



Sarah C. James

A spoof of Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*

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BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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“What is love without possessions?”

- Cathy

Blithering Heights

SPOOF. There are mysterious circumstances, arduous quests, improbable events, exaggerated emotions, melodramatic blithering, high adventure, doom and gloom, and even a ghost—and that’s just the original version of *Wuthering Heights*. This over-the-top spoof pokes fun at all the exaggerated elements of Emily Brontë’s classic Gothic romance novel. Nelly Dean, a servant at Blithering Heights, relates the touching “love” story of how shallow, materialistic Cathy throws her true love, Heathcliff, aside to marry her boring but rich neighbor, Edgar Linton. After all, “What is love without possessions?”

Performance Time: Approximately 90 minutes.

Characters

(8 M, 4 F, 3 flexible, extras)

MR. LOCKWOOD: Current renter of Thrushcross Grange

MRS. ELLEN (NELLY) DEAN: Catherine's servant and the story's narrator.

JOSEPH: Servant at Blithering Heights; a man of dark humors.

CATHERINE EARNSHAW (CATHY): Daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Earnshaw.

HINDLEY EARNSHAW: Catherine's brother.

MR. EARNSHAW: Catherine's father.

HEATHCLIFF: Adopted son of Mr. Earnshaw; a dark-skinned gypsy; filthy and dirty; handsome and morose.

DR. KENNETH: Lecherous family doctor.

EDGAR LINTON: Dashing young man; rich neighbor, former owner of Thrushcross Grange.

ISABELLA LINTON: Edgar's sister; has a pronounced lisp and often spits when she lisps.

MR. LINTON: Edgar's father.

MRS. LINTON: Edgar's mother.

DOG 1, 2

DANCER

EXTRAS: As party-goers, dancers.

Setting

1750s-1801. In and around Blithering Heights on the Yorkshire Moors of England. A unit set might be used so that several locales may move smoothly from one to the other.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1: Blithering Heights. There is a cold sitting room with a large fireplace SL and a practical window on one wall.

Scene 2: On the moor, one year later.

Scene 3: The heights.

Scene 4: Blithering Heights.

Scene 5: Blithering Heights.

Scene 6: Blithering Heights.

Scene 7: The heights.

Scene 8: Interior of the Linton mansion.

Act II

Scene 1: Blithering Heights.

Scene 2: Blithering Heights.

Scene 3: Cathy's bedroom in the Linton mansion.

Scene 4: Blithering Heights.

Props

Huge family tree chart. (In the form of a family tree, but it makes no sense, with names misspelled, limbs in crazy directions, and halves of names put together to make names that aren't real. Included names may be Heathshaw, Hindley, Mr. Linton, Mrs. Earnstraw, Cathy, Cathie, Kathy, Kathi, Frances, Edmond, Vasco de Gama, Godzilla, Isabelladella, Joseph (with his name marked out), Mr. Earnton, Bathsheba, or others you come up with.)	Mass of wood and wires (to represent broken violin)
Mug of ale	2 Stick horses
2 Teacups	Bible
Pail	Huge fake boulder
Books	2 Candelabras
Fake arm	Hat, cape, dress, for Cathy
Candle or lantern	Huge pile of paper
Nightshirt, for Heathcliff	Letter
	Rifle
	Glass of wine
	Knitting needles, yarn
	Knitting bag
	Blanket or wrap
	Huge bottle of medicine
	Huge ladle
	Large medical bag
	Wedding gown, for Cathy
	Veil
	Rice
	Wine bottles
	Purse
	Traveling clothes, for Cathy
	Stethoscope
	Walker
	Long white flowing nightgown, for Cathy

Special Effects

Overbearing violin music	Violent violin music
Door banging	Awkward sound supposed to be horse galloping
Wind	Strong wind
Snow	Rain
Door opening and closing	Wedding music
Sad violin music	Crashing sound
Fire in fireplace	Long moan
Dance music	Mysterious violin music
Lightning	Mist
Thunder	
Hand slap	

Act I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: *Blithering Heights, 1801. Cold sitting room with a large fireplace SL and a practical window on one wall. Present are Heathcliff, in his late 50s, his wife Isabella, and their servants Joseph and Nelly, both in their late 60s. Heathcliff holds a mug of ale. Isabella is drinking tea. Overbearing violin music plays. There is a banging on the door off right. All eyes turn that way, but no one moves. There is a lot more banging.*)

LOCKWOOD: (*Muffled voice, off right.*) Will somebody open the door! It's cold out here! (*After more banging, there is the brief sound of wind as the door is opened and closed, and a freezing Mr. Lockwood bursts into the room, scattering huge amounts of snow off his hat and shoulders. He stops when he sees the others. The music fades out. His teeth chattering.*) T-t-t-there was n-n-n-nobody to open the door, so I...rough weather out there. Snowing. (*He brushes more snow off his shoulders.*) And a bit chilly. (*He shivers. They continue to stare at him.*) Very chilly. One might even say, "cold." Freezing, really. My hands are numb. (*Pause.*) I'm Mr. Lockwood, the new tenant at Thrushcross Grange. Mr. Heathcliff?

HEATHCLIFF: (*Gruffly.*) Sit down.

(*Lockwood spots the tea Isabella is drinking.*)

LOCKWOOD: (*To Isabella.*) I shall be glad to have a cup of tea.

ISABELLA: Were you asked?

LOCKWOOD: No. It is proper for you to ask me. (*She ignores him and drinks her tea.*) Ah, well. (*To Heathcliff.*) As your new tenant, sir, I came as I promised...to pay my respects.

(*No response.*) But, with this snowstorm, I fear I shall be weather bound for half an hour. Perhaps I could borrow a guide among your lads to lead me back to the Grange. Could you spare one?

HEATHCLIFF: No, I could not.

LOCKWOOD: Oh, indeed. Well, then. (*He moves to the window or French doors at up left.*) The roads will be buried already. I'll lose my way. (*He turns back to them.*) What must I do?

(*Joseph picks up a pail and crosses toward the door at left, but pauses at Lockwood. He indicates the pail.*)

JOSEPH: Slop—for the hogs.

ISABELLA: (*She lisps.*) Jotheph, wait. Perhaphth Mr. Lockwood ith hungry.

(*Joseph smiles and again indicates the pail.*)

LOCKWOOD: (*To Joseph.*) Ah, thank you. But no thank you.

JOSEPH: Suit yourself. (*He exits SL.*)

LOCKWOOD: (*To Heathcliff.*) Do point out some landmarks by which I may know my way home.

HEATHCLIFF: Take the road you came.

LOCKWOOD: Then if you hear of me being discovered dead in a bog, your conscience won't bother you? All I ask is for a guide.

ISABELLA: Who? There ith himthelf, Nelly, Jotheph, and I. I am the mithtreth here, Ithabella.

LOCKWOOD: Ithabella?

ISABELLA: (*Corrects him.*) Ithabella.

LOCKWOOD: Ithabella?

NELLY: Isabella.

LOCKWOOD: Oh, I see. There are no boys at the farm?

ISABELLA: None.

LOCKWOOD: Then it follows that I am compelled to stay.

HEATHCLIFF: *(Sternly.)* I hope it will be a lesson to you to make no more rash journeys on these hills. As to staying here, I don't keep accommodations for visitors.

LOCKWOOD: I can sleep in a chair in this room.

HEATHCLIFF: Suit yourself.

(Heathcliff exits SR. Isabella silently follows him.)

LOCKWOOD: Very well then. *(He looks at some books piled near the window and reads from the covers.)* What are these? Diaries? *(He reads the titles.)* "Catherine Earnshaw," "Catherine Heathcliff," "Catherine Linton."

(Nelly crosses to him and takes the books away.)

NELLY: Those are not for you, Mr. Lockwood. *(She exits SR.)*

LOCKWOOD: Yes, well...good evening. *(Sarcastic.)* What pleasant neighbors. Ah, well. I'll get on with a little nap, then.

(Lockwood looks around and settles into a chair. Pulling his coat tightly around him, he dozes off. After a brief pause, the window at up right swings open, snow gushes in, and the wind howls. The violin music plays.)

CATHY'S VOICE: *(At the window, a ghostly sound mixing with the wind.)* Let me in, let me in! *(Pause.)* I've come home. I'd lost my way on the moors, but now I've come home. Let me in. Please. Let me in. Please. *(Pause. More demanding.)* Hey—you! *(Lockwood jerks awake.)* Open the stupid window! *(Pleadingly.)* Please.

(Lockwood looks for the voice.)

LOCKWOOD: What? What is it? What do I hear?

CATHY'S VOICE: A mysterious voice.

LOCKWOOD: Oh! *(He jumps up and faces the window. A female arm appears at the window.)* Complete with a mysterious arm.

CATHY'S VOICE: It is I, Catherine Linton. I want to come in from the cold. Open the window further.

(Lockwood goes to the window.)

LOCKWOOD: Of course. Of course, I'll let you in. But you'll have to come around to the door.

(The arm grabs him.)

CATHY'S VOICE: Twenty years! I've been lost for 20 years!

LOCKWOOD: Let me go, mysterious hand! Let go, I say! *(He plays tug-of-war with the arm. He calls off right.)* Mr. Heathcliff! Mr. Heathcliff! *(To the arm.)* Begone! I'll never let you in. Never! *(Explanation.)* I mean, I can't. You're holding me too tightly. Let go, I say!

(Heathcliff enters from SR, dressed in a nightshirt. Nelly is right behind him with a candle or lantern.)

HEATHCLIFF: *(Angrily.)* What is it, Mr. Lockwood? Why are you disturbing my sleep?

LOCKWOOD: Well, see here. There's this mysterious... *(At that moment, Lockwood jerks the disembodied arm into the room and, shaking in horror, stares at it.)* Aeeiiii!

(Heathcliff recognizes the arm.)

HEATHCLIFF: Ahhh! *(He slaps his forehead hard.)* It's Catherine!

LOCKWOOD: No, sir. It's an arm.

HEATHCLIFF: Catherine's arm! *(He grabs the arm from Lockwood. Melodramatic.)* Where is the rest of my darling, my dearest one?

LOCKWOOD: This place is haunted, swarming with ghosts and goblins!

HEATHCLIFF: What do you mean?

LOCKWOOD: It was that little fiend, Catherine Linton, or Earnshaw, or whatever she was called. She told me she had been walking the earth these 20 years.

HEATHCLIFF: *(Melodramatic.)* Where is she? Where is my Cathy, my dearest heart?

LOCKWOOD: *(Indicates outside the window.)* She's out there, sir. She called to me.

(Heathcliff shoves Lockwood out of the way as he makes his way to the window.)

HEATHCLIFF: *(Calls out, passionately.)* Come in, come in! Cathy, do come. Oh, do. *(A burst of wind throws snow into his face. He shoves it aside and continues.)* Oh, my heart's darling. If you come in, I'll return your arm to you. See? I have it right here. *(Pause.)* You won't come? You won't speak to me? *(He turns toward the door and then back at the window.)* Then I'll come to you. Wait for me, Catherine! Wait for me! *(He dashes toward the front door.)* I'm coming, my darling! I'm coming!

(The sound of a door opening and a fierce wind is heard off left. Lockwood briefly stares after Heathcliff, and then turns to Nelly.)

LOCKWOOD: He'll catch the sniffles. *(Pause. He pulls his coat around him.)* And so will we if we don't close the door. *(The door is closed and the wind sounds disappear. Joseph appears solemnly and threateningly at right. He literally snarls at Lockwood. Then he exits. To Nelly, with irony.)* I trust the hogs have been properly fed.

NELLY: Joseph will be going to his room to study the Good Book, as he always does, with great reverence. Later, he'll

deliver a hell and brimstone sermon to the four walls of his room that will shake the entire house.

LOCKWOOD: You don't seem shaken. You're used to strange events of this sort? I mean, a ghost practically throws herself into the house, Mr. Heathcliff dashes through the snow in his nightie, and you hardly seem phased.

NELLY: Eighteen years, sir, I've lived and worked here.

LOCKWOOD: Really?

(Nelly thinks.)

NELLY: Well, no. Not really. I was here at Blithering Heights when Miss Cathy was born. When she married, I went with her to Thrushcross Grange. When she died, the master retained me for his housekeeper. Then he died.

LOCKWOOD: Then why are you here at Blithering Heights again?

NELLY: I'm not sure. When I read the novel, I'm still at the Grange living in luxury. But in the movie, I've somehow ended up back here...in this dark, brooding place.

LOCKWOOD: Movie? What's a movie?

NELLY: A glamorized version of life. *(Pause.)* Times have greatly changed since then.

LOCKWOOD: Since when?

NELLY: Since the book was written.

LOCKWOOD: You've seen a good many alterations, I suppose?

NELLY: I have. And troubles, too.

LOCKWOOD: Tell me about it. Is Mr. Heathcliff rich?

NELLY: Rich, sir? He has nobody-knows-what money. Yes, yes. He's rich enough to live in a finer house than this. But he'll make much more money living here and leasing the Grange to you. He's greedy, sir...and alone in the world.

LOCKWOOD: But he has a wife—Isabella.

NELLY: Isabella.

LOCKWOOD: Yes, yes, of course. Isabella.

NELLY: Like I said...alone in the world.

LOCKWOOD: Where did she come from originally?

NELLY: She is my late master's sister.

LOCKWOOD: Isabella Linton...now Isabella Heathcliff.

NELLY: You're very quick.

LOCKWOOD: I've heard a Hindley Earnshaw was once master here.

NELLY: Yes. Catherine's brother.

LOCKWOOD: Isabella's cousin then?

NELLY: Yes. No. They're unrelated. Except by marriage. I think. But they're not married. To each other. Hindley married Frances, and they had a son, Hareton, neither of whom appears in the movie. So they're not important. Forget them. Erase them from your mind. But Mr. Edgar Linton and Miss Catherine had a daughter, Cathy, who is the next generation Linton, but I don't want to talk about that.

LOCKWOOD: Why not?

NELLY: Because Miss Catherine—Mrs. Linton—died of heartbreak, not childbirth.

LOCKWOOD: What? That doesn't make sense.

NELLY: If you want to make "cents," go to a bank. If you want to hear a good story, listen to me.

LOCKWOOD: I see. The name "Earnshaw" is carved over the front door. (*He indicates off left.*) Are they an old family?

NELLY: Very old, sir. Hareton is the last of them, as our Miss Cathy is of us.

LOCKWOOD: Who is "us?"

NELLY: The Lintons.

LOCKWOOD: You're a Linton?

NELLY: Why would you say that?

LOCKWOOD: Because you just said so.

NELLY: Nonsense. I'm the housekeeper.

LOCKWOOD: I'm confused. The Earnshaws own Blithering Heights?

NELLY: Sir, pay attention. Mr. Heathcliff owns Blithering Heights.

LOCKWOOD: But you just said—

NELLY: It's all very confusing.

LOCKWOOD: Very.

NELLY: So I've prepared this chart to help you. *(She gets a huge chart from somewhere and shows it to him and the audience. With a pointer, she haphazardly points to various names.)* You see, she's married to him and he's single though he wishes he were married to her because the dogs bit her, but he didn't want her married at all because he wanted her for himself but couldn't have her, so he got other dogs to bite back. All in all, there's been a lot of...back-biting. [Or "dog-eat-dog situations"] *(Pause.)* Do you understand?

LOCKWOOD: Not a word of it.

NELLY: Good. Then I will clarify it with the story. *(She puts the chart away.)*

LOCKWOOD: A story? It's quite late. Is this a long story?

NELLY: Very.

LOCKWOOD: Could you abbreviate it?

NELLY: I'll just tell you the first half.

LOCKWOOD: But then I won't know what happened in the end.

NELLY: Perhaps someday we'll do a sequel.

LOCKWOOD: What's a "sequel?"

NELLY: *(Ignoring him.)* I was almost always at Blithering Heights...

LOCKWOOD: As the housekeeper?

NELLY: ...because my mother had nursed Mr. Hindley Earnshaw—that was Hareton's father—and I got used to playing with the children. Hindley was fourteen. *(He enters dressed as a 14 year old.)* ...and Miss Cathy was twelve years old when it all started.

(She enters dressed as a 12 year old.)

LOCKWOOD: When what started?

NELLY: My story. Will you stop interrupting!

LOCKWOOD: Yes. Sorry. Do go on.

NELLY: One fine summer evening, Mr. Earnshaw, the old master... *(He enters in traveling clothes.)* ...returned home from a few days in Liverpool.

(Cathy and Hindley rush to him.)

CATHY: Oh, Father, you've come home. You've come home.

(She kisses him.)

NELLY: *(To Lockwood.)* Miss Cathy always liked to repeat herself.

CATHY: *(To Earnshaw.)* What did you bring us? What did you bring us?

NELLY: *(To Lockwood.)* You see?

HINDLEY: *(To Earnshaw.)* Yes. I want to see. Please, please, let me see.

MR. EARNSHAW: Very well, children. You'll be delighted, I'm sure. *(He turns toward the door at left.)* Come on in. We're waiting for you.

(Joseph ushers in Heathcliff who is dressed as a 14 year old. He wears torn and dirty clothes and is disheveled. Cathy and Hindley find him disgusting.)

NELLY: *(To Lockwood.)* He had brought with him a dirty, ragged, black-haired child... *(She walks into the scene as Lockwood remains at the side.)* Mr. Earnshaw, what is this?

EARNSHAW: It's a dirty, ragged, black-haired child.

NELLY: Who repeats only gibberish.

HEATHCLIFF: Gibberish, gibberish, gibberish, gibber-gibber-gibber-ish.

EARNSHAW: Yes.

HINDLEY: But how could you? How could you bring a gypsy brat into the house when you have us to care for?

EARNSHAW: I found the boy starving and without even a cardboard box for a house, and was determined I would not leave it as I found it.

CATHY: What about my riding crop? You promised me a riding crop.

(Earnshaw searches through his pockets.)

EARNSHAW: I must have lost it on the way home.

CATHY: *(Indicating Heathcliff.)* It's his fault! It's his fault!
(She cries.)

HINDLEY: *(To Earnshaw.)* And you were going to bring me a fine fiddle.

(Mr. Earnshaw pulls from his coat a mass of wood and wires.)

MR. EARNSHAW: It seems to have been slightly crushed.

HINDLEY: Crushed? *(Breaks character.)* No, no. It's supposed to be a fine, un-crushed fiddle. Haven't you seen the movie?

EARNSHAW: *(Breaks character.)* It's supposed to be a crushed fiddle. Haven't you read the book?

HINDLEY: *(Angrily. In character.)* Because you were more interested in him than me! The gypsy boy did it. He crushed my fine fiddle. *(He points to Heathcliff.)* I hate him, I hate him! *(Earnshaw slaps Hindley.)* Owwww! *(Breaks character.)* I don't remember a slap in the movie.

EARNSHAW: *(Breaks character.)* Read the book! *(In character. To Nelly.)* Wash it, give it clean things, Nelly, and let it sleep with the children.

HINDLEY: *(Angrily. In character.)* He'll not sleep in our room. Never!

CATHY: No. Never. Never.

EARNSHAW: Now, children, you may as well learn here and now to share. *(Suddenly loudly.)* Or I'll toss you out into the snow until you freeze.

CATHY: But, Father, it's summertime.

EARNSHAW: I'll wait until winter, and *then* I'll toss you out. *(Pause.)* I've decided to call it Heathcliff. *(He exits SR.)*

HINDLEY: "Heathcliff?" Yuck. I'm glad you didn't name me.

CATHY: *(To Nelly indicating Heathcliff.)* He would be cute—if he were clean.

(Cathy exits SR. Hindley crosses to Heathcliff.)

HINDLEY: I'll get you for this.

(Hindley shoves Heathcliff and exits. A stoic Heathcliff remains onstage as Nelly crosses to Lockwood, who reappears at the side.)

NELLY: From the very beginning, he bred bad feelings in the house, and Hindley viewed him as a usurper of his parent's affections, and he grew bitter over these injuries. Old Earnshaw became furious when he discovered his son persecuting the "poor, fatherless child," as he called him. But Miss Cathy and he became very thick.

(Nelly and Lockwood exit. Blackout.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: *Outdoors, one year later. Cathy enters riding one stick horse and carrying another. She approaches Heathcliff as Hindley watches from the side. Cathy hands Heathcliff a stick horse.*)

CATHY: Here, Heathcliff. This horse is yours. Father bought it for you. (*Without a word, he jumps aboard and rides in a circle. The horse whinnies and rears up, but Heathcliff controls it. Heathcliff can make the sounds, or they can be on CD.*) I'll race you back to the barn. The loser takes care of both horses for a week.

HEATHCLIFF: No.

CATHY: The loser cleans out the stalls for a week.

HEATHCLIFF: No.

CATHY: Uhhh, the loser becomes the other's slave.

HEATHCLIFF: (*In a bitter voice.*) I like that idea. Forever.

CATHY: Oh. Well, okay. Forever. (*They gallop their horses toward the barn – around in circles onstage – leaping over objects such as chairs or benches. Excited and very loud violin music plays for the race. Soon at the barn and out of breath, the music stops and they dismount. Heathcliff has arrived first. Cathy smiles.*) I am your slave...forever, your majesty.

(*She bows. Hindley crosses to Heathcliff.*)

HINDLEY: (*To Heathcliff.*) I want your horse.

CATHY: Hindley, no.

HEATHCLIFF: (*To Hindley.*) No. I want *your* horse.

HINDLEY: (*Breaks character.*) You want *my* horse? The script says I want *your* horse.

HEATHCLIFF: (*Breaks character.*) The book says *I* want *your* horse.

HINDLEY: It does? *(In character.)* If you don't give me your horse, I'll tell Father that you said you would toss me out of Blithering Heights after he dies.

HEATHCLIFF: *(In character.)* If you don't give me your horse, I'll tell Father that you beat me ceaselessly, and I'll show him the bruises.

CATHY: *(Breaks character.)* One of us should actually read the book before we make a movie.

HINDLEY: *(In character. To Heathcliff.)* I'll show you. I'll strike you with an iron tool.

HEATHCLIFF: *(Breaks character.)* No. It's with a rock.

HINDLEY: A rock?

HEATHCLIFF: A rock.

(Hindley looks around, spots a huge boulder, and smiles.)

HINDLEY: Very well. A rock. *(He struggles to lift it.)* Your horse.

HEATHCLIFF: Never.

HINDLEY: All right then. Take this. *(He heaves the boulder, and it strikes Heathcliff and knocks him down.)* Ha!

(He snatches Heathcliff's horse from him and exits laughing with it. Cathy kneels beside Heathcliff.)

CATHY: Oh, Heathcliff. He's hurt you. He's hurt you. Do you have anything to say? Anything clever or cute or, better yet, ominous and foreshadowing?

HEATHCLIFF: *(Bitterly.)* I'll pay him back.

CATHY: Oh, Heathcliff, you must do better than that.

HEATHCLIFF: Oh. Well... *(Bitterly.)* I'll pay him back—no matter how long it takes.

CATHY: Well, that's a little better.

HEATHCLIFF: *(Breaks character.)* Hey! I don't write the stuff; I just recite it.

CATHY: Oh, Heathcliff, you are so beautiful when you're angry. Did you know that? So very beautiful. I think you must be a Queen from Arabia.

HEATHCLIFF: King.

CATHY: That's what I meant. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern sent you from Denmark, but you were captured by pirates and brought here.

HEATHCLIFF: That was Hamlet.

CATHY: Who?

HEATHCLIFF: Hamlet was from Denmark. I'm from Liverpool. I think.

CATHY: Ah, sweet Prince!

HEATHCLIFF: And you – my princess.

CATHY: No. I want to be queen.

HEATHCLIFF: Then we must have a castle.

CATHY: Yes, we must. A castle. A castle. (*She looks at a height.*) There. There it is. A castle. Come, Heathcliff. (*She climbs the height.*) Let's climb to the castle.

(*Blackout.*)

Scene 3

(AT RISE: Lights fade up on the heights. Halfway up a steep hill, Cathy and Heathcliff are climbing to its top.)

HEATHCLIFF: (As he climbs.) This is far enough. I'm getting dizzy. (He looks around.) This isn't a castle. It's a rock. Peniston Crag, isn't it?

CATHY: (Breaks character.) I see you haven't read the book, either.

HEATHCLIFF: No, but I read the Cliffs Notes.

CATHY: It's not Peniston Crag, Heathcliff. It's Pennistow Crag. Better known to the locals as Pennistow-owhoa...whoa [PENN-is-STOW-whoa-OH-whoa-whoa] Crag. It's an old Celtic term. Or maybe it's Spanish.

HEATHCLIFF: Maybe we need to find a place with a shorter name.

CATHY: This will do fine. Our own private palace, Heathcliff. Let's never leave it. Never.

HEATHCLIFF: Except for dinner.

CATHY: That goes without saying.

HEATHCLIFF: Our lair, our aerie, our empire.

CATHY: Don't get carried away.

HEATHCLIFF: No matter what happens beyond our moat, we will always be the king and princess—

CATHY: Queen.

HEATHCLIFF: King and Queen of Pennistow-oh-whoa-oh—

CATHY: Whoa Crag.

HEATHCLIFF: Crag Castle. Forever and ever.

CATHY: Yes, oh, yes, Heathcliff. Forever and ever!

(Sad violin music begins to play.)

HEATHCLIFF: What's that?

CATHY: Sad music. Someone must have died. Let's go see.

(Blackout.)

Scene 4

(AT RISE: Inside Blithering Heights as before, a bit later. Cathy and Heathcliff climb down from the heights as a young Nelly, Hindley, Joseph, and Dr. Kenneth enter from SR in a somber mood.)

NELLY: (To Dr. Kenneth.) How is he?

DR. KENNETH: I'm afraid he has passed on.

NELLY: First Mrs. Earnshaw, and now the master himself.

CATHY: Oh, Father! Oh, he's dead, Heathcliff! He's dead.

(She cries on Heathcliff's shoulder.)

JOSEPH: (To Cathy.) What are you thinking of, girl, to roar in that way over a saint in heaven?

NELLY: Joseph, you can stop your sermonizing and pious discoursing now.

JOSEPH: If we don't pray and sermonize, we'll all go to hell. Do you hear me? We'll all go to hell!

NELLY: If it would get us away from you, it might be worth it.

JOSEPH: The devil is speaking in you.

DR. KENNETH: (To Cathy and Hindley.) You may go to him now.

CATHY: (As Joseph, Dr. Kenneth, Nelly, and she exit.) Poor, poor Father!

(Heathcliff starts after them, but Hindley stands in his way and pushes him back.)

HINDLEY: Not you, gypsy beggar. (Heathcliff stops, but remains stoic.) Blithering Heights is now under my charge. And you are the new stable boy. So go. Feed the sheep, slop the hogs, bathe the horses, and clean out the stalls...

(Hindley turns away and then turns back smiling.) With your bare hands! *(He laughs.)*

(Heathcliff looks at his hands and turns up his nose.)

HEATHCLIFF: But that stuff stinks.

HINDLEY: And so will you!

(Hindley laughs again and exits after the others. Heathcliff lowers his head and exits in the other direction. Blackout.)

Scene 5

(AT RISE: Fireplace at Blithering Heights, 1801. Nelly enters with Lockwood, both drinking tea.)

LOCKWOOD: The tea is delicious.

NELLY: Heathcliff made it – with his bare hands.

(Shocked, Lockwood puts his cup down and moves away from it.)

LOCKWOOD: Well, I fear I've lost my taste for it.

NELLY: Pity. Because it would help you stay awake during the next part of my story.

(Lockwood picks up his cup and downs the tea in one gulp. Then he measures his wakefulness.)

LOCKWOOD: I'm not sure that will do the job.

NELLY: No doubt, Mr. Lockwood, that you're wondering what became of Blithering Heights with Mr. Earnshaw dead and the young Mr. Earnshaw the new master?

LOCKWOOD: I was hoping you wouldn't tell me.

NELLY: (*Ignores him.*) As the years breezed by, they took with them all the good spirits of this once fine home. Mr. Hindley became a voracious gambler, a noted drunk, and a vicious tyrant, keeping Miss Cathy isolated from the rest of the world.

LOCKWOOD: And Heathcliff?

NELLY: Banned from the house, banned from the good life, and banned from Miss Cathy.

LOCKWOOD: Ahhh.

NELLY: But the horses seemed to like him. (*A small smile creeps across her face.*) Now, Miss Cathy...she had a mind of her own.

(The lights fade up on the heights. A mature Cathy enters and looks around.)

NELLY: And the two of them had their own private castle.

(Cathy climbs the height to Pennistow Crag.)

LOCKWOOD: Pennistow-oh-whoa...whoa-whoa...hoh-whoa...

NELLY: Don't try to pronounce it, Mr. Lockwood. The Crag. Yes. Their private place.

(Nelly smiles and exits. Lockwood follows her off. The fireplace lights fade out.)

CATHY: *(Calls.)* Heathcliff! Heathcliff! *(He appears, also mature, but dirty and wearing ragged clothes.)* Scale the castle walls and come to me, my lord! *(He does.)* Come. Let us see our world from the heights. Let us take in the beauty of the moors, of the heather, and of the home of the rich and powerful Lintons.

(She points to and focuses on the Linton's home and ignores him.)

HEATHCLIFF: *(Passionately.)* Hindley will beat me again if he finds us together, Cathy. But what do I care? Every day after lunch, he comes out to the stable and strikes me on the head with a rock—with a boulder really. That's why I have all these bumps up here. *(He indicates his head.)* And why I'm a little crazy. But I withstand his vile punishment so I can be close to you. I've thought of running away, but I can't stand the thought of losing you. I will never lose you, Cathy. *(Pause.)* Cathy?

CATHY: *(Still focusing on the Linton's home offstage.)* Yes? You said something, Heathcliff?

HEATHCLIFF: I'm saying you are the heather of the fields,
the rich blossoms of the gardens, the soft petals of the roses.

CATHY: I want to be rich, Heathcliff.

HEATHCLIFF: What? Haven't you been listening to me?

CATHY: And I want to be with you. *(She turns to look at him.)*
But not like this. *(She again faces the Linton's home.)* You're
dirty.

HEATHCLIFF: A little.

CATHY: Your clothes are nothing but rags.

HEATHCLIFF: This is my good-luck shirt.

CATHY: And you smell like shit.

HEATHCLIFF: It's a new cologne.

(She turns to him.)

CATHY: *(Passionately.)* Run away, Heathcliff. Run away,
make a lot of money, and come back for me. We'll sail the
oceans, we'll have only the best clothes—and jewelry—and
we'll build a real castle. *(She stares off.)*

HEATHCLIFF: Run away? I could never leave you, Cathy.

CATHY: *(Back to him.)* Did you say something?

HEATHCLIFF: Yes. I—

CATHY: *(She smiles broadly.)* Do you hear that, Heathcliff?

HEATHCLIFF: *(He listens.)* No. I don't hear anything.

(She looks backstage and repeats her line louder.)

CATHY: I said, do you hear that, Heathcliff?

(Dance music is heard.)

HEATHCLIFF: Oh. Now I do.

CATHY: Dance music. And it's coming from the Linton's
home, from Thrushcross Grange. Come on, Heathcliff.

HEATHCLIFF: No, Cathy!

CATHY: Let's see how the other half lives, Heathcliff. I so want to know. I do, I do.

(The dance music becomes louder. The lights fade up on the interior of the Linton mansion below the heights. Edgar Linton and his sister, Isabella, dance onto the stage. They are followed by Mr. and Mrs. Linton and other couples, if desired. A couple of floor or table candelabras help define the space. Cathy becomes so engrossed in the music that she steps lower from the height. Heathcliff follows.)

HEATHCLIFF: That is disgusting.

CATHY: Why? They're simply dancing.

HEATHCLIFF: But Edgar is dancing with his sister!

CATHY: With Isabella. Yes. Isn't she beautiful?

HEATHCLIFF: She is beautiful and disgusting.

CATHY: And Mr. and Mrs. Linton.

HEATHCLIFF: They're not disgusting.

CATHY: Ohhh! It's so exciting, Heathcliff. That is where I want to be; that is what I want to be—a beautiful, filthy rich woman in a low-cut silk dress with long sparkling diamond earrings and a dazzling necklace—dancing with a handsome man that I hold under my thumb. Do that for me, Heathcliff—do!

(The lights on the heights fade out. As they step onto the ground, there is the sound of two dogs snarling and barking. The sounds are performed by Dogs 1, 2.)

HEATHCLIFF: What's that?

CATHY: The sound of two dogs snarling and barking.

(Dogs 1, 2 enter and race toward Cathy and Heathcliff.)

HEATHCLIFF: And they're after us! Last one over the wall is a dead duck!

(They run in circles to escape Dogs 1, 2, but the animals are in hot pursuit. Heathcliff and Cathy try to scramble upward, but both are too late. Dog 1 grabs Cathy by the foot and Dog 2 grabs Heathcliff by the foot, and the Dogs pull them to the ground. They growl as they shake the legs of their captives. Cathy and Heathcliff scream. Music stops. The Lintons and the other Dancers rush to the scene in a loud commotion.)

HEATHCLIFF: He's tearing me apart! Well, don't just stand there, do something.

DANCER: Sic 'em, Bernard!

(Dogs 1, 2 become more vicious.)

HEATHCLIFF: Not that! Pull them off! Pull them off!

(Edgar steps toward Cathy, ignoring the biting dogs.)

EDGAR: It's Catherine Earnshaw, isn't it? Our neighbor from Blithering Heights. How do you do? I'm Edgar Linton, a rich, handsome, and available bachelor.

CATHY: Cancel the introductions and get this beast off me!

EDGAR: Of course. Just as you say. *(To Dog 1, who is biting Cathy.)* Down, dog. Down. Down, I say. Go to your corner. Go on. Go. *(As Dog 1 backs away, Edgar helps Cathy to stand.)* Here. Let me help you. *(Someone pushes a plush chair forward.)* Come on. Sit in my rich and plush chair.

HEATHCLIFF: *(As he continues to fight off Dog 2.)* What about me?

DANCER: Sic 'im, Bernard!

(Dogs 1, 2 attack Heathcliff, and they roll on the ground. Finally, he throws them off. The Dogs back off as he checks his wounds.)

ISABELLA: Thorry, but we don't have a rith and pluth thair for you.

MR. LINTON: Isabella, don't be rude.

ISABELLA: Thorry, Father.

MRS. LINTON: And thtop lithping.

ISABELLA: Yeth, Mama.

MR. LINTON: I'm the rude one in this family. *(To Heathcliff.)*

Get off my property!

HEATHCLIFF: Not without Cathy. *(He rushes to her and takes her hand.)* I'll protect you, my queen.

CATHY: Uh, Heathcliff, can you find your own way home? I'm thinking of taking up the Lintons on their kind invitation for me to remain here a few days...er, weeks.

MR. LINTON: But we haven't extended any such invitation to you.

(Cathy holds her leg and moans.)

CATHY: Ohhhh, it hurts! I'm in great pain, great pain. I'll sue, I'll sue. I'll take you to court. Where's my lawyer? Send for my lawyer.

MR. LINTON: *(Nervously.)* We extend the invitation.

CATHY: Why, thank you, Mr. Linton.

EDGAR: *(To Cathy.)* Please, remain with us until you are totally well.

CATHY: That could take awhile.

EDGAR: *(Entranced with her.)* Fine.

CATHY: A long while.

EDGAR: *(He smiles.)* Very fine.

(He helps her to stand.)

CATHY: *(She indicates the wealth around her.)* Heathcliff, this is what I want. You can't give it to me, but they can. So kindly...get lost!

(Edgar and a hobbling Cathy exit.)

HEATHCLIFF: (*Calls to Cathy.*) You cast me aside so blithely?

ISABELLA: (*As she admires Heathcliff.*) Owwww. I'd be happy to help you get lotht.

MRS. LINTON: Cool it, Ithabella.

HEATHCLIFF: (*To the Lintons.*) And you allow your dogs to bite me to the bone.... (*Dogs 1, 2 bark happily.*) ...and send me packing! Well, I happen to know a fine voodoo mama. And I'm going to have her put a curse on you. (*He turns to leave.*)

MRS. LINTON: (*Frightened.*) A curth? What kind of curth?

(*He stops and turns back.*)

HEATHCLIFF: Oh. Well, uh, this is the curse: I shall return.

(*He turns to leave.*)

MR. LINTON: But you haven't left.

(*Heathcliff turns back.*)

HEATHCLIFF: Oh. Well, uh, I'll leave, and then I shall return. (*He starts to leave.*)

MRS. LINTON: That'th it?

MR. LINTON: That's not much of a curse—even for a voodoo mama.

(*Heathcliff turns back to them.*)

HEATHCLIFF: All right, then. How about this? I shall return richer than you...and...I shall buy this home and destroy it...and you with it!

(*Mr. Linton turns to Mrs. Linton.*)

MR. LINTON: That's more like it.

MRS. LINTON: Foreboding.

(Heathcliff lets out a sudden and vicious growl toward the Dogs. They leap for fear and dash offstage. He limps off. Blackout.)

Scene 6

(AT RISE: *Blithering Heights, the fireplace area, 1801. Nelly and Mr. Lockwood are present.*)

NELLY: Cathy remained for five weeks at the Linton's where she lived in the lap of luxury, cared for hand and foot, provided lavish meals, and lent some of Isabella's beautiful gowns. Finally, she returned to Blithering Heights, a very dignified person, well-groomed, and wearing one of those borrowed dresses. *(She looks off after Cathy. She repeats.)* Wearing one of those borrowed dresses. *(She looks off, but there is no response. Louder.)* Wearing one of those—!

(Pause.)

CATHY: *(Calls from offstage.)* You didn't give me enough time to change. I need more time.

NELLY: What shall I do?

CATHY: A waltz would be nice.

NELLY: A waltz?

CATHY: Do what you usually do—blither.

NELLY: Ah, fine. I'm very good at that.

CATHY: Don't we know it.

NELLY: *(To audience.)* Mr. Edgar, gallant man that he was, brought her home himself. As he put his horse in the barn, Cathy preceded him into the house. *(Pause.)* Preceded him into....

(The lights fade up on the interior of blithering heights. Nelly anticipates the entrance of Cathy as Lockwood exits.)

CATHY: I'm coming, I'm coming. *(Smiling, she enters from the front door, now richly dressed.)* Nelly! Nelly, how do I look?

NELLY: Miss Cathy! Why, Miss Cathy, you are quite the beauty. I should scarcely have known you. You look like a lady now. *(Pause.)* But you must mind and not grow wild again.

(Cathy takes off her gloves and coat with Nelly's help.)

CATHY: Is Heathcliff not here?

NELLY: Heathcliff?

CATHY: Yes, Heathcliff. I would see him.

(Heathcliff appears, dressed in his usual rags – and dirty.)

CATHY: *(Happy to see him.)* Heathcliff! *(She kisses him several times on the cheek and then pulls apart from him.)* Why, how very cross you look. And how grimy and grim. But that's because I'm used to Edgar and Isabella Linton. *(He does not respond.)* Well, Heathcliff, have you forgotten me?

HEATHCLIFF: No. I haven't forgotten you. But I shall not stand to be laughed at. I shall not bear it.

CATHY: I did not mean to laugh at you. But you are so dirty.

HEATHCLIFF: I missed last month's bath.

NELLY: And the month before.

HEATHCLIFF: You look like a queen, Cathy. Like my queen.

CATHY: I feel like a queen.

HEATHCLIFF: *(Breathlessly.)* Cathy!

CATHY: Heathcliff?

HEATHCLIFF: Cathy!

CATHY: Heathcliff?

NELLY: Well, now that you remember each other's names...

(Both glare at Nelly.) Sorry. *(She turns and exits.)*

CATHY: I thought you ran away – to bring me wealth and social status.

HEATHCLIFF: Before I left, I returned.

CATHY: What?

HEATHCLIFF: Well, I mean, I left, and then I returned.

CATHY: If you're wealthy, you don't look it.

HEATHCLIFF: I'm still working on that part.

(Edgar enters and stares at Heathcliff.)

EDGAR: Who is this?

CATHY: Heathcliff.

EDGAR: Ahhh, the gypsy beggar. And filthy as they come.

Shouldn't he be working in the barn rather than traipsing through the house, smelling like that?

CATHY: Heathcliff, at least you could comb your hair.

HEATHCLIFF: I shall not. I shall keep my hair as tousled as I please, and I like for it to be tousled, and it will be tousled.

(Hindley enters with a drink in hand, sees Heathcliff, and becomes angry.)

HINDLEY: Heathcliff! What are you doing in the house? You should be in the barn with the rest of the servants. Go on...leave us! Now! *(Angrily, Heathcliff storms from the room.)* The heathen!

CATHY: *(Calls.)* Heathcliff! *(To Hindley.)* Hindley, why did you do that?

HINDLEY: It's what he deserves. *(He turns on her.)* And not another word out of you.

EDGAR: Perhaps his comb is broken. They do break, you see, on occasion.

HINDLEY: Mr. Linton. Welcome to Blithering Heights. Would you care for a drink? No. Sorry, I can't spare it. My gambling debts have got me staggering... *(He staggers.)* ...so I must keep all my wine for me. *(He drinks.)* Now, if you'll excuse me, I must go out and torment the workers a bit. It doesn't make them work any harder, but it gives me a thrill. *(He exits after Heathcliff.)*

CATHY: He's so strange sometimes. I hope you will forgive him.

EDGAR: Your brother?

CATHY: Heathcliff.

EDGAR: Shall I have him beaten? He seems so bitter, and still
he doesn't listen to the commands of his betters.

CATHY: His betters?

EDGAR: You, Cathy. And Hindley. And I. Aren't we better
than he?

CATHY: Don't talk about him like that.

EDGAR: Like what?

CATHY: You have no right.

EDGAR: I have every right.

CATHY: Stop, stop.

EDGAR: He's little more than a tramp.

CATHY: No, no.

EDGAR: You're taking up for him?

CATHY: Yes, yes.

EDGAR: When he stinks worse than dead fish?

CATHY: Yes, yes. No, no. I mean, if you can't say nice things
about him....

EDGAR: Like what?

CATHY: Then leave. Go, go.

EDGAR: Now?

CATHY: Yes, yes.

EDGAR: Fine. But I'll have my sister's dress first.

CATHY: What, what?

EDGAR: The dress you're wearing.

CATHY: You want it back?

EDGAR: Yes! Yes!

CATHY: For what?

EDGAR: (*He smiles.*) Well, it's a beautiful gown, and I thought
I might.... (*His smile disappears, and he becomes nervous.*) No.
No. What I mean to say is that I, uh, simply wish to return it
to my sister.

CATHY: That's all?

EDGAR: That's all. (*Pause.*) Yes. Yes. That's all.

CATHY: Fine, fine. *(She rips off the hat, the cape, and the dress, leaving her in her bloomers and corset.)* The hat. Here, take it. Watch the hatpin.

(Edgar pricks his finger.)

EDGAR: Ouch!

CATHY: These buttons, these buttons.

EDGAR: I'll help you.

(Cathy steps back and glares at him.)

CATHY: Hands off, hands off. *(She continues disrobing.)*

EDGAR: Must you say everything twice?

CATHY: Yes, yes. The dress, the dress. Here, take it. Take the whole thing.

(She tosses it to him. Pause.)

EDGAR: What about the...? *(He indicates her undergarments.)*

CATHY: No, no! I'll return them later. Later. Now, get out, get out.

(Edgar goes to the door and turns back to her.)

EDGAR: I'll write to you later.

CATHY: Yes, yes. Please do.

EDGAR: And tell you how much I've missed you.

CATHY: That would be nice. *(Edgar exits. Blackout.)*

Scene 7

(AT RISE: Heathcliff scales the heights and looks off into the distance. Cathy, still wearing her undergarments, sees him and climbs after him.)

CATHY: Oh, Heathcliff, Heathcliff! Wait for me.

HEATHCLIFF: Oh, Cathy! Cathy, come to me. I'm waiting for you. My love, my soul. (When she reaches him, he stares at her.) I think you forgot something.

(He indicates her undergarments. She looks at herself.)

CATHY: Heathcliff, do you love me any less naked?

(Pause. He swallows hard.)

HEATHCLIFF: Ahh, no.

(He reaches for her.)

CATHY: Not now, Heathcliff. Heathcliff, you told the Lintons you would run away and return to destroy them. You haven't destroyed anyone.

HEATHCLIFF: Yet. I tried to run away, but the thought of you brought me back, Cathy. I can't leave you. You're my soul, my heart, my very being.

CATHY: Then fill my arms with flowers, Heathcliff. Make me happy again, and fill my arms with flowers.

HEATHCLIFF: Aren't you allergic to flowers?

CATHY: Oh, yes, yes.

HEATHCLIFF: The last time I brought you flowers, you sneezed so hard you nearly blew the barn down.

CATHY: So I did. So I did.

HEATHCLIFF: But, tell me, Cathy, confirm for me, Cathy—is this the real you, or was that you in the company of Edgar Linton?

CATHY: Forget Edgar and all the Lintons, Heathcliff. This is the real me. And it's the only real me there will ever be—the really real me. Not the fake real me, nor the real fake me, but the really real me—here, in your arms. You do believe me, don't you, Heathcliff? Say you believe me.

HEATHCLIFF: I'd believe you more if you were properly dressed.

(The violin music plays. The lights fade to black.)

Scene 8

(AT RISE: Interior of the Linton mansion. Elegantly dressed, Edgar sits at a desk or table with a candelabra on it and writes a letter.)

EDGAR: "My Dear Miss Earnshaw." (He wads it up and tosses it over his shoulder.) "Dearest Miss Earnshaw." (He does the same.) "Dear Susan." Oops. Wrong girlfriend. (He does the same.) I know... (He seems pleased with himself and writes.) "Hey, you." (He smiles.) Yes. I like it. Just the right degree of formality and street talk. (He continues to write as he speaks rapidly.) "I feel like a little puppy that has been quickly petted and then set aside without food or water or care by its careless owner." No, no. (He tosses that sheet aside and writes again while speaking rapidly.) "I feel like a lonely—but very rich—porcupine that has been kept from you by..." No, no. (He tosses that sheet aside and writes again.) "I feel like you're a lonely—but very poor—porcupine who has used her quills to keep me at bay..." No, no. (He tosses that sheet aside, gets an idea, smiles, and writes again, as his sister, Isabella, steps behind him and reads over his shoulder.) "I feel perfectly miserable and sad and miserable and wretched...and miserable since you left, and I haven't heard from you since you sent me away with that...miserable...attitude of yours and your defending that miserable creep Heathcliff even though he's nothing more than a miserable stable boy with dirty hands.... (He stops, shakes his writing hand, and scribbles quickly.) Madness! My hand can't keep up with my mouth. (He puts a big explanation mark at the end.)

ISABELLA: Edgar, dear brother, you're blithering again.

EDGAR: What?

ISABELLA: Only people from Blithering Heights may blither.

EDGAR: Isabella! Were you reading over my shoulder?

ISABELLA: Of courth not. I wath lithening to your blithering.

EDGAR: I was not blithering. I was expressing my affection for Miss Earnshaw.

ISABELLA: You were blithering.

EDGAR: I intend to send her this letter.

(The lights fade up on Blithering Heights, revealing both locations simultaneously. On the opposite side of the stage, Nelly and Cathy enter. Nelly hands her a letter.)

NELLY: *(To Cathy.)* A letter.

CATHY: From whom?

NELLY: Mister Edgar Linton.

CATHY: What does it say?

NELLY: It opens with "Hey, you."

CATHY: You read my letter?

NELLY: Well, I steamed the envelope open. But, before I could get any further, you came in.

CATHY: Lucky for me. *(She opens it.)*

NELLY: What does he say?

CATHY: "Hey, you."

NELLY: Besides that?

(She quickly scans it.)

CATHY: A lot of blithering.

EDGAR: *(To Isabella.)* It's not blithering.

CATHY/ISABELLA: *(Isabella lisps her reading.)* It looks like blithering to me.

EDGAR: I wish to see her again.

CATHY: He wishes to see me again.

ISABELLA: You know the'th [*she's*] in love with that... *(She sighs.)* ...tall, dark, and dirty Heathcliff.

EDGAR: But I can take care of her, be kind to her, and give her things—things Heathcliff could only dream of.

CATHY: *(To Nelly.)* That's a good point.

ISABELLA: *(To Edgar.)* Thee would never give him up.

CATHY: *(To Nelly.)* I could never give him up.

EDGAR: *(To Isabella.)* I could make her rich.

CATHY: *(To Nelly.)* On the other hand, Edgar could make me rich.

ISABELLA: *(To Edgar.)* I can thee what thee theeth in him.

EDGAR: What?

ISABELLA: Thith mysteriouth, mathculine, macho-neth of a real man.

EDGAR: You mean macho-ness.

ISABELLA: He hath an aura about him, a muthky thcent.

EDGAR: Yes. It's called "horseshit."

CATHY: *(She reads further from the letter.)* "I've been nothing since you left. Please, make me something...by coming back. Call me."

ISABELLA: Thee can't call you, you dolt. We don't have phoneth yet.

EDGAR: I was speaking figuratively. "Call me" means to send for me, or to send me a message, or to come on over and let's make out on the front porch, or—

ISABELLA: You're incorrigible.

(Isabella exits. Edgar stands.)

EDGAR: I would call you a liar...if I knew what that meant.

(He exits after her. The lights fade out on Edgar. Heathcliff enters and sees Cathy sighing.)

HEATHCLIFF: So, he's sent you another letter, has he?

CATHY: *(Surprised at his appearance.)* Ah! Yes, yes. A letter. Another letter.

HEATHCLIFF: I don't know how you can read his snobbish words and take him seriously.

CATHY: I take his checkbook seriously.

HEATHCLIFF: You must stop wasting your time on a man who dresses more like a woman than Nelly does.

NELLY: Well! I think I resent that. *(She exits.)*

HEATHCLIFF: *(Calls after her.)* Well, let me know when you decide whether you do or you don't. *(Under his breath.)* As if I were interested.

CATHY: We were talking about me.

HEATHCLIFF: Yes, yes. Ah! Now you've got me repeating words. *(He takes her hands.)* Listen, Cathy, my heart, my soul, my...my.... Well, my heart, my soul—that should be enough. Edgar Linton speaks with forked tongue.

CATHY: I beg your pardon?

HEATHCLIFF: Sorry. Wrong movie. Edgar Linton only talks about material things, like fine clothes, big houses, the nicest buggy.

CATHY: *(Enthusiastically.)* Yes, yes?

HEATHCLIFF: While I speak from the depths of my soul when I tell you that my love for you is beyond mortal love, beyond the love of heaven. It is...I can't think...what is "beyond the love of heaven?"

CATHY: I don't think anything is beyond that, Heathcliff.

HEATHCLIFF: Okay, I'll stick with that for now. I love you, Cathy. You are mine, and I am yours...through all eternity. Nothing can separate us. Go ahead...waste your time and words on Edgar, but you'll always return to me. You have to...always return to me. Because our souls are one.

CATHY: Those are poetic words coming from a stable boy with no education, Heathcliff. I asked you, I begged you to go away, gain fame and fortune, and return to me so that we could live the best life imaginable. But you jumped ship and waddled back to Blithering Heights—

HEATHCLIFF: To be with you, Cathy. To show you my devotion, to give you my love.

CATHY: To become the worst stable boy we've ever had.

HEATHCLIFF: The worst?

CATHY: The absolute worst.

HEATHCLIFF: Well, then, you see? I have accomplished something...something splendid, Cathy. And all for you.

CATHY: Why do you think I could be satisfied with you, Heathcliff—with your dirty hands, your filthy feet, and your empty pockets?

HEATHCLIFF: For love?

CATHY: Ha! What is love without possessions?

HEATHCLIFF: Possessions? We have each other.

CATHY: No, Heathcliff. You would have me, obviously a prize worth obtaining, but I would have a loser in a hay stack.

HEATHCLIFF: Yes, yes. You're right. I'm a loser, a poor soul whose dirty hands—

CATHY: And don't forget the filthy feet.

HEATHCLIFF: And filthy feet have tried to pull you down to my piteous, pitiful level. The level of passion and love and trust. But you, you are satisfied only with the life of the gentry—even to the point of socializing and romancing with that snobby wimp, Edgar.

CATHY: Stop it, Heathcliff! Stop it! I won't listen to you. You will never amount to anything. You will always be a stable boy, a poor gypsy man with no future. I want a future, Heathcliff. A future. Not in a horse stall, but in a fine mansion. *(She takes one of his hands.)* These hands shovel manure around. What else are they good for?

HEATHCLIFF: What else? How about this? *(He slaps her. The sound of the slap is delayed.)* And this?

(As he raises his other hand to slap her again, the sound of the slap is heard prematurely. He hesitates, and then slaps her even though the sound has passed and is not heard again.)

CATHY: *(Angrily.)* I don't know why my brother keeps you on. I don't, I don't.

(He looks at his hands and then at her.)

HEATHCLIFF: See what you made me do? Now I'll have to
got out to the barn and jam my fist through a glass window.

CATHY: Why would you do that?

HEATHCLIFF: As punishment to these hands for slapping
you. It's also symbolic of...of...something important, but I
can't think of what it is just now. *(Pause.)* And it will hurt,
too. I'll probably bleed.

(He pauses, and then exits in a huff. She rubs her cheek.)

CATHY: Well, this hurt, too. Well, it would have hurt if he
had actually hit me.

(Nelly enters.)

NELLY: Did you and Heathcliff have a nice chat?

CATHY: You could say that.

NELLY: But I heard a slapping noise.

CATHY: Just a missed sound cue.

NELLY: What else does Edgar say in his letter?

(Cathy glances at the letter and quickly reads to herself. She grins.)

CATHY: Oh, Nelly, Nelly! Edgar has asked me to marry him!

*(Heathcliff walks in with bloody hands, but sees them and hides and
listens.)*

NELLY: Marry him? Marry Mr. Linton?

CATHY: Yes. Yes.

NELLY: Why would you want to do that?

CATHY: Because. Because.

NELLY: You're stuttering again.

CATHY: Because he is rich, and I shall like to be the greatest
woman of the neighborhood, and I shall be proud of having
such a husband.

NELLY: Really. Well, now, say how you love him.

CATHY: I love him because he's elegant, because he dances well, and because he kisses my hand.

NELLY: Heathcliff would kiss your feet if you would let him.

CATHY: Oh, Heathcliff, Heathcliff. I've heard enough of Heathcliff. He has no ambition, no wish to improve himself. He will never amount to anything, Nelly. He'll always be a dirty carpet for better people to wipe their feet on. If I should marry him, I would be stuck in this dreary place, never to party, never to wear silk dresses, never to enjoy the joy that is joyfully brought by enormous wealth and joy. It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff. (*Heathcliff snorts angrily and stomps off.*) What was that?

NELLY: Just a breeze coming through the window. (*Pause.*) I guess, then, you will accept Edgar's offer of marriage?

CATHY: (*She considers it briefly.*) No. No. It's true what you said—that Heathcliff would kiss my feet if I allowed it. And I would kiss his. (*Pause.*) If he would scrub them first. (*Pause.*) He and I are like heaven and earth.

NELLY: How do you mean?

(*Pause.*)

CATHY: Well, I'm not sure. But it sounds nice. We are of one soul, he and I. Bound by some invisible but tangled web that holds us together but also keeps us apart. Sticky and slimy, but strong and eternal. I could no more abandon him for Edgar than the dewdrops can abandon the leaves of grass.

NELLY: But they do abandon the leaves of grass. They evaporate.

CATHY: Nelly, please stay on point here.

NELLY: Sorry, Miss Cathy.

CATHY: But he shall never know how I love him. Not because he's handsome, Nelly, but because he is more myself than I am. Whatever our souls are made of, his and

mine are the same, and Edgar's is as different as a moonbeam from lightning, or frost from fire. Heathcliff is mine, and I am his...forever and.... *(They hear a very awkward sound of a horse galloping, which doesn't sound like a horse galloping.)* What's that?

(She listens.)

NELLY: I don't know what it is, but it's supposed to be the sound of Heathcliff's horse thundering off over the moors.

CATHY: What? Heathcliff is leaving? Why?

NELLY: Because he heard you say that you couldn't marry him.

CATHY: Where is he going?

NELLY: I don't know. Away from here.

CATHY: When is he coming back?

NELLY: Well, I'd say somewhere about page ten of Act Two.

CATHY: Oh, no! *(She rushes to the window and calls off.)* Heathcliff! My darling Heathcliff! Please come back! Don't ride off like that and leave half your soul behind! *(Pause. To Nelly, as if giving a cue.)* Well, all we need now is lightning and thunder. *(Lightning flashes and thunder screams across the room. Cathy continues to call out the window. Violent violin music plays.)* Joseph! Joseph, stop him! Stop Heathcliff!

(Joseph enters with a rifle.)

JOSEPH: I'll stop him, Miss Cathy! Old Betsy never misses. *(He aims the rifle out the door.)*

CATHY: Not like that! Go after him. Go after him.

JOSEPH: In this rain? I'd get all wet.

CATHY: *(She calls out the door.)* My darling, my love, my dirty little secret! You stayed for me before. You can't leave me now. You mustn't. You can't. You shan't.

NELLY: He has!

CATHY: *(She moans loud and long.)* Ohhhhhhhhh! Nelly, he's left me. He's left me. What am I to do? What am I to do? *(Pause.)* The castle. Perhaps he's gone to the castle—to Peniston Crag!

NELLY: That's Pennistow Crag.

CATHY: Yes, well, one of those crags. That's it. I'll meet him there—as we've met so many times before. *(She runs to the door and opens it wide. A strong wind and rain wash across her.)* Heathcliff! Heathcliff! Wait for me. I'm coming! I'm coming!

NELLY: Miss Cathy, don't spoil your beautiful dress!

(Cathy rushes out the door and her voice fades into the distance.)

CATHY: Heathcliff! Heathcliff!

(Hindley enters in a drunken stupor carrying a glass of wine.)

NELLY: Oh! Mr. Hindley, sir. Even in your present drunken state, you must go after your sister, bring her back. She's gone crazy with concern.

HINDLEY: *(He slurs his words.)* Well, she's always been a little nuts. Maybe a lot nuts.

NELLY: You must help her. Please, sir. Go after her. Find her. Keep her safe. And for God's sake, protect her silk gown from the rain!

HINDLEY: You're right. It's my duty as her brother.

(He staggers a few paces and then falls drunkenly to the floor. A tremendous clap of thunder is heard. Nelly crosses to the door and looks off.)

NELLY: Well, I think this would be a good place to take a 15-minute break. *(To the audience.)* And when I say "fifteen minutes," I mean...more or less.

(She slams the door shut. Blackout. Curtain. Intermission.)

[End of Freeview]