff’s possessions, since Edgar is dying by that time. Linton, being very ill, soon dies as well and Catherine and Hareton begin to fall in love. Heathcliff sees himself and Cathy in the young lovers and loses all desire to destroy the two houses, and soon dies.

Narration
If we first consider the aspects we can find in the examination of the narrative that Genette refers to as voice, it becomes clear that the narration in “Wuthering Heights” consists of many levels of narration. There is not only one narrator, but several. Lockwood starts it off and then
asks Nelly to continue, and in addition to that there are also letters and other types of writing from other characters, making the narrative levels even more complex. It is called frame narration when there are narratives contained within each other, and in this frame there are three different levels of narration.\(^1\) The first level is called extradiegetic and refers to the writing of the text, not by the actual author, Emily Brontë in this case, but by the character that gathered all this information, the second level is called intradiegetic and refers to the events that transpire in this text, and the third level is called metadiegetic and has to do with narratives told within the intradiegetic narrative.\(^2\) Lockwood is thus the extradiegetic narrator as it is his journal that makes up the text of “Wuthering Heights”. Nelly is then asked by Lockwood to tell him the story of Catherine, making her the intradiegetic narrator in Lockwood’s extradiegetic narrative. The letter written by Isabella that Nelly reads for Lockwood, and the notes scribbled in a book by Cathy, almost like journal entries, that Lockwood read when he spent the night at the Heights are metadiegetic narratives.

The narrators in “Wuthering Heights” are all homodiegetic narrators, to varying degrees, as Genette points out it is possible for homodiegetic narrators to be.\(^3\) A homodiegetic narrator is a narrator that is a character in the story he or she tells, whereas the opposite heterodiegetic narrator is not present in the story he or she tells.\(^4\) Lockwood and Nelly are both homodiegetic, as are Isabella and Cathy, but all of them to varying degrees. Nelly has been present for most of Cathy’s and Heathcliff’s story, Lockwood on the other hand is only present at the end of it and in fact never meets Cathy since she died long before he became the tenant of Thrushcross Grange.

There is an aspect when it comes to the factor of time concerning the narrating that can be of some relevance for this essay. There are four types of narrating and I believe that two of them are mixed in “Wuthering Heights”. That being those of subsequent narrating and interpolated narrating. Subsequent narrating is past-tense narrating, which means that the events being narrated have already occurred and are being looked back upon, while interpolated narrating occurs between the different events of the story.\(^5\) I believe that “Wuthering Heights” contains a mix of these two because most of the narrating is done in past tense, both Lockwood and Nelly talks about what has happened before, they almost never refer to things happening at their present. Also, we have to remember that the novel is written

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\(^1\) Genette, page 228.
\(^2\) Ibid.
\(^3\) Ibid., page 245.
\(^4\) Ibid., page 244-245.
\(^5\) Ibid., page 217.
in journal form and therefore everything being said is automatically in past tense. When one writes a journal one always writes about things that have already occurred, with perhaps the exception of mentioning an event that will take place soon. Though the emotions and things that will take place during that event is something that one will not be able to describe until afterwards. However, even if the journals are in past tense, Lockwood and Nelly both also stop and take pauses in their narrating in between some events. The time perspective shifts back and forth this way. Perhaps we ought to take into consideration the fact that while Nelly is telling Lockwood about everything several years have passed between her present and parts of the story. She does stop every now and then to reflect upon these things that have passed, thus in a way she is reliving everything and stopping in between different events, making it seem more interpolated than it actually needs to be.

If we take a look at one of the aspects in the category of mood, focalization, which has to do with who is the focus of the narration, we see that there can be several different types of focalization.\textsuperscript{16} Genette points out, however, that these different types can be difficult to distinguish from one another, and that one of these types does not necessarily have to be applicable to the entire work of a novel, but perhaps only shorter passages of a text.\textsuperscript{17} In “Wuthering Heights” the type of focalization that can be somewhat clearly distinguished is the internal focalization that is variable, in other words the focus of the narration is on a character that takes place in the narration. Variable in this context means that the focus of the narration switches characters, as it does between for example Nelly and Cathy, they take turns in narrating different parts of the story.\textsuperscript{18} Though it could be argued that part of the focalization is external which means that we are never allowed to hear the thoughts and feelings of the protagonist, that these are kept from us.\textsuperscript{19} Lockwood would in that case play the role of the externally focalized narrator since when he first meets Heathcliff he has no idea of what Heathcliff has been through or why he acts the way he does. Lockwood rather sees his own characteristics in Heathcliff, claiming to know why he acts the way he does, though Lockwood does realize that he cannot be sure that this is actually the case, he is aware that he might be, as he is, projecting his own characteristics onto Heathcliff.\textsuperscript{20} (p. 5).

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\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{16} Genette, page 189.
\item \textsuperscript{17} Ibid., page 191.
\item \textsuperscript{18} Ibid., page 189.
\item \textsuperscript{19} Ibid., page 190.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Brontë, Emily, \textit{Wuthering Heights: the 1847 text, background and criticism}. Edited by Richard J. Dunn, 4\textsuperscript{th} edition. New York & London 2003, page 5. Hereafter references to this novel will be made in the text of this essay, placed in parentheses wherever references are needed.
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\end{flushright}
There are aspects of having narrators such as these that are both helpful to the story and complicating. The fact that the narrators are homodiegetic narrators is helpful in the sense that they actually have been present for parts of the story, Nelly has born witness to the events that she describes whereas Lockwood eventually recounts Nelly’s narrative which he has never witnessed himself. However, the fact that they are homodiegetic as well as being minor characters is complicating as well. The varying degrees of homodiegetic narratives mean that Nelly and Lockwood have not been present for the same events and do not know the same things as one another. This makes them able to tell the story and alter it without the other narrator being aware of this. In other words Nelly could tell Lockwood a lot of things that were untrue because he had no way of knowing if she was telling him the truth or not. The fact that Nelly’s narrating is subsequent narrating can cause problems in the sense that much time has passed from when Cathy and Heathcliff were little to the point where Nelly begins to tell their story to Lockwood. There are easily a lot of things that Nelly would not be able to remember quite as clearly as she seems to do, memories usually fade or disappear over time. Therefore her recounts of entire conversations are not very reliable, at least not if we are to take the conversations word for word. While on the subject of Nelly’s narrative being unreliable, it is worth mentioning that Nelly left Wuthering Heights against her will after Edgar and Cathy married. Cathy wanted her to come with her to Thrushcross Grange but Nelly wanted to stay with young Hareton, so Cathy made sure her brother forced Nelly to go (p. 70). Once Catherine had been married to Linton and Heathcliff came to get her to Wuthering Heights to live there, Nelly begged Heathcliff to be allowed to come as well, but he would not let her (p. 219). It is not impossible that Nelly altered the story in her narrative because she sought some sort of revenge on the people who had not listened to her wishes, she is in that sense a very unreliable narrator. Another problem with Nelly telling the story this way is that she might have changed her feelings towards a certain event after it happened, and thus altered the way she tells it to Lockwood. Perhaps wanting her reaction to seem different or perhaps not remembering her thoughts at the moment she first felt them, leading her to unknowingly change them to what she feels about the event at the moment she is retelling it. In the parts of the novel where there is external focalization we are not aware of the feelings or thoughts of the protagonist. The feelings and thoughts the narrator claims that the protagonist has can be faulty since the protagonist has not actually said anything, has not shared his or her feelings, therefore the narrator does not have a way to know with certainty what the protagonist is thinking or feeling. This could lead to wrong assumptions or
descriptions, as for instance in the before mentioned passage where Lockwood places his own characteristics upon Heathcliff.

Nelly tells Lockwood at one point as she is telling him Heathcliff and Cathy’s story that she “could have told Heathcliff’s history, all that you need hear, in half-a-dozen words” (p. 48). This is paradoxical in many ways, first of all, if she could do so, then why did she not? It in fact takes her the entire novel to tell Lockwood this story. Especially considering the fact that when Lockwood first appeared Heathcliff’s story was not yet over. Only when Lockwood returns and Heathcliff has died can Nelly finish her narrative of Heathcliff’s story. Had Nelly told Lockwood Heathcliff’s story in half a dozen words then we would not have known nearly as much about Heathcliff as we do, which would make the rest of the story rather incomprehensive. In order to understand the events that take place further on in the story we need to possess the information we have already been given about Heathcliff. In half a dozen words Nelly would not have been able to tell us all we already know, she might have been able to tell us how Mr Earnshaw found Heathcliff, or how he was treated at the Heights, or of his relationship to Cathy, but not of all of it, and all of it is essential to the rest of the story.

With all these factors in mind the entire text becomes rather paradoxical since there really is no way we can know with absolute certainty that the things described and told by the narrators are accurate. However, this is all that there is to the text, these narratives are all that we have and therefore we cannot dismiss the entire novel as paradoxical, though I feel it necessary to point out that it can be viewed as such if we consider all the things mentioned above.

**Cathy and Heathcliff**

When Lockwood begins the novel by retelling his first visit at Wuthering Heights we meet Heathcliff, a dark skinned gypsy with black eyes who was well dressed and was intelligent and reserved, though he seemed to have a dark sense of humor at the expense of other people (pp. 3 & 5–7). On Lockwood’s second visit to the Heights he describes Heathcliff as if he might be bad natured and repulsive, as well as being morose (pp. 10–11 & 15).

After Lockwood’s first two visits to the Heights he falls ill and the housekeeper at Thrushcross Grange, Nelly, begins to tell Heathcliff’s and Cathy’s story from the start of their relationship at Lockwood’s request (pp. 26 & 28). Nelly gives an account of how Heathcliff came to live at Wuthering Heights in the first place, having been found by Mr Earnshaw, and describes the young Heathcliff as being patient but hardened, probably due to how his life had been that far, and quiet. When he spoke he was usually truthful and did not complain (pp. 29–
Nelly describes the young Cathy as “mischievous and wayward”, that she was constantly talking, singing or laughing, and used up everyone’s patience at Wuthering Heights, though Nelly felt sure she meant no harm (pp. 30 & 33).

Cathy and Heathcliff seemed to have taken to each other rather quickly, Nelly noticed soon after Heathcliff arrived at the Heights that they had grown very “thick”, very close to one another (p. 30). Cathy had a very strong hold over Heathcliff, he would willingly do anything she wanted him to (p. 34). They seemed to have found some comfort in each other, Heathcliff was being badly treated by almost everyone other than Cathy and Mr Earnshaw, and Cathy herself was often scolded by most of the household. When Mr Earnshaw died both Cathy and Heathcliff were very upset and sad and found great comfort in each other at that point (p. 35). It is plain already at this point in the story that Cathy and Heathcliff cares for one another. Though they are only children they find solace in each other and enjoy the others’ company. Furthermore they are somewhat similar in the way they behave, Cathy is a rather wild child and Heathcliff willingly does anything that she wants him to. This shows that at least Heathcliff’s bond to Cathy seems to be quite deep, he shows unquestionable loyalty towards her. This is the starting point of their relationship. They are surely not in love with each other at this point since they are only young children, but they have developed a close bond that, as we will see, will only continue to grow.

After Mr Earnshaw had died Hindley turned Heathcliff into a servant. Heathcliff apparently suffered this well as long as Cathy spent time with him and taught him what she was taught (p. 36). Nelly claims that Cathy and Heathcliff promised to grow up to be complete savages, they ran off together on the moors whenever they had the chance, even though they both had other duties to attend to (p. 36). Though they were both punished for their actions they seemed to forget all about the pain they might have suffered as soon as they were together again, plotting their revenge (p. 37). The two characters’ relationship has deepened even further at this point of the story. The two seem to care about nothing else than being with the other. Their actions speak loudly of their feelings for one another, though it may be argued if they are yet in love they do care deeply for one another, and seemingly only for one another. Heathcliff has been treated badly by the other residents of the Heights and thus has no reason to care for any of them. Though Cathy has lived her entire life at the Heights and knows everyone who lives there well, her nature is more similar to Heathcliff’s than to the others’. She shows this continuously in her actions, she disobeys orders and goes along with Heathcliff and the two plot their revenge against the others, as Nelly mentions. This clarifies with whom her affection lays.
Cathy, Heathcliff and Edgar

Cathy and Heathcliff at one time decided to have a look at what the Lintons down at Thrushcross Grange were doing (p. 37). The two were heard laughing by the Lintons as they stood looking in through a window, and as they tried to escape Cathy was bitten in the leg by one of the dogs and thus detected and both were brought back to the Grange (pp. 38–39). The Lintons took care of Cathy since she had been injured, however the residents of Thrushcross Grange immediately began to be unpleasant towards Heathcliff, calling him names and found it rather remarkable that young Cathy should be in his company, the Lintons had a bad impression of Heathcliff from the very beginning (pp. 39–40). After Heathcliff returned to the Heights alone without Cathy, who was to stay at the Grange until she recovered, he was ordered by Hindley not to say a word to her when she returned, or he would be fired (p. 41). One of the first times Heathcliff said anything about Cathy was when he told Nelly about them spying at the Lintons. He told Nelly that he would never wish to have what Cathy wanted and that they would never pass their time by quarrelling over something, as they had seen Edgar and Isabella do (p. 38). This rather goes to show what a hold Cathy had over Heathcliff, and how deeply he cared for her, not wanting to deprive her of anything. This we can see again when Heathcliff later on avoided hurting Edgar, though he most certainly wanted to, but did not for fear of upsetting Cathy (p. 116). He also continued his story to Nelly by telling her how superior he thought Cathy to everyone at the Grange and then quickly changed it to: “to everybody on earth, is she not, Nelly” (pp. 40–41). Heathcliff expressed his deep feelings for Cathy in this episode. Though he might not yet have been in love with her it is clear that he idolized her, and Nelly will in fact later on call Cathy Heathcliff’s idol (p. 131). Heathcliff cares for little else than Cathy and her company, placing her above all else, even his own happiness. Though, judging by what he told Nelly, Cathy’s happiness could be seen to be his own happiness. This is rather paradoxical, but I will explain this in more detail later on.

Cathy stayed at the Grange for five weeks, and when she returned her manners had improved and she dressed differently, she was somewhat altered (p. 41). She asked for Heathcliff almost immediately as she got back to the Heights, and when she saw him she greeted him by kissing his cheek but pulled away laughing at how dirty he was (p. 42). Heathcliff did not enjoy being laughed at and Cathy tried to apologize, in her own way, but a concerned glance at her dress to see if it had gotten dirty when she touched him offended Heathcliff further so he quickly left (pp. 42–43). Nelly also mentions that Heathcliff expected to see a counterpart of himself return, not this altered version of Cathy, which added to his
bad mood (p. 42). Nelly felt somewhat sorry for Heathcliff and ventured to try to “repair some of his wrongs” by trying to make him look decent in order to impress Cathy and be able to enjoy her company even while the Lintons were visiting (pp. 43–44). Hindley did not want Heathcliff present, however, and stopped him from entering the room with the others (p. 46). Edgar happened to follow and he, without meaning to, insulted Heathcliff (p. 46). Heathcliff hated and envied Edgar and viewed him as a rival for Cathy’s love, so he threw hot sauce at Edgar’s face, Hindley then removed Heathcliff from the room as Cathy entered (p. 46). Cathy scolded Edgar for having spoken to Heathcliff and was upset that he was getting punished (p. 46). Cathy was in pain for Heathcliff’s sake and tried to control her emotions, but could not do so for long and began to cry, though she managed to hide this from the Lintons (p. 47). Nelly noticed that Cathy tried to find an opportunity to steal away to Heathcliff, who had been locked up, when Cathy managed to get away to him he did not immediately respond to her, but he soon changed his mind and Nelly left them alone to speak privately (p. 47). When she returned Cathy had managed to get into Heathcliff’s room so that Nelly had to “coax” her out of it (p. 47). Even though Cathy seemed to be very fond of Edgar, it is yet again clear that Heathcliff was the one she cared about the most. She scolded Edgar for having spoken to Heathcliff and could not keep from crying over him. Though she did not express her love for Heathcliff with words, she did so through her actions. Through her actions we can see that she quite obviously cared more for Heathcliff than she did for Edgar. However, she did seem to try to avoid sharing this with the others, tried to hide the fact that she was crying. One can assume that she knew what the society would think of her for caring about Heathcliff in the way she did, especially since Edgar had just insulted him.

It seemed still that no matter how things had changed, Heathcliff and Cathy were yet “constant companions”, as Nelly phrases it (p. 53). Though their relationship had been somewhat altered, Heathcliff had stopped expressing how fond he was of Cathy and he pulled back from her new girlish ways (p. 53). Nelly informs Lockwood that Cathy, at the age of fifteen, because of her acquaintance with the Lintons developed a double nature, though Nelly thinks that she had not intended to do so (p. 52). Nelly seems to think that it is an effect of Cathy feeling flattered by the way she was treated by the Lintons (p. 52). Hearing them speaking badly of Heathcliff made her try not to act like him when around the Lintons, however, none of Cathy’s politeness would seem genuine at the Heights, so therefore she did not bother to hide or suppress her true nature when there were no visitors around (p. 52). This was rather paradoxical of Cathy. She did not know how to behave when her two worlds clashed. During her five week stay at Thrushcross Grange she had developed another side of
herself, the well mannered side, the side that was the opposite of the one that was more similar to Heathcliff’s nature. But because of the way she was treated while at the Lintons she had developed a double nature, and therein lies the paradox: she was like two different people depending on who was in her company, and therefore, when these two worlds were brought together, she had trouble deciding which nature to act on, and was undoubtedly perceived as rather paradoxical by those around her as well, since she could not act the way she usually did when around that person. Furthermore, this double nature can explain why Cathy had trouble with letting people see how deeply she cared for Heathcliff, why she could not let people see that she was crying over him when Hindley had beaten him after Edgar had accidentally insulted him. She knew how everyone but her perceived Heathcliff, and trying to please her new friends and act on the newly developed side of herself, she could not express her emotions for Heathcliff.

At one occasion when Hindley was away from the Heights, Cathy was quick to have Edgar over (p. 54). Heathcliff wanted her to spend time with him and showed her an almanac where he had marked the days she had spent with him, and the days she had spent with the Lintons (p. 54). This made Cathy irritated and they argued, so when Edgar arrived Heathcliff left without a word, while Nelly stayed because Hindley had ordered her to never leave Cathy and Edgar alone together (pp. 54–55). Cathy was already annoyed because of her argument with Heathcliff and just grew more annoyed when Nelly would not leave them, unable to suppress her true nature in front of Edgar she pinched Nelly (p. 55). Nelly became upset at this and Cathy denied what she had done since Edgar was present but could not control herself for long and proceeded to slap Nelly and shake her nephew Hareton, when Edgar tried to interfere Cathy slapped him as well (pp. 55–56). Edgar was both insulted and upset and decided not to stay another moment at the Heights and that he would not come back again (p. 56). Cathy told him to stay, when he did not agree she told him that she would cry herself sick, and Edgar began to leave but changed his mind and stayed (pp. 56–57). This brought the two even closer as Nelly remarks (p. 57).

Cathy came to Nelly one evening, not aware that Heathcliff was still in the room, asking her to keep a secret and she began to cry and confessed that Edgar had asked her to marry him (pp. 59–60). Cathy had said yes to Edgar and Nelly asked her if she loved him, to which Cathy answered that she did because he was handsome, pleasant, young, rich, and because he loved her, and Nelly told her that all of those were bad reasons (p. 61). But Cathy was unhappy and Nelly asked what the problem was, Cathy gestured to her head and heart and
said that “in my soul, and in my heart, I’m convinced I’m wrong” (p. 62). She then went on to say that:

I’ve no more business to marry Edgar Linton than I have to be in heaven; and if the wicked man in there had not brought Heathcliff so low, I shouldn’t have thought of it. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now; so he shall never know how I love him; and that, not because he’s handsome, Nelly, but because he’s more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same, and Linton’s is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire. (p. 63).

Heathcliff overheard this and left, but Cathy thought he did not hear anything, and even if he had heard she did not think that he had any idea of what love was (p. 63). Nelly told her that she could see no reason why Heathcliff should not know just as well as Cathy did, and that “if you are his choice, he’ll be the most unfortunate creature that ever was born” and continued to speak of his and Cathy’s separation and how Heathcliff would be all alone (pp. 63–64). Cathy would hear none of it, she said that it would not happen, that if their separation was the price of her marrying Edgar then she would not marry him, that nothing would keep her and Heathcliff apart, that if she had married Heathcliff they would have been beggars and by marrying Edgar she could help Heathcliff instead (p. 64). Nelly informed her that she did not think that Heathcliff would accept money from Cathy, and her husband, and that that was the worst reason of all she had for marrying Edgar, but Cathy said that it was the best by far, that she was doing what she was doing for Heathcliff’s sake, giving a long speech:

What were the use of my creation if I were entirely contained here? My great miseries in this world have been Heathcliff’s miseries, and I watched and felt each from the beginning; my great thought in living is himself. If all else perished, and he remained, I should still continue to be; and, if all else remained, and he were annihilated, the Universe would turn to a mighty stranger. I should not seem part of it. My love for Linton is like the foliage in the woods. Time will change it, I’m well aware, as winter changes the trees—my love for Heathcliff resembles the eternal rocks beneath—a source of little visible delight, but necessary. Nelly, I am Heathcliff—he’s always, always in my mind—not as a pleasure, any more than I am always a pleasure to myself—but, as my own being—so, don’t talk of our separation again—it is impracticable; and—(p. 64).

She stopped there and they soon discovered that Heathcliff was missing, Nelly told her that he had most likely heard a lot of what she had said and Cathy ran out to look for him, not understanding why he would be so upset as to leave (p. 65-66). They did not find him, and Cathy was out in the rain and got wet as she called for him, she got sick and was sad that he had left (pp. 67–69). The doctor came to see her and declared that she was “dangerously ill” (p. 69). Nelly tells Lockwood that Cathy was “saucier and more passionate, and even haughtier than ever” once she was well again, possibly due to Heathcliff’s disappearance (p. 70).
In the event described above there are several paradoxes. Though first of all I want to point out the fact that Cathy said that she wanted to marry Edgar to help place Heathcliff out of Hindley’s power, that if she had married Heathcliff they would have been beggars. As I mentioned in the introduction, Wolpers suggest that some themes takes the form of values in opposition.21 This can be interpreted to be happening here, the values in opposition are love and wealth, and thus with wealth power. Cathy surely thinks she is acting out of love, but she chooses wealth over her true love in order to save him. Though, as Heathcliff will later point out, this is not what he would have wanted her to do.

One paradox that can be found here regarding Cathy’s and Heathcliff’s love is the fact that Cathy chose to marry Edgar even though she loved Heathcliff more. That though her love for Heathcliff was like the rocks, eternal, and her love for Edgar like foliage, changeable, she still chose the love that would change. She said she had decided to marry Edgar so that she could help Heathcliff rise out from under her brother, Hindley. As Nelly pointed out it was unlikely that Heathcliff would have accepted money from the Lintons, and Cathy who knew Heathcliff better than anyone else ought to have known that he would most likely not have. What seems to make this even more paradoxical is the fact that even though Cathy had reasons for why she chose Edgar over Heathcliff, she went against her own feelings, her true nature, since she said that in her heart and soul she was convinced that she was wrong, and yet she went through with it anyway.

Another paradox that can be found here is that Cathy told Nelly that hers and Heathcliff’s separation was “impracticable”, that she would not have agreed to marry Edgar if she had to be separated from Heathcliff, and she told Nelly that Edgar would have to learn how to tolerate Heathcliff, and that Edgar surely would as soon as he learnt of her true feelings for Heathcliff (p. 64). Cathy seemed completely unaware of how Heathcliff would react to hearing that she was to marry Edgar, which is somewhat odd since she knew Heathcliff better than anyone else. We know how Heathcliff reacted to this, possibly what he actually reacted to was her saying that it would degrade her to marry him, he left. Cathy expecting Heathcliff not to mind that she would be married to Edgar and her expecting Edgar not to have any resentment towards Heathcliff simply because she loved him would explain why she could not see at the time how contradictory and unlikely what she said, and hoped for, was. Nothing in their personalities or behavior had so far gone to show that they would let go of any resentment towards the other. Heathcliff and Edgar had been more or less enemies ever since

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21 Wolpers, page 90.
they first met, and Cathy being friends with them both changed nothing. In fact, Heathcliff marked the days Cathy had spent with him and the days she had spent with the Lintons, and this was more likely to have caused further resentment towards the Lintons in Heathcliff than the opposite.

There is also the paradox that Cathy claimed that she was Heathcliff, and that he was more herself than she was, that their souls were made of the same things, that her great miseries in the world had been Heathcliff’s miseries. There are many ways in which this is paradoxical. First of all, she could not be Heathcliff, they were two separate people and could not be each other, or one, at the same time. We can assume that she did not mean it to be interpreted literally though, because it would be highly unlikely that she was unaware of the fact it was literally impossible. She was most likely using the line as a metaphor, meaning that their personalities or feelings were the same. Again though, this is not very likely possible either, two people seldom share the same thoughts and opinions on everything, and we have already seen that Cathy and Heathcliff did not. So she contradicted herself in claiming that she did not think Heathcliff was capable of feeling love while she was, if they were really one and the same even on a metaphorical plane then she should expect him to have been just as capable of those emotions. Apart from that we have their different upbringings and how they were treated, it is unlikely when taking that into consideration that they should be one and the same, have the same “miseries” as one and another if they had rather different experiences in life. Even if Cathy felt for Heathcliff and the torment he had been in, she had her own problems with trying to keep her two “natures”, her two lives apart for her miseries to be entirely of Heathcliff’s, and for her to be Heathcliff even metaphorically. Furthermore, she did not expect Heathcliff to know what love was, which once again she ought to have since she claimed that they were one and the same, then surely Heathcliff would have been just as capable of any feelings as she was.

Nussbaum suggests an explanation for Cathy choosing Edgar over Heathcliff, and that explanation is Christianity, that Christianity tells us to cover ourselves and shy away from our nakedness.22 Heathcliff did not do this, however, he did not cover himself up, he embraced and displayed his passion publicly and that, according to Nussbaum, is what made Cathy unable to choose Heathcliff over Edgar, she pulled away from his nakedness, feeling compelled to cover herself up.23 While this makes sense in one way, in another it does not.

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23 Ibid., p. 407.
Cathy has trouble with concealing her emotions as well, as was clear when Edgar visited and she wanted Nelly to leave them alone and hit her when she would not do so. She tried to suppress her emotions, but she could not. One could argue, of course, that while Cathy tried to suppress her feelings Heathcliff did nothing of the sort, he displayed them for all to see. However Nelly mentions at one point that Cathy always did have problems with keeping her temper in check, “to conceal her passion” (p. 55).

Finally, if we consider what Heathcliff meant when he returned to the Heights without Cathy, that if something made her happy he would not fight with her over it (p. 38), which might imply that Cathy’s happiness was his happiness, we see here that is clearly not the case. Heathcliff did not fight with her, instead he left. If her choice to marry Edgar meant that she was happy, her happiness did not equal Heathcliff’s happiness since her marrying Edgar did not make Heathcliff happy. In fact this can be seen to further the paradox of Cathy’s metaphor that they were one and the same since neither of them seemed to be able to understand the other at this point.

**Heathcliff returns**

When Heathcliff returned he came to the Grange wanting to speak to Cathy, and Nelly barely recognized him at first, he appeared to be quite well groomed (p. 73). When in the house Nelly got a closer look at him she noted the degradation she had seen earlier was no longer evident, but that a “half-civilized ferocity lurked yet in the depressed brows and eyes full of black fire, but it was subdued” (p. 75). Cathy was beside herself with delight at Heathcliff’s return and Edgar asked her to try to be happy “without being absurd” (pp. 74–75). Even though Cathy was thrilled to see Heathcliff once more, she did scorn him for being away for three years and said that he had not thought of her (p. 76). Heathcliff at once opposed this, saying that he had thought of her more than she had thought of him, and told her that everything he had done he had done for her (p. 76). Heathcliff expresses his deep feelings for Cathy once again at this point. He is not afraid to tell her how he feels about her, though he does not directly tell her that he loves her.

When Heathcliff found out, through Cathy, that Edgar’s sister Isabella had feelings for him he asked Cathy if she was his brother’s heir, and Cathy told him that he wished to possess his neighbors possessions too dearly, that he should remember that that specific neighbor’s possessions were hers, to which he only replied “if they were mine, they would not be none the less that” (p. 84). Thus he implied that if Edgar’s possessions were to fall into his hands, they would still be Cathy’s possessions even if she was not married to Heathcliff. Once again
Heathcliff expresses, indirectly, his deep affection for Cathy. Yet again this can be referred back to what he told Nelly about not wanting to deny Cathy anything (p. 38), it did not matter that she had chosen Edgar over him, he would still gladly let her have anything she wanted.

When Cathy found out that Heathcliff had kissed Isabella she told him to stop what he was doing unless he wanted to be forbidden from visiting at the Grange, but Heathcliff said that he longed to kill Edgar more and more with each passing day, and the two began to argue (p. 88). Heathcliff wondered why Cathy cared, said that she did not need to be jealous of him, and she said that she was not, said that he could marry Isabella – if he liked her, and Cathy did not think he did (p. 88). Cathy telling Heathcliff that he could marry Isabella if he liked her is rather paradoxical. She claimed that she loved Edgar when she was to marry him, but that she loved Heathcliff more and that she was convinced that she was wrong in marrying Edgar, as has already been discussed in this essay. However, she knew she had no reason to marry Edgar, and Heathcliff could only be allowed to marry Isabella, according to Cathy, if he liked her. They were both marrying for the wrong reasons, and Cathy scolding Heathcliff is thus rather paradoxical. Cathy claiming she loved Edgar should mean that she obviously liked him, and Heathcliff probably did not like Isabella, he simply wanted revenge, but it is paradoxical scolding someone when she had herself married someone for all the wrong reasons as well. Also what is paradoxical here, but perhaps very common, is that Heathcliff was not going to revenge himself on Cathy, saying that she could torture him to death should she like to, but he would instead revenge himself on Edgar, when in reality it was because of Cathy that the two of them were not together, because she chose Edgar over him, which means it was all because of her. Cathy ought to be the person Heathcliff should revenge himself upon, but because he loved her so much he chose to lay the blame on everyone else instead, in this case on Edgar.

Cathy was upset that Edgar listened to her conversation with Heathcliff, telling Nelly that she would have been able to persuade Heathcliff to stay away from Isabella and that the rest would have meant nothing if Edgar had not interrupted as he did, that “if I cannot keep Heathcliff for my friend, if Edgar will be mean and jealous, I’ll try to break their hearts by breaking my own” (p. 92).

Cathy shut herself up in her room for three days, on the third day she believed herself to be dying, and Nelly remarked her “ghastly countenance”, but thought she was exaggerating in case Edgar was to hear her (p. 94). However, Nelly soon remembered Cathy’s former illness, the one she had when Heathcliff first left, because her moods began to change and she behaved as if she was mad (p. 95). Cathy soon began to dream of Wuthering Heights, she longed to be back there and to be young again, when Heathcliff had been her all (pp. 97–97).
The longing grew ever stronger, she longed to be again “half savage, and hardy, and free”, and she felt sure that she would feel better if she was at the Heights (p. 98). Nelly was sure that Cathy was delirious when the latter opened the window and looked towards the Heights and spoke to Heathcliff, even though he was not there, and said: “But Heathcliff, if I dare you now, will you venture? If you do, I’ll keep you. I’ll not lie there by myself; they may bury me twelve feet deep, and throw the church down over me, but I won’t rest till you are with me. I never will”, and she waited and listened for his reply, saying that he wanted her to come to him, and she exclaimed: “Be content, you always followed me” (pp. 98–99). Cathy seemed to want only to be with Heathcliff, she did not care where Edgar went. She told him that she would be buried out on the hilltop, and not in the chapel where the Lintons were buried and that: “What you touch at present, you may have; but my soul will be on that hilltop before you lay hands on me again. I don’t want you, Edgar: I’m past wanting you” (p. 100). She did not care where Edgar had his final resting place, she no longer wanted him, and she knew that Heathcliff would follow her, because as she said he always had. Therefore she was not worried where Heathcliff would end up. Perhaps Cathy has realized at this point that the value she chose when she chose to marry Edgar, that is wealth over love, was wrong. She longed to be at the Heights and with Heathcliff, she wanted nothing more to do with Edgar. Cathy at this point chose love, though it was rather much too late.

When Nelly visited Isabella at the Heights after she had eloped with Heathcliff and married him (pp. 92, 94 & 104), Heathcliff asked Nelly to arrange a meeting between him and Cathy but Nelly said that she would not help him with that, because if he and Edgar were to meet she felt sure it would kill Cathy (p. 116). Heathcliff said it might be avoided if she helped, and he went on to show how much he loved Cathy and how much of a savage he could be when he told Nelly that:

> Had he been in my place, and I in his, though I hated him with a hatred that turned my life to gall, I never would have raised a hand against him. You may look incredulous, if you please! I never would have banished him from her society, as long as she desired his. The moment her regard ceased, I would have torn his heart out, and drank his blood! But, till then—if you don’t believe me, you don’t know me—till then, I would have died by inches before I touched a single hair of his head! (p. 116).

Nelly told Heathcliff that even though he felt that way he would jeopardize Cathy’s restoration to health by visiting her when she had almost forgotten him, as Nelly claimed she had, but Heathcliff told her that that was not true, that for every thought Cathy spent on Linton she spent a thousand on him, and that she could not love Edgar as she loved him (pp. 116–117). He told Nelly that he would linger in the garden of the Grange until he found a way
to enter, and if he met Edgar he would knock him down and threaten the servants with pistols
if they got in his way and asked her if it would not be better if she informed him when it was
safe for him to come instead (pp. 119–120). Nelly refused once more so Heathcliff threatened
to keep her at the Heights unless she helped him, so eventually she caved in to his wishes (p.
120). Cathy changed greatly with her illness, her eyes had turned dreamy and Nelly remarks
that it did not seem as if she was actually looking at the things about her, but rather beyond
them, she had grown pale and Nelly says that she looked “as one doomed to decay” (p. 122).
When Nelly showed Cathy Heathcliff’s letter, asking if he could meet her, she was too ill to
be able to comprehend the note, but she seemed to come to her senses as she heard Heathcliff
approach her room (p. 123). As soon as Heathcliff set foot in her room he hurried up to her
and they embraced, Cathy kissed him and he kissed her back, though Nelly noticed that he
could not look at her, that he had noticed just as Nelly had that Cathy would not recover, and
he exclaimed: “Oh, Cathy! Oh, my life! how can I bear it” (p. 123). Cathy told him she
thought that he and Edgar acted unfairly, coming to her to lament their pain when according
to Cathy they had broken her heart and killed her (p. 124). She told him she wanted to hold
him until they were both dead, wondering if he would miss her when she was gone, or if he
would forget about her (p. 124). He told her not to torture him until he was as mad as she was,
that he would forever remember those words and that they would haunt him once she was
dead, that she lied when she claimed he had killed her because she had done that herself (p.
124). Cathy calmed down a bit and told him that she did not want him to suffer any more than
she did, that she would be in as much pain in her grave as he would be alive on earth, that she
wished they would never be parted and the he had not once in his life harmed her (pp. 124-
125). She tried to look at his face but he would not let her, he could not stand to see her
changed and did not want her to see the emotions written on his face (p. 125):

“You teach me now how cruel you’ve been—cruel and false. Why did you despise me? Why did you
betray your own heart, Cathy? I have not one word of comfort. You deserve this. You have killed
yourself. Yes, you may kiss me, and cry; and wring out my kisses and tears. They’ll blight you—they’ll
damn you. You loved me—then what right had you to leave me? What right—answer me—for
the poor fancy you felt for Linton? Because misery, and degradation, and death, and nothing that
God or Satan could inflict would have parted us, you, of your own will, did it. I have not broken
your heart—you have broken it—and in breaking it, you have broken mine. So much the worse for
me, that I am strong. Do I want to live? What kind of living will it be when you—oh, God! would
you like to live with your soul in the grave?”

“Let me alone. Let me alone,” sobbed Catherine. “If I’ve done wrong I’m dying for it. It is
enough! You left me too; but I won’t upbraid you! I forgive you. Forgive me!”

“It is hard to forgive, and to look at those eyes, and feel those wasted hands,” he answered.
“Kiss me again; and don’t let me see your eyes! I forgive what you have done to me. I love my
murderer—but yours! How can I?” (p. 126).
They sat silent after that, both crying, until Edgar was on his way up to the house and Nelly warned Heathcliff that he must go (p. 126). Heathcliff told Cathy that he would return as soon as he could, but she would not let him leave, sure she would die, so Heathcliff stayed since she grew upset (p. 127). Edgar soon entered the room, by which time Cathy had passed out, and Heathcliff escaped an argument by placing Cathy in Edgar’s arms and telling him to help her (p.127). Heathcliff left the house but stayed on the grounds, and Cathy died two hours after having giving birth to her daughter and namesake (p. 128). That she was pregnant was not specified until the very moment Catherine Linton was actually born. Nelly went to inform Heathcliff of Cathy’s death, but before she could say a word he announced himself that she was dead (p. 129). Heathcliff asked her how Cathy died and Nelly informed him that she died peacefully, and when he asked if she said anything more about him she informed him that she did not return to her senses, and Nelly said that she hoped she would “wake up as kindly in the other world” (p. 130). Heathcliff replied saying that he hoped she would wake in torment, and he said that he prayed one single prayer:

Catherine Earnshaw, may you not rest, as long as I am living! You said I killed you, haunt me, then! The murdered do haunt their murderers, I believe—/.../ Be with me always—take any form—drive me mad! only do not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you (p. 130).

Heathcliff’s visit with Cathy and the events leading up to her death contains a few paradoxes. One of them is the one revolving around Cathy’s death. She claimed that Edgar and Heathcliff killed her, though she seemed to place most of the guilt on Heathcliff. Heathcliff on the other hand told her that she had killed herself, broken her own heart by betraying it, by not choosing him. This is also the first time in the novel that Heathcliff explicitly expresses his emotions for Cathy to her. Up until this point his love for her has always been stated implicitly, or through his actions.

Cathy’s statement that they had killed her by breaking her heart is paradoxical since she herself decided that she would break Heathcliff’s and Edgar’s hearts by breaking her own (p. 92), which she succeeded in doing. If the reason for her death was her broken heart, then she herself was responsible since she decided to break it herself. Though Heathcliff initially told her that she had killed herself by breaking her own heart, he turns paradoxical as well as he after her death yelled out that she should haunt him since the murdered haunt their murderers, but up until that point he did not admit to being the reason she was dead. He most likely still thought that she murdered herself, but he was so desperate to have her back that he was willing to act as her murderer. It is also quite paradoxical that Heathcliff said that he loved his murderer, but not hers. This is paradoxical because his murderer and her murderer are the
same person, according to Heathcliff they are both Cathy. Heathcliff accused Cathy of having murdered herself by breaking her own heart, and in dying and leaving him alone he felt that she would slowly murder him as well. Heathcliff also continued Cathy’s earlier paradox in which she stated that they were the same, that their souls were made of the same things, when he asked her if she could live with her soul in the grave. By this he meant that she was dying and that she was his soul, and when she was dead and buried his soul would therefore be in the grave. As I have already argued this is quite paradoxical. Cathy also claimed that Heathcliff had never harmed her, and he might not have laid a finger on her in his life, but had harmed her in other ways. She was broken when he left her, and though his intentions in leaving were not to harm her, I would argue that they both have harmed each other in many ways, thus rendering her statement that he had never harmed her paradoxical.

**Life without Cathy**

After Isabella had escaped the Heights she told Nelly some of how Heathcliff had been behaving since Cathy died (pp. 132–133). Isabella noted the great grief Heathcliff was in, telling Nelly that it looked as if he had not slept, and perhaps that he had cried, that his lips were set in sadness (p. 139). Heathcliff mourns over in Cathy this way, he does not express his grief through words but rather through actions. Possibly because Cathy was the only one who would have cared enough about him to listen and try to console him.

One evening, several years later, Heathcliff saw Catherine and Hareton sitting together, reading, and he signed them away, Nelly was about to leave as well but Heathcliff wanted her to stay (p. 246). Nelly remarked that he stood thinking of what he had just seen between Catherine and Hareton, and had told her that it was a rather sad end, “An absurd termination to my violent exertions”, he more or less admitted that the reason for the “termination” was Hareton and Catherine (p. 247). He went on to say that his enemies had not beaten him, and that he could destroy the two houses easily, but he no longer cared to do it, he could not enjoy their destruction and did not feel like destroying for no reason (p. 247). Heathcliff told Nelly that he could not bear to look at Catherine because of the things she awoke in him, probably because of her likeness, however slight (pp. 243 & 246), to Cathy as well as the fact that he lost Cathy when her namesake was born. Hareton on the other hand reminded him of himself when he was young, even though Hareton looked a lot like Cathy, which Heathcliff himself acknowledged (p. 247). He then went on to say that there was not a single thing that did not remind him of Cathy, that everything made him think of her, the floor, the trees, even his own face (p. 247). Heathcliff then told Nelly that he felt a change approaching, but that he was
unaware of what this change was and Nelly asked him if he was afraid of death and Heathcliff answered that he was not, more or less saying that he had been longing for death for a long time (p. 248). Heathcliff saw himself and Cathy in Hareton and Catherine, and that was probably the reason why he no longer wanted to destroy them. At first he wanted to revenge himself on everyone connected to Cathy, and though Hareton and Catherine were rather innocent in it all, he did not initially care, especially not since they were both so alike her, though in different ways. Heathcliff wanting to destroy both the houses, not only their families but the actual houses, is paradoxical. At first they were a symbol of everyone that had stood in the way of him and Cathy, they were a symbol of her, of the love he had lost. Then he said that he saw her everywhere, in everyone, so on the one hand he was trying to destroy everything that had anything to do with her while at the same time that was impossible since everything reminded him of her. J. Hillis Miller mentions this as well, meaning that by destroying the people who stood between him and Cathy, Heathcliff takes revenge on them, that everyone and every place is a symbol not of Cathy, but rather of her absence, and in destroying those people and those things Heathcliff should be able to reach her.\(^\text{24}\) However destroying what is symbolic of Cathy’s absence will not let him reach her, it will only destroy the thing that was symbolic of her absence and leave Heathcliff with nothing, Miller points out, and that is why Heathcliff eventually felt that destroying the houses and what was left of the families was useless, it would do nothing, the only thing that would enable him to reach Cathy was death.\(^\text{25}\)

For the next few days the inhabitants at Wuthering Heights observed Heathcliff behaving oddly, Nelly saw him staring off into space, as if looking at someone who was not there, and he asked her if they were truly alone (p. 253). Looking around her Nelly assured him that they were, however she noted that he still seemed to be watching someone (p. 253). Nelly heard that Heathcliff was awake that night and made her way down to outside the room he was in and heard him talking as if someone else was in the room, but the only thing she could hear him say was Cathy’s name (pp. 253–254), thus confirming that the vision or ghost he was seeing was Cathy. Nelly later asked him to eat something and get some sleep but he said he was unable to eat or sleep, not because he did not want to, but because he could not (p. 254). He told her that he was happy, but that his body could not bear his soul’s happiness (p. 254). Later that day he came and wanted someone to sit with him, Nelly did not want to because she


\(^{25}\) Miller, p. 374-375.
was frightened by the way he was speaking and he left saying that there was one who would not leave his company and said that “she’s relentless. Oh, damn it! It’s unutterably too much for flesh and blood to bear, even mine” (p. 255). Once again he was clearly referring to the ghost of Cathy he was seeing. When he left them that night he went into the chamber and lay groaning until morning (p. 255). He had locked the door and he told them from the inside when they brought the doctor that he was better (p. 256). He seemed to have spent an entire other day in the room until the following morning when Nelly found it raining in through an open window in his room and then decided to obtain another key, and when doing so and opening his door found him lying dead on the bed (p. 256).

Heathcliff died 18 years after Cathy died, and he was buried next to her (p. 258). Edgar was buried on the other side of Cathy (p. 258), and J. Hillis Miller points out that this is symbolic of Cathy’s double nature, which has been mentioned earlier in this essay. I agree that Cathy being buried with Heathcliff on one side of her and Edgar on the other is a reference to the double life she led, on the one hand wanting to be with and like Heathcliff, and on the other hand not wanting to be in order to please Edgar. It also is a reflection of Cathy as a person since she spent most of her adult life with these two sides of herself that constantly clashed.

Conclusion
The love that Cathy and Heathcliff shared for one another was, I would say, very powerful. No matter what one did to the other their feelings never faltered. They held each other more dearly than anything or anyone else. Though Cathy very rarely expressed her love for Heathcliff by words directly to him she however expressed her love for him through her actions. Cathy constantly came to the defense and aid of Heathcliff and very much enjoyed his company. Heathcliff on the other hand was more verbal in displaying his love for Cathy, though he usually did this somewhat implicitly. He rarely told her, or anyone else, how much he loved her but rather said things that implied the depth of his love for her, for example he told her that he had struggled only for her when she scolded him for having been away for three years (p. 76).

There are many paradoxes to be found in “Wuthering Heights” concerning Cathy and Heathcliff and their love for one another. These paradoxes concern, among other things, Cathy’s and Heathcliff’s love for one another, in the sense that Cathy chose Edgar over

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26 Daley, page 357.
27 Miller, p. 370.
Heathcliff and that Cathy claimed that Heathcliff killed her. The paradoxes concern the way the two characters act upon their love, Cathy for example was somewhat double natured.

However much Cathy claimed to be like Heathcliff, and however much we can argue that she was or was not, everyone loved Cathy, with the exception of her father, and Nelly who said she “did not love her” (p. 55). So though Cathy viewed herself and Heathcliff as one and the same, which I would argue is one of the biggest paradoxes in the novel since it keeps reoccurring not only in Cathy but in Heathcliff as well. Not only were there some differences between the way they both acted and the way in which they were loved and cared for by other people, the only one who ever loved Heathcliff was Cathy, and at one point Mr Earnshaw. Cathy was loved by more, which furthers the paradox that they were one and the same. Stevenson mentions that it is in fact very difficult to find exact similarities between Cathy and Heathcliff, mostly because they themselves were very vague as to how they were similar, they were unable to put it into words, which proves that it is rather difficult to try to make sense of Cathy’s statement that the two were one and the same.

Cathy and Heathcliff acted and spoke paradoxically in many ways concerning many events, and “Wuthering Heights” is filled with paradoxes surrounding their love. If these paradoxes are truly Cathy’s and Heathcliff’s or if they have been portrayed as paradoxical through the narrators can be argued. In the end it is up to each and everyone for themselves to decide if the paradoxes lie solely on Cathy and Heathcliff, on the narrators or on both. However, I felt that it was important to point out that the entire narration of the novel can be viewed as paradoxical, and not only the words and actions of the main characters. The entire story can be seen as one big paradox, if one wishes to, which complicates things. However, as I stated earlier, the narration of the novel, no matter how unreliable and paradoxical it might be, is all we have to go on when reading, judging, analyzing and discussing this novel. As long as one is aware of the fact that the novel as a whole can be viewed as paradoxical I see no reason as to why the narration cannot be accepted as it is. This might seem somewhat paradoxical of me to suggest, but I believe that an awareness of the complicating factor the narration can provide is enough for the reader to be mindful of what is being narrated, the reader then knows to take what is said with a grain of salt and reflect upon these things and come to their own conclusion.

The love between Cathy and Heathcliff is quite paradoxical. They love each other but because of Cathy’s choice to marry Edgar they cannot be together. She chooses wealth over

love. Though she does this in order to help Heathcliff break free from her brother, so she chooses wealth over love because of her love for Heathcliff. Thus love is quite central in the novel, and though it is not unrequited, since Heathcliff and Cathy both love each other, it is unfulfilled.

Paradoxes, I feel, adds a depth to the meaning of the novel, it makes us readers ponder things we might not have otherwise. They enrich our experiences and ability to think critically. It adds a realistic flair to any character or story. The paradoxes in “Wuthering Heights” are many and revolve around other characters than just Cathy and Heathcliff, though since the two of them are the main characters it would be interesting for any reader to know exactly how their love is paradoxical.
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