

**Degree – ii (English Honours)**

**Paper – iv**

**Book – Wuthering Heights**

**Lecture – 3 ( final )**

### ***The Mystery of the Bond between Heathcliff and Cathy***

Heathcliff is doomed in his turn to the torture of exile and imprisonment in an alien world until his own release. We hear nothing more, however of his true life and soul, by only of his hideous plots and ferocities against others, until eighteen years later. Then after Edgar's Linton death, he describes Nelly how he had persuaded the sexton who was digging Edgar's grave to remove the earth from Cathy's coffin and open it. Nelly exclaims against the wickedness of disturbing the dead but Heathcliff speaks in quiet passionate rhythms of his own response:

*“Disturbed her? She has disturbed me, night and day, through eighteen years--- incessantly--- remorselessly till yesternight; and yesternight I was tranquil. I dreamt I was sleeping the last sleep by that sleeper, with my heart stopped and my cheek frozen against her.”*

He goes on to tell with moving simplicity of the racking torture of Cathy's elusive figure never seen, but never absent, during all this time:

*“ When I sat in the house with Hareton, it seemed that it on going out I should meet her; when I walked on the moors I should meet her coming in. when I went from home, I hastened to return : she must be somewhere at the Heights, I was certain. And when I slept in her chamber --- I was beaten out of that --- and I must open my lids to see. And so, I opened and closed them a hundred times a night—to be always disappointed. ”*

No moral harmony clams the conclusion of Heathcliff’s story. In its social aspects he himself can describe it as an absurd termination of my violent exertions. He has spent his all energy on wrecking the lives and fortunes of the Earnshaw sans the Lintons, only to find that love between Hareton and younger Catherine is to prove stronger than all his hate. He will not accept that his enemies have defeated him. To him his rage is simply spent itself; he is indifferent to everything in the present, living only in the past and the future. He sees Hareton as the personification of his own youth, of my wild endeavour to hold my right, my degradation, my pride, my happiness, my anguish. For the rest, his whole being and faculties are obsessed with the longing for the final union in death with his beloved. Nelly’s pious talk of repentance and preparation for a Christian heaven reminds him only to insist on being buried with no coffin wall between himself and the dead Cathy. His heaven is as she has said hers will be, that glorious world of escape from the prison of an aching heart. He looks

wild and glad as he nears it and finally his dead eyes have a life like gaze of exultation, though the rest of the savage, sarcastic face seems to seener at the moral judgement of the world it has left behind.

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