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# Emily Brontë

Wuthering Heights

Nicholas Marsh



Emily Brontë: *Wuthering Heights*

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Emily Brontë:  
*Wuthering Heights*

NICHOLAS MARSH



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For Bertie

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# General Editor's Preface

This series is dedicated to one clear belief: that we can all enjoy, understand and analyse literature for ourselves, provided we know how to do it. How can we build on close understanding of a short passage, and develop our insight into the whole work? What features do we expect to find in a text? Why do we study style in so much detail? In demystifying the study of literature, these are only some of the questions the *Analysing Texts* series addresses and answers.

The books in this series will not do all the work for you, but will provide you with the tools, and show you how to use them. Here, you will find samples of close, detailed analysis, with an explanation of the analytical techniques utilised. At the end of each chapter there are useful suggestions for further work you can do to practise, develop and hone the skills demonstrated and build confidence in your own analytical ability.

An author's individuality shows in the way they write: every work they produce bears the hallmark of that writer's personal 'style'. In the main part of each book we concentrate therefore on analysing the particular flavour and concerns of one author's work, and explain the features of their writing in connection with major themes. In Part 2 there are chapters about the author's life and work, assessing their contribution to developments in literature; and a sample of critics' views are summarised and discussed in comparison with each other. Some suggestions for further reading provide a bridge towards further critical research.

*Analysing Texts* is designed to stimulate and encourage your critical and analytic faculty, to develop your personal insight into the author's work and individual style, and to provide you with the skills and techniques to enjoy at first hand the excitement of discovering the richness of the text.

NICHOLAS MARSH

# A Note on Editions

References to *Wuthering Heights* give the page number from the Penguin Classics edition of 1995, edited with an Introduction and Notes by Pauline Nestor. This edition keeps the original numbering of chapters, beginning at a 'Chapter 1' for each of the three volumes that were originally published. Where there might be any confusion as to which chapter is referred to, I have specified thus: 'Volume 2, Chapter 3'.

**PART 1**

ANALYSING  
*WUTHERING HEIGHTS*

# 1

## The Narrative Frame

The story of *Wuthering Heights* centres on a group of characters – Catherine and Hindley Earnshaw, Heathcliff, Edgar and Isabella Linton, and their three children. We can say that this ‘story’ begins when Heathcliff is brought into the Earnshaw family, when Catherine and Hindley are children; and ends with the marriage of Hareton Earnshaw and Catherine Linton/Heathcliff, and the death of Heathcliff himself. It is an exciting story, full of passions, marriages, births and deaths. However, it is important to remember that the author does not tell us this story: *Wuthering Heights* has a **narrative frame**. Another character, Nelly Dean, tells the story to Mr Lockwood, and he tells it to us. The first-person narrator of *Wuthering Heights*, then, is a long way removed from the actual experiences of the story. He only meets three of the main characters (Hareton and young Cathy, the two survivors of the younger generation; and Heathcliff), and he meets them as an unperceptive stranger, preoccupied by his own affairs, in the final year of their forty-year story.

Emily Brontë has devised an elaborate ‘frame’ for her story, then. In *Wuthering Heights*, the normal act of reading a fable related by an author is trebled: we read a fable narrated by a man who was told the story by a woman who was peripherally involved. This form places an insistent focus on the act of storytelling, and raises numerous questions: What is a ‘story’? What kind of an activity is ‘storytelling’? How should we navigate the complex relationship between any narrative account, and the thing – life – itself. An

equally heavy emphasis is placed on the act of reading or 'hearing' the story, so we are provoked to question our own activity when we are engaged in reading the novel. How do we hear the things that are related to us? Do we accept a truth that has been filtered through the prejudices, and is imprisoned in the language, of successive narrators? Or do we believe we can reconstruct the original event, compensating for the different viewpoints that have coloured it? Is it reasonable to attempt such a reconstruction? Can a story exist independent of the language that tells it?

These questions go to the heart of how literature is written and read. Many modern critics are particularly interested in analysing the actions of language, in order to throw light onto literary activity itself. Some concentrate on words as the constituent elements of language, treating them as 'signs' which refer to a reality we can never reach because it can never be fully represented to us. Others see language and the act of storytelling as a 'code', which readers are eager to break in order to reach through to the reality behind it. In this view, writers 'encode' a story which we attempt to 'decode'. Yet other critics focus on the act of reading, as a hopeless search for 'mastery' of the text: hopeless because the authority of the story is constantly undermined by the act of narration, so that meaning retreats from us.

It is not our purpose to indulge in modern critical controversies in our first chapter. But we do begin with the recognition that *Wuthering Heights* tells its story in a particularly elaborate and questionable way, within a double frame. In this chapter we look at extracts which highlight the influence of the different narrators. From analysing specific passages, we hope to understand more about how and why Emily Brontë introduces such complex relationships between the original story and the reader, and how she plays the narrators off against each other.

## Narrators

### [a] Lockwood

We start with the first-person narrator, Mr Lockwood. He arrives in the story almost by chance, as a gentleman who has casually rented Thrushcross Grange, but who might have 'fixed on' a completely different part of 'all England'. He has never been to that part of the country before, and immediately identifies himself as a newcomer by exclaiming 'This is certainly a beautiful country!'; while the aura of diary or travelogue is enhanced by the bald statement of the date '1801' followed by a dash, which is the first mark of the novel.

He writes because he has just visited Heathcliff at Wuthering Heights, and wishes to record his impressions. We will look at his description of the house, which is given on pages 4–6:

'Joseph, take Mr Lockwood's horse; and bring up some wine.'

'Here we have the whole establishment of domestics, I suppose,' was the reflection, suggested by this compound order. 'No wonder the grass grows up between the flags, and cattle are the only hedgecutters.'

Joseph was an elderly, nay, an old man, very old, perhaps, though hale and sinewy.

'The Lord help us!' he soliloquised in an undertone of peevish displeasure, while relieving me of my horse: looking, meantime, in my face so sourly that I charitably conjectured he must have need of divine aid to digest his dinner, and his pious ejaculation had no reference to my unexpected advent.

Wuthering Heights is the name of Mr Heathcliff's dwelling, 'Wuthering' being a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult to which its station is exposed in stormy weather. Pure, bracing ventilation they must have up there, at all times, indeed: one may guess the power of the north wind, blowing over the edge, by the excessive slant of a few, stunted firs at the end of the house; and by a range of gaunt thorns all stretching their limbs one way, as if craving alms of the sun. Happily, the architect had foresight to build it strong: the narrow windows are deeply set in the wall, and the corners defended with large jutting stones.

Before passing the threshold, I paused to admire a quantity of

grotesque carving lavished over the front, and especially about the principal door, above which, among a wilderness of crumbling griffins, and shameless little boys, I detected the date '1500,' and the name 'Hareton Earnshaw.' I would have made a few comments, and requested a short history of the place from the surly owner, but his attitude at the door appeared to demand my speedy entrance, or complete departure, and I had no desire to aggravate his impatience, previous to inspecting the penetralium.

One step brought us into the family sitting-room, without any introductory lobby, or passage: they call it here 'the house' pre-eminently. It includes the kitchen and parlor, generally, but I believe at Wuthering Heights the kitchen is forced to retreat altogether into another quarter, at least I distinguished a chatter of tongues, and a clatter of culinary utensils, deep within; and I observed no signs of roasting, boiling, or baking, about the huge fire-place; nor any glitter of copper saucepans and tin cullenders on the walls. One end, indeed, reflected splendidly both light and heat from ranks of immense pewter dishes, interspersed with silver jugs and tankards, towering row after row, in a vast oak dresser, to the very roof. The latter had never been underdrawn: its entire anatomy lay bare to an inquiring eye, except where a frame of wood laden with oatcakes, and clusters of legs of beef, mutton and ham, concealed it. Above the chimney were sundry villainous old guns, and a couple of horse-pistols, and, by way of ornament, three gaudily painted canisters disposed along its ledge. The floor was of smooth, white stone: the chairs, high-backed, primitive structures, painted green: one or two heavy black ones lurking in the shade. In an arch, under the dresser, reposed a huge, liver-coloured bitch pointer surrounded by a swarm of squealing puppies, and other dogs haunted other recesses.

The apartment and furniture would have been nothing extraordinary as belonging to a homely, northern farmer with a stubborn countenance, and stalwart limbs set out to advantage in knee-breeches and gaiters. Such an individual, seated in his armchair, his mug of ale frothing on the round table before him, is to be seen in any circuit of five or six miles among these hills, if you go at the right time, after dinner. But, Mr Heathcliff forms a singular contrast to his abode and style of living. He is a dark-skinned gypsy in aspect, in dress and manners a gentleman – that is, as much a gentleman as many a country squire: rather slovenly, perhaps, yet not looking amiss, with his negligence, because he has an erect and handsome

figure – and rather morose – possibly some people might suspect him of a degree of under-bred pride – I have a sympathetic chord within that tells me it is nothing of the sort; I know, by instinct, his reserve springs from an aversion to showy displays of feeling – to manifestations of mutual kindliness. He'll love and hate, equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence to be loved or hated again – No, I'm running on too fast – I bestow my own attributes over-liberally on him. Mr Heathcliff may have entirely dissimilar reasons for keeping his hand out of the way, when he meets a would-be acquaintance, to those which actuate me. Let me hope my constitution is almost peculiar: my dear mother used to say I should never have a comfortable home, and only last summer, I proved myself perfectly unworthy of one.

(*Wuthering Heights*, pp. 4–6)<sup>1</sup>

We are interested in the way Mr Lockwood expresses himself, first of all, as the story of *Wuthering Heights* comes to us through the filter of his language. What are the noticeable features of his language in this extract, and what conclusions about him can we draw based on these?

One insistent feature in this passage is Lockwood's speculations. The language is filled with guesswork: 'I suppose', 'perhaps' and 'I conjectured' govern the three main statements about Joseph (that he is the only servant; his age; and that he repeatedly calls on God) when Lockwood meets him. When the narrative turns to describe the exterior of the house, Lockwood assumes the wild weather they 'must have', and uses the slanting vegetation to 'guess' the power of the wind. Amusingly, he attributes the same speculative approach to the housebuilder three-hundred years before, who 'happily' (meaning *luckily*) built the house strongly and with small windows. When Lockwood sees the date '1500', he is curious and 'would have . . . requested a short history of the place'; but the pattern of the extract, where Lockwood speculates but has no definite information, is maintained. Heathcliff looks morose, so Lockwood is deterred from asking his question.

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<sup>1</sup> Page-references to *Wuthering Heights* are to the Penguin Classics edition, edited by Pauline Nestor (London, 1995). Page references to this text will appear alone, in brackets.

The next paragraph, describing the interior of the house, further develops the sense that we observe phenomena and guess their explanation. Here, Lockwood ‘believes’ that the kitchen is a separate room. He can ‘distinguish’ kitchen noises but ‘observed no signs’ of cooking in the main room. Towards the end of this paragraph, vague and unexplainable distances again appear in the narrative: chairs and dogs are described, but more chairs are ‘lurking in the shade’; and ‘other dogs haunted other recesses’.

Finally we arrive at the description of Heathcliff, in the last paragraph of our extract. Notice that the first 73 words are devoted to describing an imagined farmer who is *not* like Heathcliff. Then comes the statement that he contrasts with his surroundings, and a much shorter description (47 words) of Heathcliff. The whole of the last half of the paragraph (144 words) is then given over to speculation about Heathcliff’s character, and revelation of Lockwood’s. Meanwhile, the motif of hesitant, uncertain language is continued in ‘perhaps’, ‘possibly’, ‘suspect’ and ‘may have’. In this paragraph, then, the narrator attempts to describe Heathcliff, but fails.

The effect of this style is to focus our attention on the act of narration itself. Lockwood is an observer who takes in sense-impressions and thinks about them, as does any person travelling through life; and he struggles to translate these impressions into words for us. Brontë’s repeated use of the language of guesswork and hesitant deduction never allows us to forget that the thing itself – Heathcliff and his house – is only relayed to us by means of a clumsy, struggling observer.

So far, then, we have found a consistent seam in Lockwood’s language which emphasises the act of narration, reminding us that the story comes to us via a narrative frame. We have also noticed that the Lockwood ‘filter’ only allows a small amount of solid material to reach us. So, for example, we saw that the paragraph about Heathcliff was 278 words long, but only 47 of these words conveyed reliable information. So, the frame restricts our information. The next question is: does it also change, distort or suppress information?

Two features of the extract suggest answers to these questions. First, Brontë begins to establish a contrast between the diction of the

story itself, and the more elaborate language of the narrator; and secondly, the speculation about Heathcliff's character which ends the extract also analyses the relationship between narrator and character, and contains a warning about judgements of character in general.

The 'diction of the story itself' is found in the characters' direct speech, and in two words which Lockwood puts in quotation marks. This language comes to us direct from the story without interference, and is markedly plain. Heathcliff and Joseph both speak in monosyllables apart from the two names 'Joseph' and 'Lockwood'. Heathcliff includes two imperatives, 'take' and 'bring'. Their short, plain words are in sharp contrast to Lockwood's narrative. Immediately after Heathcliff speaks, Lockwood uses 'establishment' and 'domestics'; and following Joseph's speech he uses 'soliloquised', 'undertone' and 'displeasure'.

The two words in quotation marks are 'wuthering', the local term for wild stormy weather; and 'house'. The first of these is a most suggestive word which provokes us to think of 'weathering' and 'withering', and has an indefinably onomatopoeic effect, the first syllable being reminiscent of a gust of wind. Lockwood's commentary is typically elaborate, in contrast: it is 'a significant provincial adjective, descriptive of the atmospheric tumult' and so on. 'House', the local word for the main room in a farmhouse, is directly contrasted to the most pompous, precious term in this part of Lockwood's narrative. He calls the interior the 'penetralium'.

In the final paragraph Lockwood becomes uncharacteristically sure of himself. Faced with Heathcliff's 'morose' expression, he claims to understand the other man: 'I know, by instinct', he says, and then gives an analysis of Heathcliff's character: 'He'll love and hate, equally under cover, and esteem it a species of impertinence to be loved or hated again.' When we have finished reading the novel, we are struck by the simultaneous perception and blindness of Lockwood's instinct. However, Lockwood stops himself and returns to the guesswork that is typical of his narrative: 'I bestow my own attributes over-liberally on him', he says, and acknowledges that Heathcliff may have motives he (Lockwood) has never imagined.

This is a fascinating passage, raising as it does the relationship between the storyteller and the character – whether they are real or

imagined people. Brontë has established that the narrator cannot be neutral, that authors express their own characters in the stories and people they create. At the same time, the unknowable mystery of other people is affirmed. Heathcliff, like any character, has separate, free existence and infinite potential: he 'may have entirely dissimilar reasons' for appearing the way he does – reasons his author cannot imagine. The passage is particularly important as it arrives so close to the beginning of the novel, and marks Brontë's concern with the question of narrative. It is like a declaration of her intention, to exploit the doubled narrative framework to the full.

We could notice further features of Lockwood's style in this extract. Examining his sentences, for example, would show that he uses elaborate and educated constructions, and that he uses circumlocution and writes euphemistically (notice, for example, that 'atmospheric tumult' stands for 'storm'). However, we have already discovered a great deal about Brontë's use of the narrator's voice and character, and it is time to summarise what we have found.

The narrator is openly uncertain, and only a small amount of reliable material filters through him from the story to us. We are constantly reminded of how little we know, and how speculative all our interpretations must be. So, it seems at first that Brontë has created a very thin and rarefied story, and we might expect the effect of this narrative to be reductive or economical. This is not the effect, however. The explicit, insistent lack of thorough information in the story paradoxically creates the opposite effect. As we are reminded how thin our information is, we are at the same time reminded, continually, of the fullness of vague distances which contain more but unknown information. Heathcliff's 'entirely dissimilar' motives, the unknowable infinite mystery of another individual, are like the 'other dogs' which 'haunted other recesses': they are things we are vaguely aware of which create an unlimited but obscured environment around the story itself.

At the same time, Brontë has carefully allowed some scraps of material to pass through unchanged by the narrator. In this extract, there were two very short speeches and two local words. Later in the novel, we will find the characters' voices speaking to us directly through the narrative frames. In this extract, a contrast between real

speech and Lockwood's elaborately precious style enhances the directness, the realism, of these scraps, so that they stand out powerfully.

[b] Nelly Dean

Nelly Dean was a girl-servant at Wuthering Heights when Mr Earnshaw returned from a visit to Liverpool with the orphan child, Heathcliff. When Lockwood records the story, she is the middle-aged housekeeper at Thrushcross Grange. Most of the novel is narrated to Lockwood by her. Our next extract is from Mrs Dean's narrative, and comes just after the death of Catherine:

. . . My mind was never in a holier frame, than while I gazed on that untroubled image of Divine rest. I instinctively echoed the words she had uttered, a few hours before, 'Incomparably beyond, and above us all! Whether still on earth or now in heaven, her spirit is at home with God!'

I don't know if it be a peculiarity in me, but I am seldom otherwise than happy while watching in the chamber of death, should no frenzied or despairing mourner share the duty with me. I see a repose that neither earth nor hell can break; and I feel an assurance of the endless and shadowless hereafter – the eternity they have entered – where life is boundless in its duration, and love in its sympathy, and joy in its fulness. I noticed on that occasion how much selfishness there is even in a love like Mr Linton's, when he so regretted Catherine's blessed release!

To be sure one might have doubted, after the wayward and impatient existence she had led, whether she merited a haven of peace at last. One might doubt in seasons of cold reflection, but not then, in the presence of her corpse. It asserted its own tranquillity, which seemed a pledge of equal quiet to its former inhabitants.

'Do you believe such people *are* happy in the other world, sir? I'd give a great deal to know.'

I declined answering Mrs Dean's question, which struck me as something heterodox. She proceeded:

'Retracing the course of Catherine Linton, I fear we have no right to think she is: but we'll leave her with her Maker.'

The master looked asleep, and I ventured soon after sunrise to quit

the room and steal out to the pure, refreshing air. The servants thought me gone to shake off the drowsiness of my protracted watch; in reality my chief motive was seeing Mr Heathcliff. If he had remained among the larches all night he would have heard nothing of the stir at the Grange, unless, perhaps, he might catch the gallop of the messenger going to Gimmerton. If he had come nearer he would probably be aware, from the lights flitting to and fro, and the opening and shutting of the outer doors, that all was not right within.

I wished yet feared to find him. I felt the terrible news must be told, and I longed to get it over, but *how* to do it I did not know.

He was there – at least a few yards further in the park; leant against an old ash tree, his hat off, and his hair soaked with the dew that had gathered on the budded branches, and fell pattering round him. He had been standing a long time in that position, for I saw a pair of ousels passing and repassing, scarcely three feet from him, busy in building their nest, and regarding his proximity no more than that of a piece of timber. They flew off at my approach, and he raised his eyes and spoke:

‘She’s dead!’ he said; ‘I’ve not waited for you to learn that. Put your handkerchief away – don’t snivel before me. Damn you all! She wants none of *your* tears!’

I was weeping as much for him as her: we do sometimes pity creatures that have none of the feeling either for themselves or others; and when I first looked into his face I perceived that he had got intelligence of the catastrophe; and a foolish notion struck me that his heart was quelled, and he prayed, because his lips moved, and his gaze was bent on the ground.

‘Yes, she’s dead!’ I answered, checking my sobs, and drying my cheeks. ‘Gone to heaven, I hope, where we may, everyone, join her, if we take due warning, and leave our evil ways to follow good!’

‘Did *she* take due warning, then?’ asked Heathcliff, attempting a sneer. ‘Did she die like a saint? Come, give me a true history of the event. How did –’

He endeavoured to pronounce the name, but could not manage it; and compressing his mouth, he held a silent combat with his inward agony, defying, meanwhile, my sympathy with an unflinching, ferocious stare.

‘How did she die?’ he resumed, at last – fain, notwithstanding his hardihood, to have a support behind him, for, after the struggle, he trembled, in spite of himself, to his very finger-ends.

‘Poor wretch!’ I thought; ‘you have a heart and nerves the same as your brother men! Why should you be so anxious to conceal them? Your pride cannot blind God! You tempt him to wring them, till he forces a cry of humiliation!’

‘Quietly as a lamb!’ I answered, aloud. ‘She drew a sigh, and stretched herself, like a child reviving, and sinking again to sleep; and five minutes after I felt one little pulse at her heart, and nothing more!’

‘And – and did she ever mention me?’ he asked, hesitating, as if he dreaded the answer to his question would introduce details that he could not bear to hear.

‘Her senses never returned – she recognised nobody from the time you left her,’ I said. ‘She lies with a sweet smile on her face; and her latest ideas wandered back to pleasant early days. Her life closed in a gentle dream – may she wake as kindly in the other world!’

‘May she wake in torment!’ he cried, with frightful vehemence, stamping his foot, and groaning in a sudden paroxysm of ungovernable passion. ‘Why, she’s a liar to the end! Where is she? Not *there* – not in heaven – not perished – where? Oh! you said you cared nothing for my sufferings! And I pray one prayer – I repeat it till my tongue stiffens – 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 – I know that ghosts *have* wandered on earth. Be with me always – take any form – drive me mad! only *do* not leave me in this abyss, where I cannot find you! Oh, God! it is unutterable! I *cannot* live without my life! I *cannot* live without my soul!’

He dashed his head against the knotted trunk; and, lifting up his eyes, howled, not like a man, but like a savage beast getting goaded to death with knives and spears.

I observed several splashes of blood about the bark of the tree, and his hand and forehead were both stained; probably the scene I witnessed was a repetition of others acted during the night. It hardly moved my compassion – it appalled me; still I felt reluctant to quit him so. But the moment he recollected himself enough to notice me watching, he thundered a command for me to go, and I obeyed. He was beyond my skill to quiet or console!

(*Wuthering Heights*, pp. 164–7)

Our first extract introduced us to Emily Brontë’s concern with the

narrative frame. In particular, we noticed three features. First, the narrator's guesses and interpretations of the story are repeatedly emphasised; secondly, the narrator's character interferes with the story (Lockwood projects his own character onto Heathcliff); finally, Brontë establishes a contrast between the narrator's language and the language of the story, which sets off the direct strength of the story itself.

The present extract shows a more complicated situation. Brontë's manipulation of the narrative frame has developed, and this extract is narrated through the two 'filters' of Mrs Dean and Lockwood. We can begin by asking: are the three features we noticed in the previous extract, present here as well?

Mrs Dean does use guesswork, and interprets on the basis of what she observes. When she approaches Heathcliff and announces Cathy's death, for example, she tells us that 'a foolish notion struck me that his heart was quelled, and he prayed' because Heathcliff's mouth is moving. This is a straightforward example of the narrator guessing about the character's state of mind, and by calling her guess a 'foolish notion', Mrs Dean reminds us that we cannot rely on her. A more complex situation surrounds her picture of the dead Cathy as 'that untroubled image of Divine rest'. This is a conventional view of the dead, yet in the context of *Wuthering Heights*, Mrs Dean's description raises unanswerable questions. We will discuss these later in our analysis. For now, we simply notice that she does guess about the characters, and that she repeatedly reminds us not to rely on her guesses. In this case, she goes so far as to ask Lockwood whether Cathy is in heaven ('Divine rest') or not.

Does the narrator's character interfere with the story? Yes, again. Mrs Dean is an active participant in this part of the story, and she acts on the basis of what she believes, introducing her concepts of good, evil, and Heathcliff's character, into her words. She admonishes him pompously ('if we . . . leave our evil ways'), and rubs salt into his wounds by saying that Cathy died 'Quietly as a lamb' and without mentioning his name. These are hostile actions. As with her guesswork, Mrs Dean's interference will provoke further discussion below.

It is more difficult to identify a contrast between the narrator's

language and that of the story, in this extract, because Mrs Dean's language spreads into the dialogue in which she takes part. However, two features stand out. First, there is a marked contrast between her language and Heathcliff's. Their disagreement over Cathy comes through in the contrast between Mrs Dean's 'sweet smile' and 'kindly', and Heathcliff's peremptory 'May she wake in torment!' They even insult each other in contrasting diction: Mrs Dean is pompously self-righteous ('if we take due warning . . . etc. '), Heathcliff biting and hostile: 'Don't snivel before me. Damn you all!' Secondly, Brontë includes a pure Lockwood-ism, similar to the precious 'penetralium' we picked out from the earlier extract. Here, Lockwood thinks the housekeeper's speculations about salvation are 'something *heterodox*' (my italics). This classically-derived, academic word introduces to the passage the full linguistic distance the story travels before reaching the reader. It begins in the direct emotion of Heathcliff's words, then passes through Mrs Dean's bland pomposities and Lockwood's prissy academia, before reaching us. We can suggest that this linguistic journey is reflected in a parallel journey of experience and attitudes, from the story to us.

We have established, then, that the three features we noticed from the first extract are all present again here. However, the situation between narrators and story seems to be much more complicated in this extract; and we have set aside two questions for further discussion, the first of which concerns Mrs Dean's guessing.

The narrative frame in *Wuthering Heights* throws up complicated and ambiguous ironies. This is only a short extract, but we have deferred full discussion because there are so many implications that it is difficult to hold them all in our heads at the same time. In these circumstances it is helpful to summarise exactly what happens in relation to the narrative. Here is an attempt to reduce the implications of Mrs Dean's guesswork to manageable proportions, by summarising.

Mrs Dean guesses about the internal states and opinions of three characters: she guesses about Heathcliff, Cathy, and God. We will begin with the most straightforward of these.