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The Unjustified Justice: A Re-reading of Wuthering Heights

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ABSTRACT

For the last hundred and fifty years, *Wuthering Heights* has been studied and criticised minutely in countless ways. For any person reading the novel, a door opens in front of him to shed a new light to look on. This article of mine is a result of that; re-reading the novel, the characters, the plot, the actions, and the judgment that has been carried out on both, the responsible and the innocent ones. Heathcliff's position in the novel shifts from hero to the villain, more of a like an anti-hero, when he becomes the embodiment of unjustified justice. For splitting him from his spiritual-twin, 'Cathy,' he fastidiously worked out his scheme to avenge. He seemed so sure and self-righteous about his right to avenge on Hindley, Edgar, Isabella, and then on the children who were not even born at the time of the supposed crime. For this, interestingly my perception about Heathcliff kept changing through the novel, villain or victim, on like this. Although Heathcliff and his actions have been scrutinized in thousand ways, my paper is an attempt to evaluate those actions from a paradoxical view: that Heathcliff's role as the judge, jury and executioner actually served him to be the epitome of unjustified justice.

Keywords: Generation, Heathcliff, Justice, Responsible, Revenge.

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1. Introduction

I see revenge as the most violent passion found in Heathcliff of *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë. The plot is about two houses, the Wuthering Heights and the Thrushcross Grange, with the story of two generations living their lives. The Heights has the Earnshaw family, the children of nature, and the Grange has the Lintons, the children of culture. Heathcliff's entrance in their lives is as a cuckoo disturbing the natural symmetry of the nest, when Old Earnshaw found him in the streets and brought him home to rear him up with his children. Heathcliff and the daughter of the house, Catherine, grew into two star-crossed lovers. But being infatuated by the polished culture of the Lintons, Catherine married Edgar for which Heathcliff married Isabella Linton to take revenge against every person related to his separation from his 'Cathy.' The first generation did few wrongs, some miscalculations, many unfair actions against Heathcliff, the price of which is paid by the second generation; Hareton Earnshaw, Catherine Linton and Linton Heathcliff. Therefore, justice was served in an unjustified way.

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2. Main Discussion

So many readers and critics have tried to interpret *Wuthering Heights* in the past one hundred and fifty years that there have been uncountable critical reviews, concerning on numerous topics. When it was published in 1841, the novel astounded the Victorian readers, as they were unfamiliar with such unusual tale associated with consuming passion. As Susan Zlotnick (2014) remarked:

Agnes Grey and *Wuthering Heights* were published together in one three-volume edition, but even the Victorian reviewers who took note of it found the two tales made for odd bedfellows . . . *Wuthering Heights*, a masterpiece of Victorian Gothic, is an altogether stormier affair. Its doublings of plot and characters, its unreliable narrators and indeterminacies, and its ghostly apparitions challenge the rationalist assumptions embedded in Victorian realism. It is a text that simultaneously invites and resists interpretation, and has a critical history marked by a certain explanatory incoherence. (p. 37)

There have been reviews on Emily Brontë, like what encouraged her to create a world like *Wuthering Heights*, the characteristics of Gothicism; the narrative technique, like whether Nelly Dean is biased or a dependable source; the characters, the clash between the nature and the culture, the two generations mirrorizing each other; but most of all, on Heathcliff. Critics argue about whether to sympathize with him or despise him.

The reason behind the attention *Wuthering Heights* gained is its energy and power throbbing in it, which the reader feels while experiencing the world Brontë created. As Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar (2010) say in their essay “Looking Oppositely: Emily Brontë’s Bible of Hell,” “*Wuthering Heights* seems at times to be about forces or beings rather than people, which is no doubt one reason why some critics have thought it generically problematic...” (p. 36) Their remark about *Wuthering Heights* is very much true. Apparently the novel is a story about people of two generations knitted beautifully with excellent narration from an old maid of them, but a careful reading reveals that the people are representatives of natural forces and cultural forces. And where there is a reference of force or power about *Wuthering Heights*, unquestioningly Heathcliff’s name comes first. John S. Whitley (1992) says about Heathcliff, “He is not unlike the Demon Lover of British ballads ... he is possessed of a determination, love of power, great desire for individual freedom and undoubted sexual potency which lead to tremendous capacities misdirected and thwarted.” (p. XVI) Heathcliff used these determination, desire and potency to execute his revenge scheme, surpassing the border of sinners to the innocents.

A little study on the source of *Wuthering Heights*, clearly shows that the Brontë sisters were deeply influenced by the Romantic notion and Byronic heroes of that time. To analyze their statement “...if (Mary) Shelly was Milton’s critic’s daughter, Brontë was Milton’s admirer’s daughter,” (p. 37) Gilbert and Gubar (2010) say, “Satan too, however-at least Satan as Milton’s prototypical Byronic hero-has long been considered a participant in *Wuthering Heights*, for ‘that devil Heathcliff,’ as both demon lover and ferocious natural force, is a phenomenon critics have always studied.” (p. 38) Although Harold Bloom (2010) does not fully agree with Gilbert and Gubar as he says, “Emily Brontë is no more interested in refuting Milton than in sustaining him,” (p. 6) he cannot deny that *Wuthering Heights* is similar to those works which possess powerful characters like Ahab from *Moby-Dick*: “*Wuthering Heights* is as unique and idiosyncratic a narrative as *Moby-Dick*, and like Melville’s masterwork breaks all the confines of genre.” (p. 3) Both Heathcliff and Ahab worked like Hercules, fueling their craziness to take revenge, disregarding the sufferings of the innocent lives.

In his essay, “On *Wuthering Heights*,” Dorothy Van Ghent (2010) states his opinion that “The strangeness that sets *Wuthering Heights* apart from other English novels” is not its expressed attitude or defined experience, because that “same quality of feeling exists, for instance, in Conrad’s work (*Heart of Darkness*).” The “strangeness is the perfect simplicity with which it presents its elemental figures almost naked” of civilization. To explain this in the matter of Heathcliff, he compares him with the villain, yet another vividly powerful character of Samuel Richardson, Robert Lovelace, from *Clarissa*:

For example, the daemonic character of Heathcliff, associated as it is with the wildness of heath and moors, has a recognizable kinship with that of Lovelace, daemonic also, though associated with town life and sophisticated manners. Both are, essentially, an anthropomorphized primitive energy, concentrated in activity, terrible in effect. (p. 16)

He claims that Heathcliff possesses not a soul which is humane, but an elemental or animalistic source, which has no sense of goodness or virtue, for which “it is impossible to speak ... terms of ‘sin’

and 'guilt.'" According to him, this sense is associated with other daemonic characters such as Oedipus, Lovelace, Satan, Manfred, Faustus, even the characters sketched by Dostoevsky and Gide. (p. 24-25)

In the essay "*Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights*" by Virginia Woolf (2010), she talks about the two Brontë sisters, Charlotte and Emily Brontë. To go to the discussion on Emily Brontë, she first mentions Charlotte Brontë that writers like her have "overpowering personality" and "some untamed ferocity" which make them ally "with their inarticulate passions." Then she mentions Emily Brontë that

Hence it is that both Emily and Charlotte are always invoking the help of nature. They both feel the need of some more powerful symbol of the vast and slumbering passions in human nature than words or actions can convey. (p. 11)

They wrote about "what they themselves felt" and planted it in their characters. According to Woolf, "*Wuthering Heights* is more difficult to understand than *Jane Eyre*, because Emily was a greater poet than Charlotte." The "impulse which urged her to create" such Gondal was her feeling "within her the power to unite" the world "cleft into gigantic disorder." The more astonishing part is that "she can make us feel what she had it in her to say at all." (p. 12) This inspired her to create a character like Heathcliff with stormy passion who reflected her confined nature in Victorian society.

Besides these reviewers, Boone (2010) discussed about some power the characters of *Wuthering Heights* exercised on both the deserved and undeserved ones. In his essay "*Wuthering Heights: Uneasy Wedlock and Unquiet Slumbers*," Joseph Allen Boone talks about "the oppressive male 'master'" in "Brontë's vision." But he comments on more than one male character of the novel:

The correlation between male control of the family and excessive and arbitrary displays of power first surfaces in old Earnshaw, who despite his kindness is thrown "into fits" by "slights of his authority," and continues in his son and heir Hindley, who, from the safety of his domestic "paradise on the hearth", mercilessly persecutes the young Heathcliff and Catherine; it will resurface in the very different personalities of Edgar Linton, Heathcliff... Linton. (p. 128)

In "Emily Brontë In and Out of Her Time," Nancy Armstrong (2010) speaks of about keeping Heathcliff's origin in suspicion. Brontë made her protagonist more open to many possibilities and considerations than those common heroes. In this discussion, she mentions the "middle-class power" which is exercised over Heathcliff; and later, Heathcliff on the others in the name of executing justice:

One finds, for example, the Earnshaws exercising power over the hapless orphan in a manner reminiscent of the villainous aristocrats in earlier fiction. If old man Earnshaw's policies seem rather capricious (A Nothing vexed him, and suspected slights of his authority nearly threw him into fits p. 41), the next generation is clearly perverse. Hindley Earnshaw exercises power out of class anger, fraternal rivalry, and thwarted sexual desire. His aim is to obstruct legitimate desires, those to which one is entitled by nature rather than rank, and he succeeds in twisting Heathcliff's spontaneous desire for Catherine into a lust for vengeance. (p. 94)

At one point, she categorizes *Wuthering Heights* "within the mainstream of Victorian literature" by comparing Heathcliff with "such characters as Dickens's *Oliver Twist*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, Mrs. Gaskell's *Mary Barton*, and Thackeray's *Becky Sharp*." (p. 101) To bring back the lost power to its former place from the "aggressive individualism," which is Heathcliff in *Wuthering Heights*, the power is "recentered in established bloodlines," which is the Earnshaws and the Lintons. She brings example of *Jane Eyre* and *Oliver Twist* who receive inheritance and social security in the end, although they were not the embodiment of unjustified justice like Heathcliff.

Besides these, many critics have discussed directly about Heathcliff's revenge over both generations, as Susan Meyer (2010) says in her famous essay "'Your Father Was Emperor of China, and Your Mother an Indian Queen': Reverse Imperialism in *Wuthering Heights*." She says that "Critics such as David Wilson, Arnold Kettle, and Terry Eagleton" have discussed about the "threatening power in *Wuthering Heights*" by considering Heathcliff as "a representative of the discontented working class of the 'hungry forties'" who rebels against the "oppressive society and ... capitalism." (p. 163)

In *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Brontë gives imaginative life to the colonial "other" who is kept outside the "great glass panes" surrounding the prosperity of the colonizing power, and empowers him to shatter those barriers surrounding and protecting the secure domestic prosperity of Britain. (p. 176)

Wuthering Heights has always presented materials for different critical approaches. Readers and critics have talked about the Gothicism, feminism, Victorian Domestic Realism, racism, the romance, the

revenge, the power, the socio-economic system. There are numerous interpretations in psychoanalysis, like the motivation of Emily Brontë, her source, her biographical touch in the novel. They tried to decide whether the narration is biased or unbiased, whose fault it was for all the miseries. The special notice goes to Heathcliff, the powers he exercises on others to serve justice, the driving force which kept him going towards his goal. They tried to see Heathcliff from every angle possible to determine whether he was a human or a devil, and so on. Some of the critics have talked about the other characters in *Wuthering Heights* too, like Boone, Armstrong; and some of them compared Heathcliff with other historically vibrant characters, like Bloom, Ghent. Woolf's discussion is only about the Brontë sisters that what influenced them to sketch those powerful characters. But on the question of two houses and the two generations, they tried to find out the similarities and dissimilarities between them. They tried to sort out to what extent the nature and culture effected their actions. But while studying on the novel, I did not find much discussion on the subject that I got fascinated on, the dramatic effect of the justice that Heathcliff served as the judge, jury and executioner, where one generation sinned, and the other paid the sentence.

The research work used the qualitative research method to accomplish the task. This method is the appropriate one for this work because this type of research method is used "at discovering the underlying motives and desires" of "how people feel or what they think about a particular subject or institution." (Kothari and Garg 3) Through this method, the various factors are analysed on how and why Heathcliff is using his powers, the particular manners and motivations behind the usage. For this, the content analysis technique is used as the novel is analysed thoroughly. The primary data of this research work is the whole text of *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë. The secondary data of this work is different kinds of criticism, articles published in different journals and other literary works on the novel by some renowned critics from the Victorian age to the post-modern age.

From the beginning of the novel, Heathcliff seemed harmless and powerless to take revenge against all the wrongs that were happening to him, as Nelly, the narrator of the story with first-hand experience, wondered, "I was surprised to witness how coolly the child gathered himself up . . . He complained so seldom . . . that I really thought him not vindictive." But she was wrong, as she says, "I was deceived." (Brontë, 2007, p. 47) This Nelly's statement has a dramatic effect on the readers. It astounds me the way he schemed all his actions for revenge. His determination to avenge himself turns him into the villain from the victim of the novel, which Armstrong terms as ironical ". . . Heathcliff can retain his role as the hero of the tale so long as he remains virtually powerless . . ." (Brontë, 2007, p. 95) He turned from a sullen little lamb to a vengeful ruthless beast; from whose evil clutch even the little ones are not safe.

Although Catherine was the one who ultimately betrayed him by taking the vow with Edgar, Heathcliff lashed out to everyone but Catherine. He virtually ignited Hindley Earnshaw's journey to an early grave after robbing him of his wealth and social position. He also guaranteed that he could continue his revenge on the latter's son, Hareton, with slow sadistic pleasure. Heathcliff imprisoned Second Catherine in an unhappy, loveless marriage, disregarding the fact that she was part Catherine too; the shock led to Edgar's death. He married Isabella and threw her heart away like a trash. So deep his hatred ran that he never even patted on their son's, Linton's, back from fatherly affection. Heathcliff's hatred towards Hindley and Edgar is understandable, as Catherine married Edgar from the influences of Hindley's actions. Isabella was related but never responsible, certainly not their children in any way. But the children suffered more than their parents by Heathcliff. Therefore, the children paid the price for their parents' deeds.

The first target of Heathcliff's revenge plot is Hindley Earnshaw. With no sign of submissiveness, Heathcliff remained silent to Hindley's blows in childhood without even winking or shedding a tear ". . . as uncomplaining as a lamb . . ." (Brontë, 2007, p. 45) But this silence was not always maintained. One notices that he started practicing power in his childhood by becoming the favorite boy to the master of the house as he compelled Hindley to exchange their horses. The empowerment of an outsider was not easy to bear for a boy like Hindley. He took the chance immediately to make Heathcliff disempowered by lowering the latter's position even below Nelly and Joseph as 'socially nobody.' This resulted in Catherine choosing Edgar over him because Edgar was 'socially somebody.' Heathcliff swore to pay Hindley back. When Nelly asked him to forgive as God can take his revenge, he retorted, "God won't have the satisfaction that I shall . . . I only wish I knew the

best way! . . . While I'm thinking of that, I don't feel pain." (Brontë, 2007, p. 73) After the three years of absence, Heathcliff returns as a new person. Heathcliff is the socially accepted person, and Hindley the degraded one. Heathcliff is a complete gentleman whereas Hindley is submerged into drinking. The situation is altered as Hindley tries to keep acquaintance with Heathcliff now. Catherine questions her brother's reckless judgment for trusting ". . . one whom he has basely injured." (Brontë, 2007, p. 121) Catherine was the only person who truly loved Heathcliff, but even she knew how foolish it was for her brother to trust Heathcliff after a past full of tortures and humiliation.

Heathcliff came back with so many agenda. One of those was to settle his score with Hindley. Hindley had been on the doomed path of drinking from the beginning as he couldn't take his wife, Frances's, death easily. Instead of his only child, Hareton, excessive drinking got his attention. At a time like this, Heathcliff returned in the picture, mysteriously empowered with money and social dignity whereas Hindley lost his money and social position. Heathcliff cunningly used the opportunity to spread the whiff of his money to Hindley so that the latter forgot to be cautious from someone who would likely strike as a snake. Hindley brought Heathcliff home as an honorable guest, the very person whom he debased to the lowest stage. Heathcliff succeeded as Hindley died in a disgraceful way. The day Hindley died, Nelly says about Heathcliff's expression, ". . . a flinty gratification at a piece of difficult work, successfully executed . . . something like exultation in his aspect." (Brontë, 2007, p. 229) Heathcliff looked, as Mr. Kenneth said, ". . . blooming . . . rapidly regaining flesh." (Brontë, 2007, p. 227) Isabella had left him just a few days ago, but Heathcliff was not in a mourning state, but "blooming," because one of his plans was successful.

However, Heathcliff did not stop here as he was supposed to, for the oppressor of his early life drank to death from his influence. For this, Davies (2010) says about Heathcliff, "Pain begets cruelty; rejection unkindness, reciprocally, so that we act as transmitters down the generations of the wrongs that are done us." (p. 116) The pain that Hindley gave to Heathcliff made him a cruel person, Catherine's rejection made him unkind, so now he transmits those down on the generations for their parents' wrongs.

Once Heathcliff saved Hareton's life, but he shaped the latter's life as he pleases. His perfect revenge was to shove Hareton to the path in which Hindley forced him. Once Nelly met Hareton when he was only three years old, and the experience was awfully shocking as, ". . . from the stammering lips of the little fellow, a string of curses which . . . were delivered with a practised emphasis, and distorted his baby features into a shocking expression of malignity." (Brontë, 2007, p. 134) Heathcliff's charm to the boy was rooted so deeply that the boy started liking Heathcliff more than his father. Later Heathcliff will be the father figure in Hareton's eyes for the rest of the life. The moment Hindley died, Edgar and Nelly wanted to take away Hareton from Heathcliff's clutch as Heathcliff cannot be trusted with the boy of his sworn enemy. Nelly heard Heathcliff plotted, "Now, my bonny lad, you are mine! And we'll see if one tree won't grow as crooked as another, with the same wind to twist it!" (Brontë, 2007, p. 230) Hindley never received any ray of education, any appreciation for manners, any warmth of affection and any laughter from friendship. He grew dumb, brute and wild. From the beginning of the innocent boy's life, Heathcliff took matters about him in his hands by manipulating the small boy little by little with the "same wind."

As Hindley forced Heathcliff into the role of servant, assuming an unpaid one, Heathcliff later recreated his own situation in Hareton by depriving the advantage of wages. Heathcliff gave Hareton back all those abuses and maltreatments that he suffered from Hindley. Before Old Earnshaw's death, Heathcliff had received some education. After Hindley had become the master of the house, he stopped that education and decreed to treat Heathcliff as a servant. And then, hard work in the field wiped out every trace of education he had, which ultimately resulted in turning Heathcliff into a brute and Catherine choosing well-groomed Edgar as her husband. Heathcliff recreated the same situation so that the same thing would happen in Hareton's life and he could fulfill his revenge. Although Hareton had more potentiality than those of Linton, he turned into a brute as no spark of education ignited within him. Just like Heathcliff who was once kept away from the opportunity to groom himself, he deprived Hareton of literacy to the point where, in the ultimate metaphor of disinheritance, he could not read his own name over the door of the Wuthering Heights. So when a pretty girl was in front of him, he forgot to speak and acted awkward:

I've tied his tongue . . . Nelly, you recollect me at his age . . . He has satisfied my expectations – if he were a born fool I should not enjoy it half so much – but he is no fool; and I can sympathize with all his feelings, having felt myself . . . he'll never be able to emerge from his bathos of coarseness, and ignorance. I've got him faster than his scoundrel of a father secured me, and lower; for he takes a pride in his brutishness. I've taught him to scorn everything extra-animal as silly and weak – Don't you think Hindley would be proud of his son, if he could see him? almost as proud as I am of mine – But there's this difference, one is gold put to the use of paving-stones; and the other is tin polished to ape a service of silver – Mine has nothing valuable about it . . . His had first-rate qualities, and they are lost. (Brontë, 2007, p. 268)

When Catherine was spending a considerable time with Edgar, Heathcliff once wished to Nelly that he would also like to have white skin and blue eyes so that Catherine would choose to spend her time with him over Edgar. As Nelly was kind and sympathetic to Heathcliff, she tried to wash him and make him handsome which Meyer (2010) termed as “racial metamorphosis” which he later threatens to “the opposite direction,” as he proposes to take his revenge on the tyrannizing white skin and blue eyes. (p. 175) Heathcliff turned Hareton's skin brown from hard working in the fields. He reached his goal of revenge on Hindley by reverse enactment of his own. The ultimate conclusion is:

... Hareton, who should now be the first gentleman in the neighbourhood, was reduced to a state of complete dependence on his father's inveterate enemy; and lives in his own house as a servant deprived of the advantage of wages, and quite unable to right himself, because of his friendlessness, and his ignorance that he has been wronged. (Brontë, 2007, p. 231)

The second target of Heathcliff's revenge plot was Isabella, and through her the next generation, Linton. Heathcliff targeted Isabella for two reasons. First, she was Edgar's sister. According to Heathcliff, as Edgar took away Catherine, his reason to live, he would also snatch away his favourite person, Isabella. Heathcliff wanted to empty Edgar's life of the women he had in revenge of emptying out his life from the only woman he loved. Besides, he also wanted to take revenge for the inhuman treatment he received from the Linton family when he had acquainted with them the first time.

He pulled me under the chandelier, and Mrs Linton placed her spectacles on her nose and raised her hands in horror. The cowardly children crept nearer also, Isabella lisping –

“Frightful thing! Put him in the cellar, papa. He's exactly like the son of the fortune-teller, that stole my tame pheasant. Isn't he, Edgar?” (Brontë, 2007, p. 60)

By race, Heathcliff's appearance was of a moor or gypsy. Unjustly, he was an outsider with a frightful face for his dark skin to the white people. The Linton family, as the representative of the polished English culture, inspected him from far like he was a caged animal, “an exotic, subhuman creature.” Later, when Heathcliff came back and masked as a well-groomed rich man, the same Isabella, who had shrank away and screamed at her father to lock it, fell in love with the same face. In Chapter 10, Isabella was held captive in Catherine's claw, the alter-ego of Heathcliff himself. Once Isabella along with her family cast Heathcliff “the imperialist gaze,” as Meyer names it. (p. 175) Heathcliff now wields the same gaze which deprives her of human status, “he stared hard at the object of discourse, as one might do at a strange repulsive animal ... The poor thing couldn't bear that; she grew white and red in rapid succession...” (Brontë, 2007, p. 130) Isabella, unable to speak under such tormenting scrutiny and commentary, was silenced, like Heathcliff before her. She became the object of imperialist discourse, rather than being the subject. Now Heathcliff has the power to silence Isabella by his mere gaze, which is so piercingly sharp that Isabella melted in front of it.

The changing of Isabella's point-of-view is ironical as when Heathcliff owned a good amount of money and an educated accent, his face didn't bother her at all. That was her undoing, as she gave scope to Heathcliff to squeeze in their peaceful lives. Catherine and Nelly warned her, tried to make her understand the reality that he would crush her heart “like a sparrow's egg” as “... he couldn't love a Linton; and yet, he'd be quite capable of marrying” a Linton for “fortune and expectations.” (Brontë, 2007, p. 126) Isabella didn't pay any heed to their cautioning. She was building castle in the air by applying her illusory conception in hero of romance on Heathcliff. Soon her false sense of romance was shattered when Heathcliff schemed to lay his hand legitimately on Linton fortune through her. Boone (2010) calls her the “sexual instrument of his scheme of revenge.” (p. 131) As a result, Isabella's love for Heathcliff vanished and hatred took place in there. Finally she accepted the reality that Heathcliff was incapable to love anyone who had Linton blood in their system, even if it was his own child.

After being cured of her figurative blindness, Isabella fathomed the depth of Heathcliff's abhorrence towards Linton family. She kept her son's name 'Linton,' so that Heathcliff would stay away from him for hatred. Or it could be from her defiance towards Heathcliff for destroying her life. This would have been the perfect revenge for Isabella as now he would have to love someone named Linton. A normal father would have loved his children no matter who they were named after or how much they shared his enemy's blood. But in the matter of love and hatred, Heathcliff's heart was incalculable. He could pronounce without any pang of guilt that how much he hated his own son. He unabashedly acknowledged that Linton was nothing but his tool to gain valid power over Linton family's possession.

Catherine's separation from Heathcliff was the primal cause for his zeal to take revenge. Although Hindley's oppression and her attraction towards the polished and civilized Grange life influenced her decision, she could have chosen not to do so. Moreover, she confessed her reason as "And he will be rich, and I shall like to be the greatest woman of the neighbourhood, and I shall be proud of having such a husband." (Brontë, 2007, p. 95) Heathcliff accused Catherine of treating him infernally in strong passionate voice by choosing Edgar and forbade her to fancy that he would suffer "unrevenged." (Brontë, 2007, p. 137) He gleefully thanked her to reveal her sister-in-law's secret and swore to make use the most of it. His excessive love for Catherine might have stopped him from harming Catherine directly, yet her husband and daughter were not saved from his vengeance.

It is noticeable how often Heathcliff used the word "satisfaction" while referring to hurting Edgar anyhow. His happiness lied in Edgar's misery. In this case, happiness seems less appropriate, rather exultation is the right word to describe Heathcliff's emotional state. When Heathcliff came back after three years of absence, Edgar did not appreciate his visit to the house, especially due to Catherine's overly heart-warmed welcome. Edgar had the intuition that Heathcliff's coming back to their peaceful life was not a blessing, but a curse. He did not take Heathcliff as his company as Hindley did. And, as he had an unmarried sister at house through whom the Linton property could fall into the wrong hands of an outsider, he was a little guarded too. Despite the caution, Edgar's worst possible nightmares came true. Heathcliff sneaked around to find a hole through which he can enter as a needle and materialize his scheme. He secured Isabella's capture in his grasp until he needed her, then Edgar's daughter, Second Catherine.

The patriarchal rules of the society gave Heathcliff the legitimacy to snatch Second Catherine away. All he had to do was tap into the rules made by the very society Edgar represents, property going to the next male heir of the deceased one. Ironically, Heathcliff calls his scheme "honest." as he says. "...the two cousins may fall in love, and get married ... should she second my wishes, she'll be provided for, at once, as joint successor with Linton." (Brontë, 2007, p. 263) However, to make his design come to fruition, he tries his best. He seizes the opportunity to make the cousins meet, especially whenever Linton is looking better. Then he persuades Second Catherine to keep the visit in secret. Finally, he dupes Nelly and Second Catherine into crossing the forbidden threshold of the Wuthering Heights and compels Second Catherine to leave the world of her youth behind. The events following after that is "an unending nightmare" as Boone (2010) calls it because they become his "literal prisoners." (p. 137) He forces Second Catherine to remain barred within Wuthering Heights for several days, without any trace of her to the outer world. This anxiety for her hurried Edgar's demise. Here also, like Hindley's, Heathcliff played as an indirect agent in Edgar's death.

Heathcliff avenged his separation from Catherine by severing Second Catherine's vital relationship with her father. So another innocent is sentenced for some crime she did not commit. Her mother's immature, impulsive and selfish decision made Second Catherine suffer. She had to suffer growing up without a mother. She suffered when Linton was taken away to and hidden in the Heights. In the end, she suffered as a penniless orphan and a tormented widow, trapped and oppressed in Wuthering Heights. A ball of brightness like her doesn't deserve only sighs and tears and to be cut out from laughter for her mother's selfish intentions.

Linton was a fragile human being from his birth. Confined to the bed all day long was his inevitable routine. Heathcliff forced the union to happen although Linton was no match for the ever-sunshine like Second Catherine. Linton's fast deterioration of health threatened to spoil Heathcliff's carefully plotted agenda, as Linton had to die after Edgar, not before, to gain Linton property legitimately. That is why Heathcliff was in a bit of a hurry, even Edgar consented to the marriage.

“Because that lad yonder, seems determined to beat me – and I’d thank his uncle to be quick, and go before him.” (Brontë, 2007, p. 327) We notice that, not even for once he was concerned about his son’s health, not even life.

In the end, Heathcliff is successful to establish himself as the master of both the houses, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. His success lies in not only owning the materialistic objects, but also being the puppeteer of the fate of the houses’ people. But no matter how much he is empowered, the final union between Second Catherine and Hareton Earnshaw makes us question about his final achievement in the end. And the more astonishing fact is, Heathcliff witnessed the symbolic union of the two representatives with his own eyes. In fact, after punishing the children for their parent’s sins, letting the young ones who are left to unite is his true triumph over his wrong-doers, not separating them.

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, Heathcliff has got all the “levers and mattocks to demolish the two houses,” essential powers to beat his old enemies, and he has trained himself to be able to work as Hercules, but no spirit is left in him to separate them. (Brontë, 2007, p. 394) His rage and determination strives and thrives like the Frankenstein’s monster to take revenge against the society represented by Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange for severing apart spiritual-twins like him and Catherine. He tries to stifle the heart of patriarchy which gives legitimacy to this society to marginalize people like Heathcliff. In doing so, his border of revenge surpasses from the responsible generation to the innocent one, parents to their children. In order to bring his plan to light, he silently infiltrates among the Earnshaws’ and Lintons’ lives. He pushes Hindley to the lowest degree of death, takes into grip all his properties while making his son a brute servant; mesmerizes Isabella and then stomps on her heart as well as uses his own son as a tool; entices Second Catherine into Linton’s love to replace Edgar as the master of the Grange, pushes him to grave and keeps her imprisoned as the trophy of his meticulous work.

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