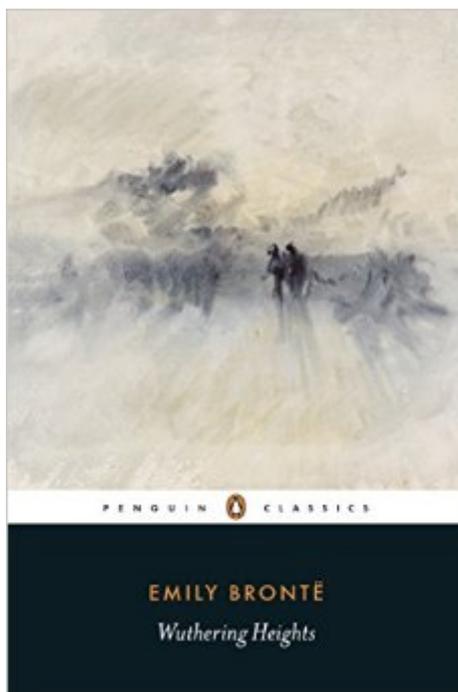


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Wuthering Heights (Penguin Classics)



Synopsis

Emily Brontë's only novel, a work of tremendous and far-reaching influence, the Penguin Classics edition of *Wuthering Heights* is the definitive edition of the text, edited with an introduction by Pauline Nestor. Lockwood, the new tenant of Thrushcross Grange, situated on the bleak Yorkshire moors, is forced to seek shelter one night at *Wuthering Heights*, the home of his landlord. There he discovers the history of the tempestuous events that took place years before; of the intense relationship between the gypsy foundling Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw; and how Catherine, forced to choose between passionate, tortured Heathcliff and gentle, well-bred Edgar Linton, surrendered to the expectations of her class. As Heathcliff's bitterness and vengeance at his betrayal is visited upon the next generation, their innocent heirs must struggle to escape the legacy of the past. In this edition, a new preface by Lucasta Miller, author of *The Brontë Myth*, looks at the ways in which the novel has been interpreted, from Charlotte Brontë onwards. This complements Pauline Nestor's introduction, which discusses changing critical receptions of the novel, as well as Emily Brontë's influences and background. Emily Brontë (1818-48), along with her sisters, Charlotte and Anne, was one of the most significant literary figures of the 19th century. She wrote just one strikingly innovative novel, *Wuthering Heights*, but was also a gifted and intense poet. If you enjoyed *Wuthering Heights*, you may like Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*, also available in Penguin Classics. 'Wuthering Heights is commonly thought of as "romantic", but try rereading it without being astonished by the comfortableness with which Brontë's characters subject one another to extremes of physical and psychological violence' Jeanette Winterson 'As a first novel, there is very little that can compare to it. Even Shakespeare took over a decade to reach the cliff-top extremities of *King Lear*' Sarah Waters

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Rather than delve on the contents of this strangest and strongest of English novels, so intensely poetic in its haunting darkness and otherness, I'll comment briefly on the best editions available for a good first contact:

A) Text oriented editions (that is, editions with few materials added: normally an Introduction, annotation, and perhaps Charlotte's Preface and Biographical Notice and some bibliographical indications).

1. Oxford World's Classics: authoritative text, good annotation, excellent introduction.
2. Penguin's Classics: same as above, everything looks a little shorter but is excellent nonetheless.
3. Wordsworth Classics edition. This would be a rather fine edition as befitting this collection, if it had a good 1847 text and not the heavily tampered-with Charlotte's 1850 edition. The text itself reflects accurately that of the 1900 Haworth Edition -a careful one-. The wording changes aren't perhaps so worrying nor is the toning-down of the dialectal tirades -although funny and useless-. What is worrying is the disappearance of more than six hundred paragraph entries (I mean just the paragraphing, not the contents itself!), that makes for a different -and worse- reading experience. Very good and full -if brief- annotation. Mass-market, glued paperback.
4. Heather Glen's for Routledge. One of the finest text-oriented editions, especially for the excellent Introduction and Epilogue together with its good annotation, out-of-print for rather obscure reasons. If you find still a very good to fine copy at Canadian branch (or at abebooks.com, it would be a good buy.
5. Orchises two-volume facsimile reprint of the 1847 edition. No notes nor any additional material. the books are well produced if a little expensive.

Published in 1847, WUTHERING HEIGHTS was not well received by the reading public, many of whom condemned it as sordid, vulgar, and unnatural--and author Emily Bronte went to her grave in 1848 believing that her only novel was a failure. It was not until 1850, when WUTHERING HEIGHTS received a second printing with an introduction by Emily's sister Charlotte, that it attracted a wide readership. And from that point the reputation of the book has never looked back. Today it is widely recognized as one of the great novels of English literature. Even so, WUTHERING HEIGHTS continues to divide readers. It is not a pretty love story; rather, it is swirling tale of largely unlikeable people caught up in obsessive love that turns to dark madness. It is cruel, violent, dark and brooding, and many people find it extremely unpleasant. And yet--it possesses a grandeur of

language and design, a sense of tremendous pity and great loss that sets it apart from virtually every other novel written. The novel is told in the form of an extended flashback. After a visit to his strange landlord, a newcomer to the area desires to know the history of the family--which he receives from Nelly Deans, a servant who introduces us to the Earnshaw family who once resided in the house known as Wuthering Heights. It was once a cheerful place, but Old Earnshaw adopted a "Gipsy" child who he named Heathcliff. And Catherine, daughter of the house, found in him the perfect companion: wild, rude, and as proud and cruel as she. But although Catherine loves him, even recognizes him as her soulmate, she cannot lower herself to marry so far below her social station. She instead marries another, and in so doing sets in motion an obsession that will destroy them all.

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