

**Degree – 2 (English Honours)**

**Paper – 4**

**Book – Wuthering Heights**

**Lecture – 1**

### ***Storm and Calm in Wuthering Heights***

The setting of the *Wuthering Heights* is a microcosm of the universal scheme as Emily Bronte conceived it. On the one hand, we have the place called Wuthering Heights which is the land of storm. High on the barren moorland, naked to the shock of the elements, it is the natural home of the Earnshaw family, they fiery, untamed children of storm. On the other hand, sheltered in the leafy valley below, stands Thrushcross Grange, the appropriate home of the children of calm, the gentle the passive, timid Linton's. Together each group, following own nature in its own sphere, combines to compose a cosmic harmony. It is the destruction and the re-establishment of this harmony which is the theme of the story.

The story opens with the arrival at Wuthering Heights of an extraneous element--- Heathcliff. He too is a child of storm; and the affinity between him and Cathy Earnshaw makes them fall in love with each other. but since he is an extraneous element, he is a source of discord, inevitably disturbing the working of natural order. He derives the father, Mr. Earnshaw, into conflict with the son, Hindley, and as a result Hindley into

conflict with himself. The order is still further dislocated by Cathy who is seduced into uniting herself in an unnatural marriage with Edgar Linton, the child of calm. The shock of her infidelity and Hindley's ill-treatment of Heathcliff now, in their turn, disturb the natural harmony Heathcliff's nature, and turn him from an alien element in the established order into a force active for its destruction. He is not, therefore, as is usually supposed a wicked man voluntarily yielding to his wicked impulses. He is a manifestation of natural forces acting involuntarily under the pressure of his own nature. But he is a natural force which has been frustrated of its natural outlet, so that it inevitably becomes destructive.

Heathcliff's first destructive act is to derive Hindley to death. Secondly, as counterblast to Cathy's marriage, and prompted not by love but by a hatred of the Lintons, he himself makes an unnatural marriage with Isabella.

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