Whudderin Heichts

Owersett into Doric

from the novel by Emily Brontё

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**A Veesit tae Whudderin Heichts**

**Chapter 1**

1801.—

I hae jist cam back frae a veesit tae ma landlord—the lanely neebour that I winna be tribbled wi. This is o a certainty a bonnie kintra! In aa England, I dinna believe that I could hae sattled on an airt sae aathegither ooto the steer o fowk. A perfeck lane body’s heiven: an Mr. Heathcliff an masel are sic a weel suitit pair tae share the teemness atween us. A braw chiel! He little kent foo ma hairt warmed tae him fin I saw his blaik een draw in sae wary-like aneth their broos, as I rade up, an fin his fingers fand a bield fur thirsels, wi a cannie resolve, still farrer in his westcoat, as I spakk ma nemme.

‘Mr. Heathcliff?’ I speired.

A nod wis the repon.

‘Mr. Lockwood, yer new tenant, sir. I dae masel the honour o veesitin as sune as I could efter ma incam, tae share the hope that I hinna misfittit ye bi ma thrawness in sikkin tae bide in Thrushcross Grange: I heard yestreen ye’d some thochts—’

‘Thrushcross Grange is ma ain, sir,’quo he, glowerin. ‘I shouldnae lat onybody pit me oot, gin I could hinner it—wauk in!’

The ‘wauk in’ wis spukken wi steekit teeth, an shawed the feelin, ‘Gyang tae the Deil’: even the yett ower which he booed gaed nae sympatheezin meevement tae the wirds; an I think thon fack gart me takk up the invite: I felt interestit in a cheil fa seemed mair unca grippit in than mysel.

Fin he saw ma shelt’s breist fair breengin agin the barrier, he did pit oot his haun tae unchyne it, an syne dour like steppit afore me up the causey, cryin, as we gaed inno the coort ‘Joseph, takk Mr. Lockwood’s shelt; an bring up a suppie wine.’

‘Here we hae the hale rik-ma-tick o skiffies, I jelouse,’ wis the thocht suggestit bi this complex order. ‘Nae winner the girse growes up atween the flagstanes, an nowt are the anely buss-cutters.’

Joseph wis an agein, na, an auld chiel: verra auld, mebbe, tho hale an stoot. ‘God help us!’ quo he tae hisel in a fusper o scunnert displeisure, while seein tae ma shelt: luikin, betimes, in ma face sae sour that I thocht he maun hae need o the Lord’s help tae digest his denner, an his pious ootburst hid naethin adee wi ma unexpeckit incam.

*Whudderin Heichts* is the nemme o Mr. Heathcliff’s hame. ‘Whudderin’ bein a weel kent kintra adjective, picturin the atmospheric storm tae which its airt is unproteckit in gurly weather. Caller, bracin air they maun hae up thonner at aa times, foreby: a body micht jelouse the pouer o the nor win blawin ower the taps, bi the unca slant o a fyew dweeble firs at the eyn o the hoose; an bi a reenge o shilpit thorns aa streetchin their airms ae wey, as if seekin alms o the sun. Bi gweed chaunce, the architect hid foresicht tae bigg it strang: the nerra windaes are deep set inno the waa, an the neuks defendit wi muckle juttin stanes.

Afore gaun ower the doorwey, I devauled tae luik at a daud o fooshty carvin cuttit ower the front, an speecially aboot the main yett; abune thon, amang a wudness o crummlin griffins an nyaakit wee loons, I spied the date ‘1500’, an the nemme ‘Hareton Earnshaw’. I wid hae vrocht a fyew remairks, an socht a wee history o the airt frae the dour ainer; bit his staunce at the yett seemed tae sikk ma faist incam, or straicht aff depairture, an I hid nae wint tae steer up his displeisur afore owerluikin the intimmers.

Ae step brocht us intae the faimily chaumer, wioot ony lead in lobby or waukwey: they caa it here ‘the hoose’ maistly. It takks in kitchie an parlour, in the ordnar wey; bit I larnt at Whudderin Heichts the kitchie is gart retreat aathegither intae anither airt: at least I made oot the soun o claik, an a dirl o cuikin gear, deep inbye; an I spied nae merks o roastin, bylin or bakin, aboot the

muckle ingle; nur ony glent o copper saucepans an tin seives on the waas. Ae eyn, mairower, refleckit brawly baith licht an heat frae raws o muckle pewter dishes, aside siller joogs an tankards, touerin raw efter raw, on a gran aik press, tae the verra reef. The hinmaist hid niver bin unner-drawn: its hale intimmers lay nyaakit tae an inquirin ee, barrin far a frame o timmer wechtit wi aetcakes an dauds o shanks o beef, mutton, an ham, happit it. Abune the lum wir a wheen coorse auld guns, an a pair o shelt-pistols: an, bi wey o fantoosherie, three skyrie-peintit tinnies plunkit alang its ledge. The fleer wis o smeeth, fite stane; the cheers, heich-backit, roch biggit, peintit green: ane or twa wechty blaik anes bidin in the shadda. In an arch unner the press sprauchled a muckle, liver-coloured bitch pynter, cercled bi a heeze o squallichin puppies; an ither tykes hauntit ither neuks.

The placie an gear wid hae bin naethin byordnar as belangin tae a hamely, norlan fermer, wi a thrawn luik, an strang limbs set oot tae advauntage in cuttie-breeks an gaiters. Sic a body dowpit in his airm-cheer, his mug o ale bubblin up on the broon brod afore him, is tae be seen in ony cercle o five or sax miles amang thon knowes, gin ye gae at the richt time efter denner. Bit Mr. Heathcliff gies aff a byordnar contrast tae his hame an wey o leevin. He is a derk-skinned gipsy in luik, in rigoot an mainners, genteel: that is, as genteel as mony a kintra laird: raither hallierackit, mebbe, yet nae luikin unca wi his wint o care, because o his straicht an braw makk; an raither gurly. Mebbe, some fowk micht think him as haein a natur o unner-bred pride; I hae a sympathetic thocht inbye that tells me it’s naethin o the kind: I ken, bi instinck, his dourness cams frae a laithin tae shaw fleerishes o feelin—tae displays o couthieness. He’ll lue an hate equally happit, an conseeder it a kind o impiddence tae be lued or hated again. Na, I’m rinnin on ower faist: I’m pittin ma natur ower freely ontae him. Mr. Heathcliff micht hae aathegither ither rizzons fur keepin his haun ooto the wey fin he meets a wid-be fier, tae thon that govern masel. Lat me hope ma makk is near byordnar: ma dear mither eesed tae say I should niver hae a comfy hame; an anely the hinmaist simmer I pruved masel aathegither unworthy o ane.

Fin enjoying a month o fine weather at the seaside, I wis pit intae the company o a maist bonnie craitur: a rael goddess in ma een, as lang as she tuik nae tent o me. I ‘niver telt ma luve’ in spikk; still, gin luiks hae a leid, the saftest gype micht hae jeloused I wis heid ower heels: she unnerstude me at hinnereyn, an luikit back—the swetest o aa possible luiks. An fit did I dae? I confess it wi affront—dwined cauldly intae masel, like a snail; at ilkie glisk drew back caulder an farrer; till at the hinnereyn the puir lammie wis gart doot her ain senses, an, owercam wi dumfounerment at her jeloused mistakk, perswuadit her mamma to gae hame. Bi this fey turn o maitters I hae gained the repute o measured hairtlessness; foo undeserved, I alane can ken.

I tuik a seat at the eyn o the ingle opposite thon far ma landlord wis heidit, an fulled up a devaul o seelence bi ettlin tae pet the mither bitch, fa’d left her nursery, an wis creepin wolf-like tae the back o ma shanks, her lip rowed up, an her fite teeth watterin fur a bite. Ma straikin brocht on a lang, throaty gurrl.

‘Ye’d better lat the tyke alane,’ gurled Mr. Heathcliff in time wi the dug, checkin nestier ongauns wi a dunt o his fit. ‘She’s nae eesed tae be connached—nae keepit fur a pet.’ Syne, stridin tae a side yett, he skreiched again, ‘Joseph!’

Joseph mummlit indistinck in the founs o the cellar, bit gaed nae hint o appearin; sae his maister dived doon tae him, leavin me *vis-à-vis* the nesty bitch an a pair o dour hudderie sheep-dugs, fa keepit wi her a jealous watch ower aa ma meevements. Nae wintin tae cam in contack wi their teeth, I sat quaet; bit, thinkin they wid scarce unnerstan unspukken insults, I unluckily tuik tae winkin an puin faces at the trio, an some twist o ma luiks sae vrocht up the bitch, that she o a suddenty brakk intae a roose an lowpit on ma knees. I haived her back, an hashed on tae plunk the brod atween us. This ongaun roosed the hale heeze: hauf-a-dizzen fower-fitted deevilicks, o umpteen makks an ages, steered oot frae happit dens tae masel. I felt ma heels an jaiket-faulds partic’lar subjecks o attack; an haudin aff the biggest faes as weel as I could wi the poker, I wis gart tae skirl, aloud, help frae some o the fowk inbye in re-establishin peace.

Mr. Heathcliff an his man sclimmed the cellar steps wi irritatin calm: I dinna think they meeved ae secunt faister than ordnar, tho the ingle wis a richt storm o wirryin an bowfin. Bi gweed chaunce, a kitchie body made mair speed: a sonsie deem, wi hickled-up goun, nyakkit airms, an flame-reid chikks, breenged intae the mids o us wyvin a fryin-pan: an made eese o thon wappon, an her tongue, tae sic forcieness, that the storm deed doon like magic, an she anely bedd, heavin like a sea efter a heich win, fin her maister cam intae the chaumer.

‘Fit the deil’s adee?’ he speired, eein me in a mainner that I could ill thole, efter this unfrienly walcam.

‘Fit the deil, ye micht weel say!’ I mummlit. ‘The herd o wud grumphies could hae hid nae waur speerits in them than thon breets, sir. Ye micht as weel leave an incamer wi a heeze o tigers!’

‘They winna scutter wi fowk fa touch naethin,’ he remairked, pittin the bottle afore me, an settin upricht the cowpit brod. ‘The tykes dae richt tae be watchfu. Takk a glaiss o wine?’

‘Na, thank ye.’

‘Nae bitten, are ye?’

‘Gin I hid bin, I wid hae pit ma signet on the biter.’ Heathcliff’s face swackened intae a grin.

‘Cam, cam,’ quo he, ‘ye’re steered up, Mr. Lockwood. Here, takk a suppie wine. Veesiters are sae unca rare in this hoose that masel an ma tykes, I am willin tae ain, scarce ken foo tae treat them. Yer health, sir?’

I booed an gaed back the toast; stertin tae jelouse that it wid be daft tae be misfittit fur the ongauns o a heeze o tykes; mairower, I felt laith tae gie the chiel mair pleisur at ma expense; since his natur booed thon wey. He—nae doot sweyed bi the cannie thocht o the daftness o misfittin a gweed tenant—relaxed a thochtie in the clippit style o chippin aff his pronouns an main verbs, an introduced fit he jeloused wid be a subjeck o interest tae masel—a langamachie on the advauntages an disadvauntages o ma present rentit hame. I fand him verra mensefu on the topics we spakk on; an afore I gaed hame, I wis cheered sae far as tae volunteer anither visit the morn. He clearly didnae sikk anither veesit. I’ll gae, hooesaeiver. It’s dumfounerin foo sociable I feel masel fin meisured alangside him.

A Fey Faimly

**Chapter 2**

Yestreen the efterneen set in mochy an cauld. I wis hauf myndit tae spen it bi ma study lowe, insteid o wydin ben heath an dubs tae Whudderin Heichts. On camin up frae denner, hoosaever, (N.B.—I ett atween twal an ane o’clock; the hoosekeeper, a mitherly leddie, taen as a fixture alang wi the hoose, couldnae, or widnae, unnerstaun ma request that I micht be served at five)—on climmin the stairs wi this lazy intent, an steppin intae the chaumer, I saw a skiffie on her knees surroundit bi breems an coal-pails, an caain up a deevilish stoor as she smored the flames wi howps o danders. This sicht drave me back straicht aff; I tuik ma bunnet, an, efter a fower-miles’ wauk, wis at Heathcliff’s gairden-yett jist in time tae jouk the first feddery flichters o a sna-shooer.

On thon wersh knowe-tap the yird wis hard wi a cranreuch cauld, an the air gart me chitter ben ilkie limb. Bein unable tae takk aff the chyne, I lowpit ower, an, rinnin up the staney cassie bordered wi warsslin gozzberry-busses, chappit eeselessly fur a repon, till ma neives dirled an the tykes skirled.

‘Vratches o inmates!’ thocht I , ‘Ye deserve aybydaun alaneness frae human kind fur yer coorse cauldness. At least, I widnae keep ma yetts barred in the day-time. I dinna care—I will win in!’ Sae myndit, I grippit the snib an shooglit it forcie. Soor-faced Joseph powkit his heid frae a roon windae o the barn.

‘Fit are ye efter?’ he skreiched. ‘The maister’s doon in the fauld. Gae roon bi the eyn o the barn, gin ye wint tae spikk tae him.’

‘Is there naebody inbye tae open the yett?’ I speired, in repon.

‘There’s naebody bit the mistress; an she’ll nae open it tho ye makk yer dirlin stooshie till nicht.’

‘Foo? Can ye tell her fa I am, eh, Joseph?’

‘Nae fears! I’ll hae nae haun in it,’ mummlit the heid, vanishin.

The snaa stertit tae ding doon blin drift. I grippit the haunle tae hae anither try; fin a young chiel wioot a jaiket, an shouderin a pitchfork, appeared in the yaird ahin. He socht me tae follae him, an, efter merchin throw a wash-hoose, an a paved airt wi a coal-sheddie, pump, an doo-cot, we, at the hinnereyn, cam tae the muckle, hett, cheerie chaumer far I wis taen afore. It glimmered brawly in the licht o a muckle lowe, biggit o coal, peat, an wid; an nearhaun the brod, set fur a weel plenished evenin meal, I wis delichtit tae see the ‘mistress’, a body fas existence I’d niver afore suspeckit. I booed an wyted, thinkin she wid bid me sit doon. She luikit at me, leanin back in her cheer, an bedd still an mute.

‘Roch weather!’ quo I. ‘I’m feart, Mrs. Heathcliff, the yett maun shaw the result o yer servants’ leisur attendance: I’d a hard tyauve tae makk them hear me.’

She niver opened her mou. I glowered—she glowered as weel: ony wey, she keepit her een on me in a cweel, regairdless mainner, unca misfittin an nesty.

‘Sit doon,’ quo the young chiel, dour like. ‘He’ll be in sune.’

I did as I wis telt; an cleared ma throat, an caad on the vratch Juno, fa agreed, at this secunt tryst, tae meeve the far tip o her tail, tae ain kennin me.

‘A braw breet!’ I stertit again. ‘Dae ye inten pairtin wi the wee anes, madam?’

‘They’re nae mine,’ reponed the frienly hostess, mair nippily than Heathcliff himsel could hae spukken.

‘Ah, yer petties are amang thon?’ I gaed on, turnin tae a dootfu bowster fu o somethin like kittlins.

‘A fey wylin o petties!’ quo she, doonpitten me.

Unchauncy, it wis a howp o deid mappies. I cleared ma throat aince mair, an drew closer tae the ingle, repeatin ma spikk on the wudness o the nicht.

‘Ye shouldnae hae cam oot,’ she telt me risin an raxxin frae the mantle-piece twa o the peintit tinnies.

Her makk afore wis happit frae the licht; noo, I’d a distinck view o her hale corp an luiks. She wis shilpit, an seemed scarce past her teens: a braw form, an the maist swete wee face that I hae iver hid the pleisur o seein; smaa features, verra fair; near fite ringlets, or raither gowden, hingin lowse on her douce nape; an een, hid they bin kindly in expression, that wid hae bin owerpouerin: lucky fur ma tender hairt, the anely feelin they shawed swithered atween scorn an a kind o fleg, byordnar unnat’ral tae be seen thonner. The tinnies wir near oot o her reach; I meeved tae help her; she turned on me as a miser micht turn gin ony body ettled tae help him in coontin his gowd.

‘I dinna wint yer help,’ she snappit; ‘I can win at them fur masel.’

‘I beg yer pairdon!’ I made faist tae repon.

‘Wir ye socht tae tea?’ she speired, tyin a peenie ower her trig blaik frock, an staunin wi a speenfu o the leaf heistit ower the pot.

‘I’ll be gled tae hae a cup,’ I reponed.

‘Wir ye socht?’ she repeatit.

‘Na,’ quo I, hauf smilin. ‘Ye are the richt body tae sikk me.’

She flang the tea back, speen an aa, an dowped her cheer in a huff; her broo wrunkled, an her reid unner-lip pushed oot, like a bairn’s aboot tae greet.

Betimes, the young chiel hid flang ontae himsel a richt hackit upper claethin, an, staunin himsel afore the lowe, luikit doon on me frae the neuk o his een, fur aa the warld as gin there wir some deidly fecht unfeenished atween us. I stertit tae doot gin he wir a servant or nae: his rig oot an spikk wir baith roch, aathegither teem o the superiority seen in Mr. an Mrs. Heathcliff; his thick broon curls wir roch an hudderie, his fuskers briered bear-like ower his chikks, an his hauns wir brooned like thon o an ordnar orra man: still he stude free, near vauntie, an he shawed nane o a skiffy’s care in wytin on the leddy o the hoose. Nae kennin his place in the hoose, I thocht it best tae bide back frae notin his fey wyes; an, five meenits efter, the incam o Heathcliff saved me, in some meisur, frae ma uneasy state.

‘Ye see, sir, I’m here, as I promised!’ quo I, makkin on tae be cheerie; an I’m feart I’ll be weather-bun fur hauf an oor, gin ye can gie me a bield fur a whylie.’

‘Hauf an oor?’ he speired, shakkin the fite snaa frae his claes; ‘I winner ye should chuse the mids o blin-drift tae daunder aboot in. Dae ye ken that ye rin a risk o bein tint in the peat bogs? Fowk fa ken thon muirs aften miss their road on sic gloamins; an I can tell ye there’s nae chaunce o a cheenge eenoo.’

‘Mebbe I can win a guide amang yer lads, an he micht bide at the Grange till mornin—could ye spare me ane?’

‘Na, I couldnae.’

‘Och, ye winna! Weel, syne, I maun trust tae ma ain wyceness.’

‘Umph!’

‘Are ye gaun tae makk the tea?’ he speired o the chiel wi the hackit jaiket, shiftin his roozed glower frae me tae the young leddy.

‘Is *he* tae hae ony?’ she socht o Heathcliff.

‘Get it ready, will e?’ wis the repon, uttered sae coorse that I jinkit. The tone in which the wirds wir spakk shawed a richt ill naur. I nae langer wintit tae caa Heathcliff a fine chiel. Fin aa wis ready, he invited me wi ‘Noo, sir, bring forrit yer cheer.’ An we aa, includin the roch loon, drew roon the brod: a wersh seelence dominatin the meal.

I thocht, gin I had caused ill feelin, it wis up tae me tae ettle tae impruve it. They couldnae ilkie day sit sae dour an seelent; an it wis impossible, hooseaiver ill-natured they micht be, that the glower they wore wis their ordnar luik.

‘It’s fey,’ I stertit, in the devaul atween suppin ae cup o tea an winnin anither ‘it’s fey foo custom can affeck oor likes an notions: mony couldnae pictur blytheness in a life o sic aathegither exile frae the warld as ye spen, Mr. Heathcliff; yet, I jelouse, that, amids yer faimily, an wi yer frienly leddy as the rulin starnie ower yer hame an hairt—’

‘Ma rulin starnie!’ he brakk in, wi a near deevilish glower on his face. ‘Far is she—my rulin starnie?’

‘Mrs. Heathcliff, yer wife, I mean.’

‘Weel, ay—och, ye wid makk on that her speerit his taen the darg o meenisterin angel, an guairds the weird o Whudderin Heichts, even fan her corp is gaen. Is thon the wye o’t?’

Kennin masel in a mistakk, I ettled tae correck it. I micht hae seen there wis ower great a reenge atween the ages o the twa tae makk it likely that they wir man an wife. Ane wis aboot forty: a whyle o mental virr at which men seldom haud the daft notion o bein mairried fur luve bi quines: thon idea is keepit fur the balm o auld age. The ither didnae luik seeventeen.

Syne it cam tae me— ‘The gype at ma elbuck, fa is suppin his tea ooto a bowel an ettin his breid wi yirdy hauns, maun be her man: Heathcliff’s son, of coorse. Here’s the result o bein beeriet alive: she’s haived hersel awa on thon eejit frae pure unkennin that better chiels existed! A rale peety—I maun takk tent foo I gar her tae regret her wylin.’ The hinmaist thocht maun seem vauntie; it wisnae. Ma neebour strukk me as near orra; I kent, throw experience, that I wis fairly weel faured.

‘Mrs. Heathcliff is ma dother-in-law,’ quo Heathcliff, settin me richt. He gaed, as he spakk, a fey luik in her airt: a luik o hatred; unless he his a maist unca set o facial muscles that winna, like thon o ither fowk, shaw the leid o his sowel.

‘Ach, o a certainty—I see noo: ye are the happy man o the braw fey,’ I remairked, turnin tae ma neebour.

This wis waur than afore: the chiel grew reid, an grippit his neive, wi ilkie luik o a sudden cloor. Bit he seemed tae think better o’t an smored his roose wi a roch bann, mummlit on fur me: that, hoosaeiver, I wis cannie tae ignore. ‘Unchauncy in yer jelousin, sir,’ quo ma host; ‘we neither o us hae the preevilege o ainin yer gweed fey; her mate is deid. I telt ye she wis ma dother-in-law: sae, she maun hae mairried ma son.’

‘And this young man is—’

‘Nae ma son, I can tell ye.’

Heathcliff smiled again, as gin it wir raither ower bauld a joke tae lay the faitherin o thon galoot tae him.

‘Ma nemme is Hareton Earnshaw,’ gurred the ither; ‘an I’d coonsel ye tae respeck it!’

‘I’ve shawn nae disrespeck,’ wis ma repon, lauchin inbye masel at the proodness wi which he annoonced himsel.

He fixed his ee on me langer than I likit tae return the glower, fur fear I micht be temptit either tae skelp his lugs or lauch oot lood. I stertit tae feel byordnar like an ootlinn in thon pleisunt faimily cercle. The dowie speeritual mood owercam, an mair than blottit oot, the warm pheesical comforts roon me; an I decidit tae be cannie foo I veeisted thon airt a third time.

The maitter o ettin bein ower, an naebody spikkin a wird o couthie sklaik, I gaed tae a windae tae conseeder the weather. A sorrowfu sicht I saw: derk nicht camin doon early, an lift an knowes melled in ane wersh furl o win an smorin snaa.

‘I dinna think it possible fur me tae win hame noo wioot a guide,’ I couldnae help spikkin. ‘The roads’ll be beeriet already; an, gin they wir bare, I could scarce makk oot a fit in advaunce.’

‘Hareton, kepp thon dizzen yowes intae the barn. They’ll be happit gin left in the fauld aa nicht: an pit a plank afore them,’ quo Heathcliff.

‘Fit maun I dae?’ I gaed on, wi moontin roose.

There wis nae repon tae ma speirin; an on luikin roon I saw anely Joseph humfin in a pail o parritch fur the tykes, an Mrs. Heathcliff booin ower the lowe, amusin hersel wi kinnlin a bunnle o spunks that hid drappit frae the mantlepiee as she pit the tea-tinnie in its place. The former, fin he’d set doon his burden, tuik a gleg owerluik o the chaumer, an in hairse tones grated oot ‘I winner foo ye thole tae staun there in laziness an waur,fin aa the lave gae oot! Bit yer like a nowt, an it’s nae eese spikkin—ye’ll niver mend yer ill weys, bit straicht tae the deil, like yer mither afore ye!’

I thocht, fur a meenit, that this bit o spikk wis aimed at me; an, eneuch roosed, steppit tae the auld vratch wi an intent o kickin him ooto the yett. Mrs. Heathcliff, hoosaeiver, checkit me bi her repon.

‘Ye shameless auld fraud!’ quo she. ‘Are ye nae feart o bein cairried awa bodily, finiver ye spikk the deil’s nemme? I warn ye tae haud aff frae roozin me or l’ll sikk yer kidnap as a speecial favour! Wyte! luik here, Joseph,’ she gaed on, takkin a lang, derk buik frae a shelf; ‘I’ll shaw ye foo far I’ve won in the Blaik Airt: I’ll sune be able tae makk a clear swype o it. The reid coo didnae dee bi chaunce; an yer rheumaticks can scarce be kent as chaunce happenins !’

‘Och, coorse, coorse!’ peched the elder; ‘may the Lord deeliver us frae coorseness!’

‘Na, vratch! ye are an affcast—be aff, or I’ll skaith ye serious! I’ll hae ye aa vrocht in wax an clay! an the first fa passes the leemits I fix shall—I winna say fit’ll happen tae him—bit, ye’ll see! Gyang, I’m luikin at ye!’

The wee witch pit a makk on coorseness intae her bonnie een, an Joseph, trimmlin wi sincere grue, hashed oot, prayin, an moothin ‘coorse’ as he gaed. I thocht her mainner maun be caused bi a kinno dreich fun; an, noo that we wir alane, I ettled tae interest her in ma wae.

‘Mrs. Heathcliff,’ quo I, ‘ye maun excuse me fur tribblin ye. I jelouse, because, wi thon face, I’m siccar ye canna help bein gweed-hairted. Dae pynt oot a puckle lanmerks tae shaw me the wey hame: I hae nae mair idea foo tae win thonner than ye wid hae on foo tae win tae Lunnon!’

‘Takk the road ye cam,’ she reponed, dowpin hersel in a cheer, wi a caunle, an the lang buik open afore her. ‘It’s smaa advyce, bit as soun as I can gie.’

‘Syne, gin ye hear o me bein fand deid in a bog or a pit fu o snaa, yer conscience winna fusper that it’s pairtly yer faut?’

‘Fit wye? I canna takk ye. They widnae lat me gae to the eyn o the gairden waa.’

‘*Ye*! I’d be laith tae sikk ye tae cross the yett, fur ma wints, on sic a nicht,’ I caad oot. ‘I wint ye tae tell me ma wey, nae tae *shaw* it: or else tae perswuad Mr. Heathcliff tae gie me a guide.’

‘Fa? There’s himsel, Earnshaw, Zillah, Joseph an masel. Fa wid ye hae?’

‘Are there nae loons at the ferm?’

‘Na; thon are aa.’

‘Weel, it follaes that I maun bide.’

‘Thon ye maun sattle wi yer host. I hae naethin tae dae wi it.’

‘I hope it’ll be a lesson tae ye tae makk nae mair daft traivels on thonner knowes,’ cam Heathcliff’s roch voyce frae the kitchie yett. ‘As tae bidin here, I dinna keep chaumers fur veesitors: ye maun share a bed wi Hareton or Joseph, gin ye dae.’

‘I can sleep on a cheer in this chaumer,’ I reponed.

‘Na, na! An incamer is an incamer, be he rich or puir: it winna suit me tae lat onybody hae the reenge o the place fin I’m aff guaird!’ quo the coorse mainnered vratch.

Wi thon insult ma patience wis at an eyn. I mummlit a grumph o grue, an pushed by him intae the yaird, rinnin agin Earnshaw in ma hash. It wis sae derk that I couldnae see the wey o exit; an, as I wanneret aroon, I heard anither speecimen o their ceevil weys amangst each ither. At first the young laddie seemed aboot tae befrien me.

‘I’ll gae wi him as far as the park,’ quo he.

‘Ye’ll gae wi him tae hell!’ spakk his maister, or fitever kin he bore. ‘An fa is tae takk tent o the shelts, eh?’

‘A chiel’s life is o mair wirth than ae evenin’s negleck o the shelts: somebody maun gae,’ mummlit Mrs. Heathcliff, mair kindly than I expeckit.

‘Nae at yer orderin!’ reponed Hareton. ‘Gin ye set store on him, ye’d better be quaet.’

‘Syne I hope his ghaist’ll haunt ye; an I hope Mr. Heathcliff will niver win anither tenant till the Grange is a wrack,’ she reponed, sherply.

‘Lippen, lippen, she’s bannin them!’ mummlit Joseph, tae fa I’d bin heidin.

He sat inbye earshot, milkin the kye bi the licht o a lamp, that I grippit withoot speirin, an, cryin oot that I’d sen it back the morn, hashed tae the nearest side yett.

‘Maister, maister, he’s reivin the lamp!’ skreiched the auld bodach, chasin me. ‘Hey, Gnasher! Hey, tyke! Hey Wolf, haud him, haud him!’

On openin the wee yett, twa hairy breets flew at ma thrapple, haudin me doon, an pittin oot the licht; while a jynt lauch frae Heathcliff an Hareton pit the foun stane on ma roose an affront. Lucky, the breets seemed mair set on raxxin their paas, an yawnin, an fleerishin their tails, than ettin me alive; bit they widnae lat me rise an I wis gart lie back till their coorse maisters wintit tae save me: syne, bunnetless an trimmlin wi roose, I telt the vratches tae lat me oot—at their risk tae haud me ane meenit langer—wi a wheen mummlit threats o revenge that, in their leemitless depth o virr, wis like something ooto King Lear.

The virr o ma wirry brocht on a forcie nosebluid, an still Heathcliff leuch, an still I raged. I dinna ken fit wid hae feenished maitters, hid there nae bin ae body at haun as mensefu as masel, an mair kindly than ma host. This wis Zillah, the stoot hoosewife; fa at the hinnereyn cam tae fin oot the natur o the stooshie. She thocht that some o them hid bin pttin violent hauns on me; an, nae daurin tae attack her maister, she turned her hale spikk agin the younger breet.

‘Weel, Mr. Earnshaw,’ quo she, ‘I winner fit ye’ll hae gaun on neist? Are we gaun tae murder fowk on oor verra yett? I see this hoose’ll niver dae fur me—luik at the puir cheil, he’s near thrapplit! Wheesht, wheesht; ye maunna cairry on like thon. Cam in, an I’ll cure thon: there noo, bide at peace.’

Wi thon wirds she o a suddenty splytered a pint o jeelin watter ower ma heid, an rugged me intae the kitchie. Mr. Heathcliff follaed, his unplanned lauchter deein faist intae his ordnar dourness.

I wis byordnar sikk, an licht heidit, an feint; an thus gart tae accept ludgins unner his reef. He telt Zillah tae gie me a glaiss o brandy, an syne gaed on tae the inbye chaumer; as she sympatheesed wi me on ma peetifu state, an haein obeyed his orders, makkin me feel a thochtie better, hickled me tae bed.

The ghaist at the windae

**Chapter 3**

Fin leadin the wey upstairs, she suggestit that I should hide the caunle, an nae makk a soun; fur her maister hid a fey notion aboot the chaumer she wid pit me in, an niver lat onybody bide thonner willinly. I speired the rizzon. She didnae ken, she reponed: she’d anely bedd there a year or twa; an they hid sae mony fey ongauns, she couldnae stert tae be ill-faschent.

Ower stupifeed to be winnerin aboot thon masel, I faistened ma yett an keekit aroon fur the bed. The hale furniture wis o a cheer, a claes-press, an a muckle aik chest, wi squars cuttit oot near the tap luikin like coach windaes. Haein gaen up tae thon structure, I keekit inbye, an kent it tae be a byordnar kinno o auld-farrant couch, verra handy vrocht tae dee awa wi the need fur ilkie ane o the faimily haein a chaumer tae himsel. In fack, it vrocht a wee closet, an the ledge o a windae, that it enclosed, served as a brod. I rugged back the panelled sides, got in wi ma licht, rugged them thegether again, an felt safe agin the watchfuness o Heathcliff, an the lave.

The ledge, far I plunked ma caunle, hid a puckle fooshty buiks biggit up in ae neuk; an it wis happit wi screivin scrattit ontae the peint. This screivin, hoosaeiver, wis naethin bit a nemme repeatit in aa kinds o letters, muckle an wee—*Kirsty Earnshaw*, here an thonner cheenged tae *Kirsty Heathcliff*, an syne again tae *Kirsty Linton*.

In dweeble weariness I booed ma heid agin the windae, an cairriet on spellin ower Kirsty Earnshaw—Heathcliff—Linton, till ma een steekit; bit they hidnae rested five meenits fin a glare o fite letters stertit frae the derk, as skyrie as speerits—the air heezed wi Kirsties; an roozin masel tae clear awa the intrusive nemme, I fand ma caunle-wick leanin on ane o the auld buiks, an guffin the airt wi a stank o roastit cauf-skin. I snippit it aff, an, verra misfittit unner the mellin o cauld an ongaun seekness, sat up an spreid open the bladdit buik on ma knee. It wis a Testament, in shargeret type, an guffin dreadfu fooshty: a fly-leaf hid the screivin ‘Kirsty Earnshaw, her buik,’ an a date a quarter o a century back. I steekit it, an tuik up anither an anither, till I’d owerluiked aa. Kirsty’s librar wis select, an its state o wrack pruved it tae hae bin weel thoombed, tho nae aathegether fur a richt purpose: scarce ae chapter hid escaped, a pen-an-ink screivin—at least the luik o ane—happin ilkie nippick o blank that the prenter hid left. Some wir lane sentences; ither pairts tuik the form o a ordnar diary, scrattit in an unformed, bairnie’s haun. At the tap o an extra page ( a richt treisur, nae doot, fin first lichtit on) I wis gart lauch tae see a braw caricature o ma frien Joseph—rochly, yet pouerfully drawn. Straicht aff an interest kinnlit inbye me fur the unkent Kirsty, an I stertit tae makk oot her dwined scrattins.

‘An awfu Sabbath,’ stertit the paragraph aneath. ‘I wish ma faither wir back again. Hindley is a scunnerin substitute—his mistreatin o Heathcliff is veecious—H. an I are gaun tae rebel—we tuik oor first step this evenin.

‘Aa day hid bin poorin wi rain; we couldnae gae tae kirk, sae Joseph maun makk a congregation in the laft; an, fin Hindley an his wife streetched oot doonstairs afore a comfy lowe—daein onythin bit readin their Bibles, I’ll sweir —Heathcliff, masel an the waesome ploo loon wir telt tae takk oor prayer-buiks, an sclimm up: we were reenged in a raw, on a baggie o corn, maenin an chitterin, an hopin that Joseph wid chitter as weel, sae that he micht gie us a short sermon fur his ain sake. A vain notion! The sermon laisted a hale three oors; an yet ma brither hid the face tae quo, fin he saw us cam doon, “Fit, dane already?” On Sabbath evenins we eesed tae be lat play, gin we didnae makk muckle soun; noo a wee keckle is eneuch tae sen us intae neuks.

“Ye forget ye hae a maister here,” quo the tyrant. “I’ll blooter the first fa pits me in a roose! I maun hae perfeck solemn weys an seelence. Och, loon! wis thon yersel? Frances dearie, pu his hair as ye gae by: I heard him snap his fingers.” Frances pued his hair hairtily, an syne gaed an dowpit hersel on her man’s knee, an thonner they wir, like twa babbies, kissin an spikkin styte bi the oor—daft sklaik that we should be affrontit o. We made oorsels as cosy as we could in the arch o the press. I’d jist preened oor peenies thegether, an hung them up fur a curtain, fin in cams Joseph, on an eeran frae the stables. He teirs doon ma curtain, cloors ma lugs, an craiks:

“The maister jist beeried, an Sabbath nae ower, an the soun o the gospel still in yer lugs, an ye daur be caperin! Ye should be affrontit! sit ye doon, coorse bairns! there’s gweed buiks eneuch gin ye’ll read them: dowp ye doon, an think o yer sowels!”

Spikkin this, he gart us squar oor poseetions that we micht win frae the hyne-aff lowe eneuch licht tae shaw us the text o the buiks he haived upon us. I couldnae thole the darg. I tuik ma stoory buik bi the cover, an haived it intae the tykes’-kennel, tellin him I hatit a gweed buik. Heathcliff kickit his tae the same airt. Syne there wis a stooshie!

“Maister Hindley!” skreiched oor meenister. “Maister, cam here! Miss Kirsty’s rived the back aff ‘The Helmet o Salvation,’ an Heathcliff’s pit his fit intae the first pairt o ‘The Braid Wey tae Destruction!’ It’s fair scunnerin that ye let them gae on this wey. Ach! the auld maister wid hae keepit them in order —bit he’s awa!”

‘Hindley hashed up frae his Eden at the ingle, an grippin ane o us bi the scruff, an the t’ither bi the airm, haived baith intae the back-kitchie; far, Joseph telt us, “Auld Nick wid takk us awa as sure as we wir leevin: an, sae comfortit, we each socht a neuk tae awyte his incam. I tuik this buik, an a pottie o ink frae a shelf, an shoved the hoose-yett ajee tae gie me licht, an I hae gotten the time on wi screivin fur twinty meenits; bit ma fier is restless, an sez that we should takk the dairywumman’s plaid, an hae a rin on the muirs, unner its bield. A pleisant ploy—an syne, gin the dour auld bodach cams in, he micht think his prophecy verifeed—we canna be weeter, or caulder, in the rain than we are here.’

\* \* \* \* \* \*

I expeck Kirsty cairried oot the ploy, fur the neist sentence tuik up anither subjeck: she becam waesome.

‘Foo little did I ken that Hindley wid iver makk me greet sae!’ she screived. ‘Ma heid dunts, till I canna keep it on the bowster; an still I canna stop greetin. Puir Heathcliff! Hindley caas him a cyard, an winna lat him sit wi us, nur ett wi us ony mair; an, he sez, he an I maunna play thegether, an threatens tae pit him ooto the hoose gin we brakk his orders. He his bin blamin oor faither (foo daur he?) fur treatin H. ower weel; an sweirs he’ll caa him doon tae his richt place—’

\* \* \* \* \* \*

I sterted tae nod wearisome ower the dim page: ma ee wanneret frae manuscript tae prent. I spied a reid ornamented title ‘Sivventy Times Sivven, an the First o the Sivventy-First. A Haly Sermon gaen bi the Reverend Jabez Branderham, in the Kirk o Gimmerden Sough.’ An fin I wis, half-consciously, wirryin ma harns tae jelouse fit Jabez Branderham wid makk o his subjeck, I lay back in bed, an fell asleep. Ochone fur the effecks o bad tea an ill natur! Fit ither could it be that gart me spen sic an unca nicht? I dinna mynd anither that I can at aa compare wi it since I wis capable o thon wae.

I stertit tae dwaum, near afore sleep tuik ower. I thocht it wis mornin; an I’d set oot on ma wey hame, wi Joseph gaun afore. The snaa lay yairds deep in oor road; an, as we plytered on, ma fier weariet me wi ongaun reproaches that I hidnae brocht a pilgrim’s cromack: tellin me that I could niver win intae the hoose wioot ane, an vauntie like fleerishin a wechty-heidit club, that I unnerstude tae be the richt gear. Fur a meenit I thocht it daft that I should nott sic a wappon tae win intae ma ain hame. Syne a new notion cam tae me. I wisnae gaun thonner: we wir traivellin tae hear the weel-kent Jabez Branderham preach, frae the text ‘Sivventy Times Sivven;’ an either Joseph, the meenister, or I hid committed the ‘First o the Sivventy-First,’ an wir tae be publicly wyled oot an excommunicatit. We cam tae the kirk. I hae gaen bye it really in ma wauks, twa or three times; it lies in a howe, atween twa knowes: a raised howe, nearhaun a muir, fas peaty bree is said tae embalm the fyew corpses beeriet thonner. The reef his bin keepit hale up tae noo; bit as the meenister’s pye is anely twinty pun per year, an a hoose wi twa chaumers, threatenin faist tae dwine intae ane, nae meenister will takk on the darg o kirk leader: speecially as it is kent that his flock wid raither lat him sterve than add mair tae his pye bi ae penny frae their ain poochs. Hoosaeiver, in ma dwaum, Jabez hid a stappit an tenty congregation; an he preached—gweed God! fit a sermon; cuttit intae *fower hunner an ninety* pairts, ilkie ane as lang as an ordnar langamachie frae the pulpit, an ilkie pairt spakk o a separate sin! Far he raiked fur them, I canna tell. He’d his ain fey mainner o interpretin the wird, an it seemed necessar the brither should sin different sins on ilkie event. They wir o the maist fey kind: unca misdaeins that I niver pictured afore.

Och, foo trauchelt I grew. Foo I warsslit, an yawned, an noddit, an revived! Foo I nippit an powkit masel, an rubbit ma een, an stude up, an dowpit doon again, an duntit Joseph tae lat me ken gin he wid i*ver* feenish. I wis gart hear it aa: at the hinnereyn, he reached the ‘*First o the Sivventy-First*’. At thon, o a suddenty a thocht steered me; I wis meeved tae rise an dooncry Jabez Branderham as the sinner o the sin that nae Christian nott pairdon.

‘Sir,’quo I, ‘dowpin here inbye thon fower waas, at ae streetch, I hae tholed an forgien the fower hunner an ninety heids o yer spikk. Sivventy times sivven times hae I pyked up ma bunnet an bin aboot tae depairt—Sivventy times sivven times hae ye ootrageously gart me dowp doon again. The fower hunner an ninety-first is ower muckle. Ither martyrs, rin at him! Ding him doon, an caa him tae smush sae the airt that kens him micht ken him nae mair!’

‘*Ye are the cheil*!’skreiched Jabez, efter a dowie devaul, leanin ower his bowster. ‘Sivventy times sivven times did ye freely girn—sivventy times sivven did I takk coonsel wi ma sowel—Loshty, this is human dweebleness: this can be owerluikit! The First o the Sivventy-First is cam. Brithers, cairry oot on him the judgement screived. Sic honour hae aa His sancts!’

Wi thon hinmaist wird, the hale set oot, heistin their pilgrim’s clubs, breenged roon me in a breist; an I, haein nae wappon tae heist tae save masel, stertit warsslin wi Joseph, ma nearest an coorsest fae, fur his. In the steer an the melee a wheen clubs crossed; dunts, aimed at me, skaithed ither heids. Sune the hale kirk dirled wi chappins an coonter chappins: ilkie chiel’s haun wis agin his neebour; an Branderham, nae able tae bide still, poored oot his virr in a shouer o lood knells on the brods o the pulpit, that rang oot sae smert that, at the hinnereyn, tae ma unspikkable relief, they waukened me. An fit wis it that hid suggestit the great stooshie? Fit hid played Jabez’s pairt in the melee? Jist the branch o a fir-tree that duntit ma windae as the win maened by, an chappit its dry cones agin the glaiss! I lippened dootinly a meenit; jeloused fit wis the disturber, syne turned an dwaumed, an dreamt again: gin onthin waur than afore.

This time, I myndit I wis lyin in the aik press, an I heard distinck the gurly win, an the on ding o the snaa; I heard, as weel the fir bough rap oot its teasin soun, an kent it tae be the richt cause: bit it roosed me sae muckle, that I ettled tae seelence it, gin possible; an, I thocht, I raise an tycuaved tae unsteek the windae. The heuk wis sowdered inno the staple: a maitter seen bi me fin waukened, bit forgot. ‘I maun stop it, hoosaeiver!’ I mummlit, chappin ma neive throw the glaiss, an raxxin an airm oot to grip the unrelentin branch; insteid o which, ma fingers claucht on the fingers o a wee, ice-cauld haun! The forcie horror o a widdendreme cam ower me: I ettled tae draw back ma airm, bit the haun clung tae it, an a maist waesome vyce sabbit, ‘Lat me in—lat me in!’ ‘Fa are ye?’ I speired, warsslin, betimes, tae free masel. ‘Kirsty Linton,’ it reponed, chitterin (foo did I think o *Linton*? I’d read *Earnshaw* twinty times fur Linton) ‘I’m cam hame: I’d tint ma wey on the muir!’ As it spakk I made oot, feintly, a bairn’s face luikin throw the windae. Terror turned me coorse; an, findin it eeseless tae ettle shakkin the craitur aff, I pued its wrist ontae the brukken glaiss, an rubbit it back an fore till the bluid ran doon an syped the bedclaes: still it maened, ‘Lat me in!’ an keepit its ticht haud, near maddenin me wi fleg ‘Foo can I!’ quo I at the hinnereyn. ‘Lat *me* gae, gin ye wint me tae lat ye in!’ The fingers saftened, I rugged mine ben throw the hole, faist biggin the buiks up in a pyramid agin it, an stoppit ma lugs tae haud oot the peetifu prayer. I seemed tae keep them steekit abune a quarter o an oor; yet, the meenit I lippened again, there wis the dowie voyce maenin on! ‘Aff wi ye!’ I skirled. ‘I’ll niver lat ye in, nae gin ye prig fur twinty years.’ ‘It is twinty years,’ murned the voyce: ‘twinty years. I’ve bin an ootlinn fur twinty years!’ Syne stertit a dweeble scrattin ootbye, an the howp o buiks meeved as gin shoved forrit. I tycauved tae lowp up; bit couldnae steer a limb; an sae skirled oot, in a frenezy o fricht. Tae ma bumbazement, I fand the skirl wisnae ideal: faist fitsteps cam tae ma chaumer yett; somebody shoved it ajee, wi a forcie haun, an a licht glimmered ben the squars at the tap o the bed. I sat chitterin yet, an dichtin the swyte frae ma broo: the intruder devauled an mummlit tae himsel. At the hinnereyn, quo he, in a hauf-fusper, plainly nae expeckin a repon, ‘Is onybody here?’ I thocht it best tae ain up tae bein thonner; fur I kent Heathcliff’s spikk, an wis feart he’d luik farrer, gin I keepit quaet. Wi this thocht, I turned an caad the panels ajee. I winna sune forget the effeck ma action hid.

Heathcliff stude near the yett, in his sark an troosers; wi a caunle dreepin ower his fingers, an his face as fite as the waa ahin him. The first craik o the aik fleggit him like an electric stang: the licht lowpit frae his grip tae a space o a puckle feet, an his steer wis sae sair that he could scarce pyke it up.

‘It’s anely yer guest, sir,’ I cried oot, wintin tae save him the affront o shawin his cooardice farrer. ‘I’d the mischaunce tae skreich in ma sleep, ower a frichtfu widdendreme. I’m sorry I waukened ye.’

‘Och, Deil takk ye, Mr. Lockwood! I wish ye wir at the—’ stertit ma host, settin the caunle on a cheer, because he fand it eeseless tae haud it steidy. ‘An fa shawed ye up intae this chaumer?’ he gaed on, grippin his nails intae his palms, an grindin his teeth tae hap his facial meevements. ‘Fa wis it? I’ve a gweed mind tae pit them ooto the hoose this meenit?’

‘It wis yer servant Zillah,’ I reponed, haivin masel on to the fleer, an faist pitten on ma claes. ‘I widnae care gin ye did, Mr. Heathcliff; she weel deserves it. I jelouse that she wintit tae win anither pruif that the airt wis hauntit, at ma expense. Weel, it is—heezin wi ghaists an trowies! Ye hae rizzon in steekin it up, I tell ye. Naebody’ll thank ye fur a sleep in sic a lair’

‘Fit div ye mean?’ speired Heathcliff, ‘an fit are ye daein? Lie doon an feenish oot the nicht, since ye *are* here; bit, fur heiven’s sake! dinna repeat thon frichtfu soun: naethin could excuse it, unless ye wir haein yer thrapple cuttit!’

‘Gin the wee vratch hid won in at the windae, she likely wid hae smored me!’ I reponed. ‘I’m nae gaun tae thole the ill tricks o yer hospitable forebears again. Wisnae the Reverend Jabez Branderham kin tae ye on the mither’s side? An thon bizzim, Kirsty Linton, or Earnshaw, or fitiver she wis caaed—she maun hae bin a changelin—coorse wee sowel! She telt me she’d bin waukin the yird thon twinty years: a just price tae pye fur her sins, I’ve nae doot!’

Scarce wir thon wirds spukken fin I myndit the jynin o Heathcliff’s wi Kirsty’s nemme in the buik, that hid aathegither slippit frae ma harns, till sae waukened. I reiddened at ma thochtlessness: bit, wioot shawin farrer kennin o the mistakk I hashed tae add ‘The truith is, sir, I spent the first pairt o the nicht in—’ Here I stoppit anew—I wis aboot tae say ‘readin thon auld buiks,’ syne it wid hae shawed I kent o their screived, as weel as their prentit, intimmers; sae, correckin masel, I gaed on ‘in spellin ower the nemme scrattit on thon windae-ledge. A scunnerin darg, meant tae set me asleep, like coontin, or—’

‘Fit *can* ye mean bi spikkin in this wey tae *me*!’ thunnered Heathcliff wi forcie virr. ‘Foo—foo *daur* ye, unner ma reef?—God! he’s wud tae spikk sae!’ An he cloored his broo wi roose.

I didnae ken whether tae resent this spikk or cairry on ma explanation; bit he seemed sae pouerfu steered up that I tuik peety an gaed on wi ma dwaums; statin I’d niver heard the nemme o ‘Kirsty Linton’ afore, bit readin it aften ower vrocht a pictur that personifeed itsel fin I’d nae langer ma harns unner control. Heathcliff slawly fell back intae the bield o the bed, as I spakk; at the hinnereyn dowpin doon near happit ahin it. I jeloused, hoosaiver, bi his byordnar an unsteidy pechin that he warssled tae haud back a steer o violent feelin. Nae likin tae shaw him that I’d heard the warssle, I gaed on wi ma dressin raither loodly, luikit at ma watch, an spakk on fit a lang night it wis: ‘Nae three o’clock yet! I could hae taen an oath it wis sax. Time dauchles here: we maun surely hae gaen tae rest at echt!’

‘Aywis at nine in yule, an rise at fower,’ quo ma host, beeryin a maen: an, as I jeloused, bi the meevement o his airm’s shadda, dichtin a tear frae his een. ‘Mr. Lockwood,’ he telt, ‘ye can gae intae ma chaumer: ye’ll anely be in the wey, camin doonstairs sae sune: an yer childish skreich his sent sleep tae the deil fur me.’

‘An fur me, as weel,’ I reponed. ‘I’ll wauk in the yaird till daylicht, an syne I’ll be aff; an ye neednae dreid a repeat o ma veesit. I’m noo aathegither cured o sikkin pleisur in fowk, be it in the kintra or the toon. A mensefu cheil oucht tae fin eneuch company in himsel.’

‘Delichtfu company!’ mummlit Heathcliff. ‘Takk the caunle, an gae far ye wint. I’ll jyne ye sune. Bide ooto the yaird, tho, the tykes are unchyned; an the hoose—Juno stauns guaird thonner, an—na, ye can anely daunder aboot the steps an lobbies. Bit, awa wi ye! I’ll cam in twa meenits!’

I did as he telt me, sae far as tae leave the chaumer; fin, nae kennin far the nerra lobbies led, I stude still, an saw unsocht, a nippick o superstition on the pairt othe laird that belied, feyly, his seemin mense. He sclimmed ontae the bed, an yarked open the windae, brakkin, as he pued at it, intae a frenezy o greetin. ‘Cam in! cam in!’ he sabbit. ‘Kirsty, dae cam. Och, dae—*aince* mair! Och! ma hairt’s dearie! Lippen tae me *this* time, Kirsty, at the hinnereyn!’ The ghaist shawed a ghaist’s ordnar pliskie: it gaed nae sign o bein; bit the sna an win furled wud throw, even reachin masel, an blawin oot the licht.

There wis sic pain in the ootpoorin o wae that jyned this rantin, that ma fella feelin gart me owerluik its daftness, an I gaed aff, hauf roosed tae hae lippened at aa, an pit oot at haein telt ma daft widdendreme, since it brocht on thon wae; tho *foo* wis ayont ma kennin. I gaed doon cannily tae the laigher airts, an cam tae the back-kitchie, far a glimmer o a lowe, raked compack thegether, lat me rekinnle ma caunle. Naethin wis steerin bar a mirled, grey cattie, that creepit frae the aisse, an met me wi a shakky mieuw.

Twa benches, shapit in pairts o a cercle, near closed in the hairth; on ane o thon I streetched masel, an Grimalkin moontit the tither. We wir baith o us doverin afore onybody cam on oor bield, an syne it wis Joseph, shauchlin doon a widden laidder that vanished intae the reef, throwe a trap: the stair tae his lift, I jelouse. He cast a seenister luik at the wee flame that I’d gart play atween the ribs, swypit the cat frae its seat, an dowpin himsel in the teem airt, stertit the darg o stuffin a three-inch pipe wi baccy. My bein in his sanctum wis clearly thocht a skirp o impidence ower affrontin fur remairk: he seelently pit the pipe tae his mou, fauldit his airms, an sooked awa. I lat him enjoy the pleisur wioot steerin; an efter sookin oot the lees o the rikk, an heavin a profund sough, he won up, an depairted as dreichly as he cam.

A swacker fitstep cam in neist; an noo I opened ma mou fur a ‘Gweed mornin,’ bit steekit it again, the wirds seelenced; fur Hareton Earnshaw wis performin his prayers *saftly*, in a breenge o banns direckit agin ilkie objeck he touched, fin he raikit in a neuk for a spad or shovel tae howk ben the drifts. He keekit ower the back o the bench, fleered his nostrils, an thocht as little o spikkin tae me as newsin wi ma fier the cattie. I jeloused, bi his ongauns, that gaun oot wis alloued, an, leavin ma hard bed, made a meevement tae follae him. He tuik tent o this, an pyntit at an inbye yett wi the eyn o his spad, lattin me ken bi a grumph that there wis the airt far I maun gae, gin I cheenged ma poseetion.

It opened inno the hoose, far the weemen wir already steerin; Zillah coaxin fleerishes o flame up the lum wi a muckle bellaas; an Mrs. Heathcliff, kneelin on the hairth, readin a buik bi the aid o the bleeze. She held her haun atween the furnace-heat an her een, an seemed thrang in her darg; dauchlin frae it anely tae rage the servant fur happin her wi spirks, or tae haive awa a tyke, noo an then, that snoozled its snoot ower forcie intae her face. I wis bumbazed tae see Heathcliff there as weel. He stude bi the lowe, his back tae me, jist feenishin a gurly scene wi puir Zillah; fa noo an again interruptit her darg tae pyke up the neuk o her peenie, an heave a vexed maen.

‘An ye, ye wirthless—’ he brakk oot as I cam in, turnin tae his dother-in-law, an spikkin a wird as hairmless as dyeuk, or yowe, bit in the ordnar wye screived bi a dash. ‘Thonner ye are, at yer idle pliskies again! The lave o them dae earn their breid—ye live on ma charity! Pit yer orrals awa, an fin somethin tae dae. Ye’ll pye me fur the scunner o haein ye aywis in ma sicht—dae ye hear, damnt bizzim?’

‘I’ll pit ma trock awa, because ye can makk me gin I dinna,’ quo the young leddy, steekin her buik, an haivin it on a cheer. ‘Bit I’ll nae dae onythin, tho ye should sweir yer tongue oot, barr fit I please!’

Heathcliff heistit his haun, an the spikker lowped tae a safer airt, clearly weel acquant wi its wecht. Haein nae wint tae see a cat-an-tyke fecht, I steppit forrit gleg, as gin eager tae takk the warmth o the hairth, an unkennin o ony hint o the interruptit argybargy. Ilkie ane hid eneuch mense tae stop farrer nestiness: Heathcliff pit his neives, oot herm’s wye, in his pooches; Mrs. Heathcliff furled her lip, an wauked tae a seat hyne aff, far she keepit her wird bi playin the pairt o a statue durin the lave o ma veesit. Thon wisnae lang. I didna jyne their brakkfaist, an, at the first glimmer o day brakk, tuik the chaunce o escapin intae the free air, noo caller, an still, an cauld as mysteerous ice.

Ma laird cried fur me tae wyte afore I reached the boddom o the gairden, an offered tae jyne me ower the muir. It wis weel he did, fur the knowe-back wis ae cloudy fite sea; the swalls an faas nae shawin true rises an howes in the grun: mony pits, at least, wir stappit tae their tap; an hale reenges o hillocks, the smush o the quarries, dichtit frae the map that ma wauk yestreen left pictured in ma harns. I’d remairked on ae side o the road, at spaces o sax or sivven yairds, a line o upricht stanes, gaed on ben the hale length o the muir: these wir biggit an peintit wi lime tae wirk as guides in the derk, an as weel fin a faa, like eenoo, mirled the deep peat hags on either haun wi the firmer pathie: bit, barrin a yirdy dot pyntin up here an thonner, aa merks o them hid vanished: an ma fier fand it necessar tae warn me aften tae steer tae the richt or left, fin I thocht I wis follaein, richt, the furlin o the road.

We spakk little, an he dauchled at the entrance o Thrushcross Park, tellin me, I could makk nae mistakk thonner. Oor fareweels wir keepit tae a hashed nod, an syne I breenged forrit, trustin tae ma ainsel; fur the porter’s ludge is untenanted as yet. The wauk frae the yett tae the grange is twa miles; I think I raxxed it tae fower, fit wi lossin masel amang the trees, an sinkin up tae the scruff in snaa: a mishanter that anely fowk fa hae daen it can share the grue o. Onywey, fitever wir ma traivels, the clock changed twal as I gaed inno the hoose; an that gaed exack an oor fur ilkie mile o the ordnar wey frae Whudderin Heichts.

Ma hoosekeeper an her fiers hashed tae walcam me; tellin me, in a breist, they’d aathegither thocht me tint: aabody jeloused that I deed last nicht; an they wir winnerin foo they maun set aboot luikin fur ma corp. I bedd them be quaet noo that they saw me hame, an, jeeled tae ma verra hairt, I traucheled upstairs; far, efter pittin on dry claes, an waukin back an fore thirty or forty meenits, tae bring back ma body heat, I gaed tae ma study, dweeble as a kittlin: near ower muckle sae, tae enjoy the blythe lowe an the rikkin coffee that the maidie hid brocht tae revive me.

**Incam o an Ootcast Chapter 4**

Fit vauntie weathercocks we are! Masel, fa’d vowed tae haud ootower frae aa social weys, an thankit ma starnies that, at last, I’d lichted on a neuk far it wis neist tae impossible —I, dweeble vratch, efter maintainin till gloamin a tyauve wi laigh speerits an alaneness, wis noo gart strikk ma colours; an unner the ploy o winnin information aboot the needs o ma business, I socht Mrs. Dean, fin she brocht in supper, tae dowp doon fin I ett it; hopin wi aa ma hairt she wid pruve a richt sklaik, an either steer me tae life or shoosh me tae sleep bi her spikk.

‘Ye hae bedd here a fair whylie,’ I stertit; ‘did ye nae say saxteen years?’

‘Echteen, sir: I cam fin the mistress wis mairried, tae wyte on her; efter she deed, the maister keepit me on fur his hoosekeeper.’

‘Och weel.’

There follaed a wyte. She wisnae a sklaik, I wis feart; unless aboot her ain maitters, an thon could scarce interest me. Hoosaeiver, haein thocht fur a whylie, wi a neive on ilkie knee, an a cloud o reflection ower her reid chikkt face, she spakk ‘Ay, times are verra cheenged since thon!’

‘Ay,’ I reponed, ‘ye’ve seen a gweed mony cheenges, I jelouse?’

‘I hae: an tribbles as weel,’ she telt me.

‘Ach, I’ll turn the spikk tae the laird’s faimily!’ I thocht tae masel. ‘A gweed subjeck tae stert! An thon bonnie quine-widda, I’d like tae ken her back story: whether she be a local o the kintra, or, as is mair like, an exotic that the dour *indigenae*  winna ken as kin.’ Wi this intent I socht Mrs. Dean foo Heathcliff lat Thrushcross Grange, an preferred bidin in an airt an hame sae muckle waur. ‘Is he nae rich eneuch tae keep the estate in gweed trim?’ I speired.

‘Rich, sir!’ she reponed. ‘He his naebody kens fit siller, an ilkie year it growes. Aye, aye, he’s rich eneuch tae bide in a finer hoose than this: bit he’s verra thrifty— mean; an, gin he’d meant tae flit tae Thrushcross Grange, as sune as he heard o a gweed tenant he couldnae hae tholed tae miss the chaunce o winnin a fyew hunners mair. It’s fey that fowk should be sae greedy, fin they’re alane in the warld!’

‘He’d a son, I think?’

‘Aye he hid ane—he’s deid.’

‘An thon young leddy, Mrs. Heathcliff, is his widda?’

‘Aye.’

‘Far did she cam frae first aff?’

‘Weel, sir, she’s ma late maister’s dother: Kitty Linton wis her maiden nemme. I nursed her, puir craitur! I did wish Mr. Heathcliff wid flit here, an syne we micht hae bin thegether again.’

‘Fit! Kitty Linton?’ I brakk oot, bumbazed. Bit a meenit’s thocht convinced me it wisna ma ghaistly Kirsty. Syne,’ I gaed on, ‘ma forerinner’s nemme wis Linton?’

‘It wis.’

‘An fa is thon Earnshaw: Hareton Earnshaw, fa bides wi Mr. Heathcliff? Are they sib?’

‘No; he is the late Mrs. Linton’s nephew.’

‘The young leddy’s cousin, syne?’

‘Aye; an her man wis her cousin aa weel: ane on the mither’s, the ither on the faither’s side: Heathcliff mairried Mr. Linton’s sister.’

‘I see the hoose at Whudderin Heichts his “Earnshaw” cuttit ower the front yett. Are they an auld faimily?’

‘Verra auld, sir; an Hareton is the hinmaist o them, as oor Miss Kitty is o us—raither, o the Lintons. Hae ye bin tae Whudderin Heichts? I prig pardon fur speirin; bit I’d like tae hear foo she is!’

‘Mrs. Heathcliff? she luikit verra weel, an verra bonnie; yet, I think, nae verra blythe.’

‘Ochone, I dinna winner! An foo did ye like the maister?’

‘A roch chiel, raither, Mrs. Dean. Is thon nae his makk?

‘Roch as a saw-edge, an hard as whinstane! The less ye hae adee wi him the better.’

‘He maun hae hid a puckle ups an doons in life tae makk him sic a breet. Dae ye ken onythin o his back story?’

‘It’s a gowk bird’s, sir—I ken aa aboot it: barr far he wis born, an fa wir his fowk, an foo he won his siller at first. An Hareton his bin cast oot like a gorblie! The puir loon is the anely ane in aa this pairish that disnae ken foo he’s bin swickit.’

‘Weel, Mrs. Dean, it’ll be a charitable darg tae tell me somethin o ma neebours: I feel I winna rest gin I gae tae bed; sae be gweed eneuch tae sit an blether an oor.’

‘Och, fairly, sir! I’ll jist fetch a bittie shewin, an syne I’ll sit as lang’s ye like. Bit ye’ve catched a hoast: I saw ye chitterin, an ye maun hae some thin parritch tae drive it oot.’

The wirthy wumman breenged aff, an I hunkert nearhaun the lowe; ma heid felt hett, an the lave o me jeeled: maireower, I wis vrocht up, near tae a state o daftness, throwe ma nerves an harns. This gart me feel, nae misfittit, bit raither fearfu (as I am still) o serious effecks frae the ongauns o the day an yestreen. She cam back faist, bringin a rikkin bowel an a basket o wirk; an, haein plunked the former on the hob, drew in her cheer, clearly blythe tae fin me sae couthie.

Afore I cam tae bide here, she sterted—wytin nae farrer invite tae her story—I wis near aywis at Whudderin Heichts; because ma mither hid nursed Mr. Hindley Earnshaw, that wis Hareton’s faither, an I got eesed tae playin wi the bairns: I ran eerans as weel, an helpit tae makk hey, an hung aboot the fairm ready fur onythin that onybody wid set me tae dae. Ae fine simmer foreneen—it wis the stert o hairst, I mynd—Mr. Earnshaw, the auld maister, cam downstairs, riggit oot fur a traivel; an, efter he’d telt Joseph fit wis tae be dane durin the day, he turned tae Hindley, an Kirsty, an me—fur I sat ettin ma parritch wi them—an quo he, spikkin tae his son, ‘Noo, ma bonnie lad, I’m gaun tae Liverpool the day, fit’ll I bring ye? Ye may chuse fit ye like: anely lat it be wee, fur I’ll wauk thonner an back: saxty miles ilkie wey, thon’s a lang stravaig!’ Hindley socht a fiddle, an syne he socht o Miss Kirsty; she wis scarce sax years auld, bit she could ride ony shelt in the stable, an she wintit a wheep. He didnae forget me; fur he’d a kind hairt, tho he wis raither hard whyles. He promised tae bring me a poochfu o aipples an pears, an syne he kissed his bairns, bad them fareweel, an set aff.

It seemed a lang whylie tae us aa—the three days o his absence—an aften did wee Kirsty socht fin he wid be hame. Mrs. Earnshaw expeckit him bi supper-time on the third evenin, an she pit the meal aff oor efter oor; there wir nae signs o his incam, hoosaeiver, an at the hinnereyn the bairns weariet o rinnin doon tae the yett tae luik. Syne it grew derk; she wid hae hid them aa beddit, bit they priggit sair tae be lat bide up; an, jist aboot eleyven o’clock, the yett-snib wis raised quaet, an in steppit the maister. He flang himsel intae a cheer, lauchin an maenin, an bad them aa staun aff, fur he wis near killt—he widnae hae sic anither wauk fur the three kingdoms.

‘An at the eyn o it tae be flayed tae daith!’ quo he, lowsin his muckle jaiket, that he held bunnlit up in his airms. ‘Takk tent, wife! I wis niver sae threwshed wi onythin in ma life: bit ye maun takk it as a gifttie o God; tho it’s as derk near as gin it cam frae the deil.’

We croodit roon, an ower Miss Kirsty’s heid I’d a keek at a yirdy, raggety, blaik-haired bairn; big eneuch baith tae wauk an spikk: mairower, its face luikit aulder than Kirsty’s; yet fin it wis plunkt on its feet, it anely glowered roon, an spakk ower an ower again a wheen styte that naebody could unnerstaun. I wis frichtit, an Mrs. Earnshaw wis ready tae haive it ooto the hoose: she did fleer up, speirin foo he could ettle tae bring thon cyard vratch intae the hoose, fin they’d their ain bairns tae feed an fend fur? Fit he meant tae dae wi it, an whether he wis gyte? The maister ettled tae explain the maitter; bit he wis really hauf deid wi trauchle, an aa that I could makk oot, amangst her ragin, wis a tale o his seein it stervin, an hameless, an as gweed as dumb, in the streets o Liverpool, far he pykit it up an luikit fur its ainer. Nae a sowel kent tae fa it belanged, he telt us; an his siller an time bein baith leemited, he thocht it better tae takk it hame wi him at aince, than rin intae eeseless costs thonner: because he wis set that he widnae leave it as he fand it. Well, the ootcam wis, that ma mistress girned hersel calm; an Mr. Earnshaw telt me tae wash it, an gie it clean claes, an lat it sleep wi the bairns.

Hindley an Kirsty sattled thirsels wi luikin an lippenin till peace wis won: syne, baith stertit raikin in their faither’s pooches fur the gifties he’d promised them. The former wis a halflin o fowerteen, bit fin he drew oot fit hid bin a fiddle, caad tae smush in the muckle jaiket, he grat oot lood; an Kirsty, fin she larned the maister hid tint her wheep in takkin tent o the ootlinn, shawed her humour bi glowerin an pyocherin at the daft wee craitur thing; earnin fur her cairry on a smert cloor frae her faither, tae larn her cleaner mainners. They aathegither refused tae hae it in bed wi them, or even in their chaumer; an I’d nae mair mense, sae I pit it on the lobby o the stairs, hopin he micht be gaen bi the morn. Bi chaunce, or else drawn bi hearin his voyce, it creepit tae Mr. Earnshaw’s yett, an thonner he fand it on quittin his chaumer. Inquiries wir vrocht as tae foo it won thonner; I wis obleeged tae confess, an tae repye ma cooardness an coorseness wis sent ooto the hoose.

This wis Heathcliff’s first incam tae the faimily. On camin back a feyw days efter (fur I didnae conseeder ma banishment foraye), I fand they’d caad him ‘Heathcliff’: it wis the nemme o a son fa died in bairnhood, an it his served him iver since, baith fur Christian an surnemme. Miss Kirsty an he wir noo verra close; bit Hindley hatit him: an tae spikk the truith I did tae; an we tormentit an malagaroosed him shamefu: fur I wisnae rizzonable eneuch tae feel ma injustice, an the mistress niver pit in a wird on his side fin she saw him wranged.

He seemed a dour, patient bairn; hardened, mebbe, tae ill-treatment: he wid staun Hindley’s cloors wioot winkin or greetin, an ma pinches meeved him anely tae pech an open his een, as gin he’d skaithed himsel bi mistak, an naebody wis tae blame. These ongauns made auld Earnshaw roosed, fin he fand his loon malagaroosin the puir fatiherless bairn, as he caad him. He tuik tae Heathcliff strangely, believin aa he spakk (fur that maitter, he said verra little, an generally the truith), an pettin him up far abune Kirsty, fa wis ower tricky an waywird fur a pettie.

Sae, frae the verra stert, he bred ill feelin in the hoose; an at Mrs. Earnshaw’s daith, that happened in less than twa years efter, the young maister hid larned tae regaird his faither as an oppressor raither than a frien, an Heathcliff as the reiver o his parent’s luv an his preevileges; an he grew wersh wi broodin ower thon skaiths. I sympatheesed a whilie; bit fin the bairns fell nae weel o the measles, an I hid tae takk tent o them, an takk on me the darg o a wumman at aince, I cheenged ma thochts. Heathcliff wis dangerously seek; an fin he lay at the wirst he socht me ay bi his bowster: I jelouse he felt I did a gweed deal fur him, an he hidnae mense tae jelouse that I wis gart tae dae it. Hoosaeiver, I will say this, he wis the quaetest bairn that iver nurse watched ower. The difference atween him an the ithers gart me thaw. Kirsty an her brither deaved me unca: he wis as uncomplainin as a lammie; tho hardness, nae douceness, gart him gie smaa tribble.

He won throwe, an the doctor statit it wis in a great meisur owin tae me, an reesed me oot fur ma care. I wis vauntie o his praise, an saftened tae the craitur bi fas means I earned them, an sae Hindley tint his hinmaist frien: still I couldnae warm aathegither tae Heathcliff, an I winnered aften fit ma maister saw tae admire sae muckle in the dour loon; fa niver, tae ma myndin, repeyed his favour bi ony merk o thanks. He wisnae insolent tae his patron, he wis jist uncarin; tho kennin perfeck weel the haud he hid on his hairt, an kennin he hid anely tae spik an aa the hoose wid be obleeged tae boo tae his wints. Fur example, I mynd Mr. Earnshaw aince bocht twa shelts at the pairish fair, an gaed the loons each ane. Heathcliff tuik the brawest, bit it sune grew gammie, an fin he fand thon it, quo he tae Hindley—

‘Ye maun excheenge shelts wi me: I dinna like mine; an gin ye winna I’ll tell yer faither o the three threwshins ye’ve gien me this wikk, an shaw him ma airm, which is blaik tae the shouder.’ Hindley pit oot his tongue, an cloored him ower the lugs. ‘Ye’d better dae it at aince,’ he gaed, escapin tae the porch (they wir in the stable): ‘ye’ll hae tae: an gin I spikk o thon cloors, ye’ll win them again twafauld.’ ‘Aff, tyke!’ skreiched Hindley, threatenin him wi an iron wecht eesed fur weyin tatties an hey. ‘Haive it,’ he reponed, staunin still, ‘an syne I’ll tell foo ye braggit ye’d turn me oot as sune as he deed, an see whether he’ll nae turn ye oot straicht aff.’ Hindley haived it, strikkin him on the breist, an doon he drappit bit hytered up richt aff, ooto pech an fite; an, hid I nae stoppit it, he wid hae gaen jist sae tae the maister, an gotten fu revenge bi lattin his state spikk fur him, tellin fa’d dane it. ‘Takk ma shelt, Cyard, syne!’ quo young Earnshaw. ‘An I pray that he’ll brakk yer neck: takk him, an be damned, ye damnt ootlinn! an wheedle ma faither ooto aa he ains: anely efterhin shaw him fit ye are, deevilick o Auld Nick.—An takk thon, I hope he’ll knell oot yer harns!’

Heathcliff hid gaen tae lowse the breet, an shift it tae his ain staa; he wis passin ahin it, fin Hindley feenished his spikk bi haivin him unner its feet, an wioot devaulin tae see whether his hopes wir met, ran awa as faist as he could. I wis bumbazed tae see foo cweel the bairn gaithered himsel up, an gaed on wi his darg; excheengin saiddles an aa, an syne dowpin doon on a bunnle o hey tae owercam the stang that the coorse cloor caused, afore he gaed intae the hoose. I perswadit him easy tae lat me lay the blame o his skaiths on the shelts, he cared little fit tale wis telt since he hid fit he wintit. He girned sae seldom, forebye, o sic stooshies as these, that I really thocht him nae spitefu: I wis trickit aathegither, as ye’ll larn.

**The Daith o Maister Earnshaw Chapter 5**

In the coorse o time Maister Earnshaw stertit tae dwine. He’d bin fu o virr an smeddum , bit fin his virr o a suddenty left him; an fin he wis leemited tae the ingle neuk he grew unca ill naturet. A nochtie ferlie roosed him; an suspeckit slichts o his poseetion near brocht on a fit. Thon wis speecially notit tae be seen gin onybody ettled tae ding doon, or domineer ower, his petty: he wis verra jealous that a wird should be spukken aff takken tae him; seemin tae hae gotten intae his heid the thocht that, because he likit Heathcliff, aa hatit, an langed tae dae him ill. It wisnae gweed fur the loon; fur the kinder amang us didnae wint tae misfit the maister, sae we humoured his saftness; an thon humourin fed the bairn’s vauntiness an blaik roose. Hoosaeiver it becam in a mainner necessar; twice, or thrice, Hindley’s open ill will, fin his faither wis nearhaun, roosed the auld bodach tae a heicht: he grippit his stick tae strikk him, an trimmlit wi roose that he couldnae dae it.

At the hinnereyn, oor meenister (we’d a meenister syne then fa made the darg pye bi teachin the wee Lintons an Earnshaws, an fermin his bittie o lan himsel) advised that the young chiel should be sent tae college; an Mr. Earnshaw agreed, tho wi a wechty speerit, fur quo he, ‘Hindley wis nocht, an wid niver thrive fariver he traivelled.’

I hoped sair we’d hae peace syne. It hurtit me tae think the maister should be made uncomfy bi his ain gweed deed. I jeloused the misfittin o age an sleekness raise frae his faimily argybargy; as he wid hae it that it did: in fack, ye ken, sir, it wis in his dwinin corp. We micht hae gotten on weel eneuch, hoosaeiver bit fur twa fowk—Miss Kirsty, an Joseph, the servant: ye saw him, I daursay, up thonner. He wis, an is yet maist likely, the maist scunnerin self-satisfeed Pharisee that iver read a Bible tae wyle the promises tae himsel an haive the banns at his neebours. Bi his wey o sermonisin an pious spikk he ettled tae makk a great merk on Mr. Earnshaw; an the mair dweeble the maister becam, the mair influence he won. He wis thrang in worritin him aboot his sowel’s consarns, an aboot rulin his bairns stinchly. He eeked him on tae regaird Hindley as a ner’dae weel; an, nicht efter nicht, he aywis grummlit oot a lang streetch o tales agin Heathcliff an Kirsty: aywis myndin tae flatter Earnshaw’s saftness bi howpin the wechtiest blame on the latter.

O a certainty she’d weys wi her sic as I niver saw a bairn takk up afore; an she pit aa o us past oor patience fifty times an aftener in a day: frae the oor she cam doonstairs till the oor she gaed tae bed, we hidnae a meenit’s certainty that she widnae be up tae ill trick. Her speerits wir aywis at heich-watter mark, her tongue aywis gaun—singin, lauchin, an deavin aabody fa widnae dae the same. A wud, coorse vratch she wis—bit she’d the bonniest ee, the swetest smile, an lichtest fit in the pairish: an, efter aa, I think she meant nae herm; fur fin aince she gart ye greet in gweed earnest, it seldom happened that she widnae keep ye company, an obleege ye tae be quaet that ye micht comfort her. She wis far ower fond o Heathcliff. The sairest punishment we could gie fur her wis tae keep her apairt frae him: yet she got raged mair than ony o us on his accoont. In play, she fair likit tae act the wee mistress; makkin eese o her hauns freely, an orderin her fiers: she did sae tae me, bit I widnae thole skelpin an orderin; an sae I lat her ken.

Noo, Mr. Earnshaw didnae unnerstaun jokes frae his bairns: he’d aywis bin stinch an grave wi them; an Kirsty, on her pairt, hid nae idea foo her faither should be mair ill naturet an less patient in his seek state than he wis in his prime. His girny repruifs waukened in her an ill trickit delicht tae roose him: she wis niver sae blythe as fin we wir aa ragin her at aince, an her defyin us wi her bauld, ill trickit luik, an her ready wirds; turnin Joseph’s religious banns intae jokes, tormentin me, an daein jist fit her faither hatit maist—shawin foo her makkie on cheek, that he thocht real, hid mair pouer ower Heathcliff than his kindness: foo the loon wid dae *her* biddin in onythin, an *his* anely fin it suited him. Efter behavin as coorsely as possible aa day, she whyles cam creepin tae makk it up thon nicht. ‘Na, Kirsty,’ the auld cheil wid say, ‘I canna luve ye, yer waur than yer brither. G’wa, say yer prayers, bairns, an seek God’s pairdon. I doot ma mither an I maun be sorry that we iver reared ye!’ Thon gart her greet, at first; an syne bein aywis raged hardened her, an she lauched gin I telt her tae say she wis sorry fur her fauts, an prig tae be forgien.

Bit the oor cam, at the hinnereyn that feenished Mr. Earnshaw’s tribbles on the Eirde. He deed quaet in his cheer ae October evenin, dowpit bi the ingle. A heich win breenged roon the hoose, an roared in the lum: it soundit wud an gurly, yet it wisnae cauld, an we wir aa thegether—I, a thochtie apairt frae the hairth, eident at ma wyvin, an Joseph readin his Bible near the brod (fur the servants aye sat in the hoose syne, efter their wirk wis dane). Miss Kirsty hid bin nae weel, an thon made her quaet; she leant agin her faither’s knee, an Heathcliff wis lyin on the fleer wi his heid in her lap. I mynd the maister, afore he drappt intae a dwaum, straikin her bonnie hair—it pleased him weel tae see her douce—an sayin, ‘Foo can nae aywis be a gweed quine, Kirsty?’ An she turned her face up tae his, an leuch, an reponed, ‘Foo can ye nae aywis be a gweed chiel, faither?’ Bit as sune as she saw him vexed again, she kissed his haun, an said she wid sing him tae sleep. She stertit singin verra laigh, till his fingers drappit frae hers, an his heid sank on his breist. Syne I telt her tae wheesht, an nae steer, fur fear she’d wauken him. We aa keepit as quaet as moosies a hale hauf-oor, an should hae dane sae langer, anely Joseph, haein feenished his chapter, won up an quo that he maun roose the maister fur prayers an bed. He steppit forrit, an caaed him bi nemme, an tappit his shouder; bit he widnae meeve: sae he tuik the caunle an luikit at him. I thocht there wis somethin wrang as he set doon the licht; an grippin the bairns each bi an airm, fuspered them tae ‘gyang upstairs, an makk nae soun—they micht pray alane thon evenin—he’d somethin tae dae.’

‘I’ll bid faither gweed-nicht first,’ quo Kirsty, pittin her airms roon his neck, afore we could hinner her. The puir thing fand her loss direck—she skirled oot ‘Och, he’s deid, Heathcliff! he’s deid!’ An they baith set up a hairt-brakkin skreich.

I jyned ma skirl tae theirs, lood an wersh: bit Joseph speired fit we could be thinkin o tae maen in thon wey ower a sanct in heiven. He telt me tae pit on ma plaid an rin tae Gimmerton fur the sawbanes an the meenister. I couldnae jelouse the eese that either wid be o then. Hoosaeiver, I gaed, throwe win an rain, an brocht ane, the sawbanes, back wi me; the ither said he wid cam in the mornin. Leavin Joseph tae explain maitters, I ran tae the bairn’s chaumer: their yett wis ajee, I saw they’d niver lie doon, tho it wis by midnicht; bit they wir quaeter, an didnae need me tae comfort them. The wee sowels wir comfortin each ither wi better thochts than I could hae hit on: nae meenister in the warld iver pictured heiven sae bonnily as they did, in their innocent spikk; an, while I sabbed an lippened, I couldnae help wishin we wir aa thonner safe thegether.

**New Friens Chapter 6**

Mr. Hindley cam hame tae the kistin; an—a ferly that bumbazed us, an set the neebours sklaikin richt an left—he brocht a wife wi him. Fit she wis, an far she wis born, he niver telt us: dootless, she’d neither siller nor nemme tae set her apairt, or he wid scarce hae keepit the mairriage frae his faither.

She wisnae ane that wid hae misfittit the hoose much on her ain accoont. Ilkie objeck she saw, the meenit she crossed the yett, seemed tae delicht her; an ilkie ongaun that tuik place aboot her: barrin the preparin fur the beerial an the presence o the murners. I thocht she wis hauf daft, fae her cairryin on fin that wis on the go: she ran intae her chaumer, an gart me cam wi her, tho I should hae bin riggin oot the bairns: an thonner she sat chitterin an grippin her hauns, an speirin ower an ower ‘Are they awa yet?’ Syne she stertit tellin wi profun virr the effeck it hid on her tae see blaik; an lowpit, an trimmlit, an, at the hinnereyn, stertit greetin—an fin I speired fit wis the maitter, reponed, she didnae ken; bit she felt sae feart o deein! I thocht her as little likely tae dee as masel. She wis raither shilpit, bit young, an caller-faced, an her een skinkled as bricht as diamonds. I did remairk, richt eneuch, that sclimmin the stairs gart her pech verra faist; that the smaaest unexpeckit soun set her chitterin, an that she hoastit sair whyles: bit I kent naethin o fit thon symptoms meant, an hid nae feelin tae sympatheese wi her. We dinna in the ordnar wye takk tae incamers here, Mr. Lockwood, unless they takk tae us first.

Young Earnshaw wis cheenged aathegither in the three years o his absence. He’d grown thinner, an tint his colour, an spakk an riggit oot different; an, on the verra day o his return, he telt Joseph an masel we maun noo bide tae the back-kitchie, an leave the hoose fur him. Mairower, he wid hae carpeted an papered a wee spare chaumer fur a parlour; bit his wife fand sic pleisur at the fite fleer an muckle glimmerin lowe, at the pewter dishes an delf-press, an dug-kennel, an the braid airt thonner wis tae meeve aboot in far they usually sat, that he thocht it nae necessar tae her comfort, an sae drappit the intent.

She wis delichtit, tae, at finnin a sister amang her new fiers; an she blethered tae Kirsty, an kissed her, an ran aboot wi her, an gaed her a heeze o gifties, at the stert. Her likin wis verra sune ferfochan, hoosaiver, an fin she grew ill naturet, Hindley becam coorse. A fyew wirds frae her, shawin a dislike tae Heathcliff, wir eneuch tae steer in him aa his auld hatred o the loon. He drave him frae their company tae the servants, tuik him awa frae the teachins o the meenister an ordered that he should wirk ootside insteid; garrin him tae dae sae as hard as ony ither loon on the fairm.

Heathcliff tholed his dooncam weel eneuch at first, because Kirsty taught him fit she larnt, an wirked or played wi him in the parks. They baith shawed signs o growin up as roch as savages; the young maister nae carin foo they carried on, an fit they did, sae they keepit awa frae him. He widnae even hae seen efter their gaun tae kirk on Sabbaths, anely Joseph an the meenister scauldit him on his negleck fin they plunkit the kirk; an thon myndit him tae order Heathcliff a threwshin, an Kirsty a fast frae denner or supper. Bit it wis ane o their chief delichts tae rin awa tae the muirs in the mornin an bide thonner aa day, an the efter punishment grew a nochtie thing tae lauch at. The meenister micht set as mony chapters as he wintit fur Kirsty tae larn bi hairt, an Joseph micht threwsh Heathcliff till his arim ached; they forgot aathin the meenit they wir thegether again: at least the meenit they’d thocht o some plisky o revenge; an mony a time I’ve grat tae masel tae watch them growin mair wud daily, an I nae daurin tae spikk a wird, fur fear o lossin the wee pouer I still keepit ower the unfriendit craiturs Ae Sabbath evenin, it chaunced that they wir pit ooto the sittin-chaumer, fur makkin a soun, or a slicht offence o the kind; an fin I gaed tae caa them tae supper, I could fand them naewye. We raiked the hoose, abune an ablow, an the yaird an stables; they wir naewye: an, at the hinnereyn, Hindley in a roose telt us tae steek the yetts, an swore naebody should lat them in thon nicht. The hoosehold gaed tae bed; an I, as weel, ower wirriet tae lie doon, lowsed ma windae an pit ma heid oot tae harken, tho it poored: sae on lattin them in spite o the bann, should they cam back. In a whylie, I heard steps camin up the road, an the licht o a lamp glimmered ben the yett. I haived a plaid ower ma heid an ran tae hinner them frae waukenin Mr. Earnshaw bi chappin. There wis Heathcliff, bi himsel: it gaed me a begeck tae see him alane.

‘Far’s Miss Kirsty?’ I speied faist. ‘Nae mishanter, I hope?’ ‘At Thrushcross Grange,’ he reponed; ‘an I’d hae bin there as weel, bit they hidnae the mainners tae seek me tae bide.’ ‘Weel ye’ll catch it!’ quo I: ‘ye’ll niver be santisfeed till yer sent awa. Fit in the warld gart ye wanner tae Thrushcross Grange?’ ‘Lat me takk aff ma weet claes, an I’ll tell ye aa aboot it, Nelly,’ he reponed. I bad him takk tent nae tae roose the maister, an while he tirred his claes an I wyted tae pit oot the caunle, he gaed on ‘Kirsty an I escaped frae the wash-hoose tae hae a daunder free, an winnin a glisk o the Grange lichts, we thocht we wid jist gae an see gin the Lintons spent their Sabbath evenins staunin chitterin in neuks, while their faither an mither sat ettin an drinkin, an singin an lauchin, an burnin their een oot afore the lowe. D’ye think they dae? Or readin sermons, an bein catecheesed bi their manservant, an pit tae larn a heeze o Scriptur nemmes, gin they dinna repon richt?’ ‘Nae likely,’ quo I. ‘They’re gweed bairns, nae doot, an dinna need the treatment ye win, fur yer coorse wyes.’ ‘Dinna spikk styte, Nelly,’ he telt me: ‘havers! We ran frae the tap o the Heichts tae the park, wioot devaul—Kirsty aathegither threwshed in the race, because she wis barfit. Ye’ll hae tae caa fur her sheen in the muir the morn. We creepit throw a brukken buss, clawed oor wey up the pathie, an plunkit oorsels on a flooer-plot unner the drawin-chaumer windae. The licht cam frae thonner; they’d nae steekit the shutters, an the curtains wir anely hauf steeked. Baith o us wir able tae keek in by staunin on the cellar, a grippin tae the ledge, an we saw—och! it wis bonnie—a braw airt carpeted wi crammosie, an reid-happit cheers an tbrods, an a braw fite ceilin edged bi gowd, a shooer o glaiss-draps hingin siller chynes frae the mids an glimmerin wi wee saft caunles. Auld Mr. an Mrs. Linton wirnae thonner; Edgar an his sisters hid it aathegither tae thirsels. Should they nae hae have bin blythe? We should hae thocht oorsels in heiven! An noo, d’ye ken fit yer gweed bairns wir daein? Isabella—I think she’s eleyven, a year younger than Kirsty—lay skirlin at the farrer eyn o the chaumer, skreichin as gin witches wir rinnin reid-hett preens intae her. Edgar stude on the hairth greetin seelently, an in the mids o the brod sat a wee dug, shakkin its paw an bowfin; that, frae their miscaain ain anither, we unnerstude they’d near pued in twa atween them. The gypes! Thon wis their pleisur! tae fecht ower fa should haud a howpie o hett hair, an each stertit tae greet because baith, efter warsslin tae win it, refused tae takk it. We leuch ootricht at the pettit craiturs; we did scorn them! Fan wid ye catch me wintin tae hae fit Kirsty wintit? or finn us bi oorsels, sikkin pleisur in skirlin, an sabbin, an rowin on the grun, set apairt bi the hale chaumer? I’d nae cheenge, fur a thoosan lives, ma life here, fur Edgar Linton’s at Thrushcross Grange—nae gin I micht hae the preevilege o haivin Joseph aff the heichest gable, an peintin the hoose-front wi Hindley’s bluid!’

‘Wheesht, wheesht!’ I brakk in. ‘Still ye hinna telt me, Heathcliff, foo Kirsty is left ahin?’

‘I telt ye we leuch,’ he reponed. ‘The Lintons heard us, an wi ae meevements they shot like arraas tae the yett; there wis seelence, an syne a skirl, “Och, mamma, mamma! Och, papa! Och, mamma, cam here. Och, papa, och!” They really did skirl oot somethin in thon wey. We vrocht frichtfu souns tae terrifee them still mair, an syne we drappit aff the ledge, because somebody wis drawin the bars, an we felt we’d better flee. I’d Kirsty bi the haun, an wis eakin her on, fin aa at aince she drappit doon. “Rin, Heathcliff, rin!” she fuspered. “They hae lat the bull-dug lowse, an he hauds me!” The deil hid grippit her cuits, Nelly: I heard his gurly snocherin. She didnae skirl oot—na! she wid hae scorned tae dae it, even gin she’d bin pronged on the horns o a wud coo. I did, tho: I skreiched banns eneuch tae connach ony deevilick in Christendom; an I wyled a stane an stappit it atween his jaas, an ettled wi aa ma micht tae drive it doon his thrapple. A breet o a servant cam up wi a licht, at the hinnereyn, skirlin “Haud on, Skulker, haud on!” He cheenged his tune, hosaeiver, fin he saw Skulker’s gemme. The tyke wis yarked aff; his muckle, poorple tongue hingin hauf a fit ooto his mou, an his hingin lips rinnin wi bluidy slivvers. The cheil tuik Kirsty up; she wis sekk: nae frae fear, I’m siccar, bit frae pain. He cairried her in; I follaed, grummlin banns an vengeance. “Fit prey, Robert?” speired Linton frae the yett. “Skulker’s catched a wee quine, sir,” he reponed; “an there’s a loon here,” he addit, makkin a cleuk at me, “fa luiks a ne’r dae weel! Verra like the reivers wir fur pittin them throwe the windae tae lowse the yetts tae the gang efter aa wir asleep, that they micht murder us nae bother. Haud yer tongue, ye orra-spikkin reiver, ye! Ye’ll gae tae the gallas fur this. Mr. Linton, sir, dinna lay by yer gun.” “Na, na, Robert,” quo the auld gype. “The vratches kent that yestreen wis ma rent-day: they thocht tae profit richt. Cam in; I’ll gie them a walcam. Noo, John, faisten the chyne. Gie Skulker some watter, Jenny. Tae reive frae a judge in his ain hame, an on the Sabbath, as weel! Far will their impidence stop? Och, ma dear Mary, luik thonner! Dinna be feart, it’s anely a

loon—yet the vratch glowers sae ill in his face; wid it nae be a kindness tae the kintra tae hing him at aince, afore he shaws his natur in deeds as weel as luiks?” He pud me aneth the chandelier, an Mrs. Linton pit her glaisses on her neb an heistit her haun in grue. The cooardly bairns creepit nearhaun as weel, Isabella hubberin “Frichtfu breet! Pit him in the cellar, papa. He’s jist like the son o the spae wife that reived ma pet pheasant. Is he nae, Edgar?”

‘Fin they owerluikit me, Kirsty cam roon; she heard the hinmaist spikk, an leuch. Edgar Linton, efter an ill faschent glower, colleckit eneuch mense tae ken her. They see us at kirk, ye ken, tho we rarely meet them ony ither airt. “Thon’s Miss Earnshaw?” he fuspered tae his mither, “an luik foo Skulker’s bitten her—foo her fit bluids!”

“Miss Earnshaw? Styte!” skreiched the wumman; “Miss Earnshaw rakin the kintra wi a cyard! An yet, ma dearie, the bairn’s in murnin—sure it is—an she micht be gammie fur life!”

“Fit blamewirthy negleck in her brither!” quo Mr. Linton, turnin frae me tae Kirsty. “I’ve unnerstude frae Shielders”’ (thon wis the meenister, sir) “that he lats her growe up in ootricht heathenism. Bit fa is this? Far did she faa tee wi this fier? Ochone! I mynd he’s fey craitur ma late neebour colleckit, in his traivel tae Liverpool—a wee Lascar, or an American or Spanish cast aff.”

“A coorse loon, onywey,” quo the auld leddy, “an nae fit fur a ceevilised hoose! Did ye takk tent o his spikk, Linton? I’m affrontit that ma bairns should hae heard it.”

‘I restertit sweitin—dinna be roosed, Nelly—an sae Robert wis telt tae turn me oot. I refused tae gae wioot Kirsty; he yarked me intae the gairden, stappit the licht intae ma haun, lat me ken that Mr. Earnshaw should be telt o ma conduct, an, biddin me merch awa direck, steekit the yett again. The curtains wir still cleukit up at ae neuk, an I tuik up ma station as spy; fur, gin Kirsty hid wintit tae return, I wis gaun tae brakk their muckle glaiss peens tae umpteen bitties, unless they lat her oot. She dowpit on the sofa quaet. Mrs. Linton tuik aff the grey plaid o the dairy-quine that we’d borraed fur oor ootin, shakkin her heid an repruvin her, I jelouse: she wis a young leddy, an they differed atween her treatment an mine. Syne the wumman-servant brocht a basin o hett watter, an washed her feet; an Mr. Linton melled a tummler o negus, an Isabella teemed a platefu o fancy pieces intae her lap, an Edgar stude gapin ootower. Efterwirds, they dried an caimbed her bonnie hair, an gaed her a pair o muckle safties, an furled her tae the lowe; an I left her, as blythe as she could be, dividin her maet atween the wee dug an Skulker, fas neb she nippit as he ett; an kinnlin a spirk o speerit in the teem blae een o the Lintons—a peely wally echo frae her ain chermin face. I saw they wir fu o gypit admiration; she’s sae aathegither better than them—tae aabody on the Eirde, is she nae, Nelly?

‘There’ll be mair cam o this maitter than ye think,’ I reponed, happin him up an pittin oot the licht. ‘Yer hopeless, Heathcliff; an Mr. Hindley will hae tae gyang tae leemits, see gin he winna.’ Ma wirds cam truer than I wintit. The unchauncy ootin made Earnshaw roosed. An syne Mr. Linton, tae sort maitters, pyed us a veesit himsel on the morn an gaed the young maister sic a lecture on the wey he ruled his faimily, that he wis steered tae luik aboot him, eidently. Heathcliff won nae threwshin, bit he wis telt that the first wird he spakk tae Miss Kirsty wid makk siccar his bein sent awa; an Mrs. Earnshaw unnertuik tae timmer her sister-in-law in aboot fin she cam hame; makkin eese o ploys, nae force: wi force she wid hae fand it eeseless.

**Kirsty Becams a Leddy Chapter 7**

Kirsty bedd at Thrushcross Grange five wikks: till Yule. Bi thon time her cweet wis aathegither sained, an her mainners verra genteel. The mistress veesited her aften in the by-gaun, an stertit her notion o reform bi ettlin tae heist her self-respeck wi braw claes an saft soap, that she tuik readily; sae that, insteid o a wud, hudderie heidit wee savage lowpin intae the hoose, an hashin tae squeeze us aa braithless, there lichtit frae a bonnie blaik shelt a verra dignifeed body, wi broon ringlets faain frae aneth a feathered beaver, an a lang claith plaid, which she wis obleeged tae haud up wi baith hauns that she micht sail in. Hindley heistit her frae her shelt, sayin delichted, ‘Weel, Kirsty, yer fair a bobbydazzler! I should scarce hae kent ye: ye luik like a leddy noo. Isabella Linton isnae tae be compared wi her, is she, Frances?’ ‘Isabella hisnae her natural bonnieness,’ his wife reponed: ‘bit she maun mind an nae grow wud again here. Ellen, help Miss Kirsty tirr her claes—Wyte, dearie, ye’ll spyle yer curls—lat me lowse yer bunnet.’

I tuik aff the plaid, an there sheened furth aneth a gran silk frock, fite troosers, an burnished sheen; an, while her een skinklit blythefully fin the tykes cam breengin up tae walcam her, she daured scarce touch them fur fear they should spyle her braw claes. She kissed me doucely: I wis aa flooer makkin the yuletide cake, an it widnae hae dane tae gie me a bosie; an syne she luikit roon fur Heathcliff. Mr. an Mrs. Earnshaw watched worriet at their foregaitherin; thinkin it wid lat them tae joodge, in some meisur, fit gruns they hid fur hopin tae win in brakkin up the twa friens.

Heathcliff wis hard tae finn, at first. Gin he wir careless, an uncared fur, afore Kirsty’s waa-gaun, he’d bin ten times mair sae since. Naebody bit I even did him the kindness tae caa him an orra loon, an bid him wash himsel, aince a wikk; an bairns o his age dinna aften hae a natural pleisur in soap an watter. Sae, nae tae spikk o his claes, that hid seen three months’ tcyauvin in dubs an stoor, an his hudderie uncaimbed hair, the skin o his face an hauns wis unca clarty. He micht weel hide ahin the settle, on seein sic a bricht, gracefu quine enter the hoose, insteid o a roch-heidit coonterpairt o himsel, as he expeckit. ‘Is Heathcliff nae here?’ she demandit, puin aff her gloves, an shawin fingers winnerfu fitened wi daein naethin an bidin inbye.

‘Heathcliff, ye can cam forrit,’ quo Mr. Hindley, enjoyin his misfittin, an gratifeed tae see fit a gurly young vratch he’d be gart shaw himsel. ‘Ye may cam an wish Miss Kirsty walcam, like the ither skiffies.’

Kirtsy, catchin sicht o her frien in his hidiehole, breenged tae bosie him; she plunkit sivven or echt kisses on his chikk inbye ae secunt, an syne devauled, an drawin back, burst intae a lauch, sayin, ‘Weel, foo verra blaik an ill naturet ye luik! an foo—foo funny an gurly! Bit thon’s because I’m eesed tae Edgar an Isabella Linton. Weel, Heathcliff, hae ye forgotten me?’

She hid gweed rizzen tae speir, fur affront an pride flang derk grue ower his face, an keepit him ill tae like.

‘Shakk hauns, Heathcliff,’ quo Mr. Earnshaw, doon spikkin; ‘aince in a wey, thon is alloued.’

‘I winna,’ reponed the loon, finnin his voyce at the hinnereyn; ‘I winna staun tae be lauched at. I winna thole it!’ An he wid hae brukken frae the cercle, bit Miss Kirsty grippit him again.

‘I didnae mean tae lauch at ye,’ quo she; ‘I couldnae hinner masel: Heathcliff, shakk hauns at least! Fit are ye roozy aboot ? It wis anely that ye luikit fey. Gin ye wash yer face an caimb yer hair, it’ll be aa richt: bit ye are sae clarty!’

She luikit wi consarn at the stoory fingers she held in her ain, an likewise at her dress; that she wis feart wisnae improved frae touchin him. ‘Ye neednae hae touched me!’ he reponed, follaein her ee an wheechin awa his haun. ‘I’ll be as orra as I like an I like tae be orra, an I will be orra.’

Wi thon he breenged heidfirst ooto the chaumer, amang the lauchter o the maister an mistress, an tae the serious misfit o Kirsty; fa couldnae unnerstaun foo her remairks should hae brocht on sic an stooshie o ill natur.

Efter playin leddy’s-maid tae the new-camer, an pittin ma cakes in the oven, an makkin the hoose an kitchie cheery wi muckle lowes, befittin Yule-eve, I readied masel tae sit doon an amuse masel bi singin carols, aa alane; regairdless o Joseph’s spikk that he thocht the blythe tunes I wyled as nearhaun tae sangs. He’d gaen tae private prayer in his chaumer, an Mr. an Mrs. Earnshaw wir takkin up Missy’s time by puckles o braw gifties bocht fur her tae gie tae the wee Lintons, as a thanks fur their kindness. They’d socht them tae spen the morn at Whudderin Heichts, an the invites hid bin accepted, on ae condition: Mrs. Linton priggit that her dearies micht be keepit weel awa frae thon ‘ill trickit sweirin loon.’

Unner thon set oots I bedd alane. I smelt the braw yoam o the heatin spices; an admired the sheenin kitchie gear, the polished wag at the waa, riggit oot in holly, the siller mugs reenged on a tray ready tae be fulled wi mulled ale fur supper; an abune aa, the stoorless purity o ma partic’lar care—the scoored an weel-swyped fleer. I gied gweed applause inbye tae ilkie objeck, an syne I myndit foo auld Earnshaw eesed tae cam in fin aa wis redd up, an caaed me a braw lass, an slip a shillin intae ma haun as a Yuletide-giftie; an frae thon I gaed on tae think o his likin fur Heathcliff, an his dreid that he’d thole negleck efter daith hid taen him: an thon of coorse led me tae conseeder the puir loon’s situation noo, an frae singin I cheenged tae greetin. It strukk me sune, hoosaeiver, there wid be mair wyceness in ettlin tae repair a puckle o his wrangs than greetin ower them: I stude up an wauked intae the coort tae sikk him. He wis nearhaun; I fand him smeethin the sheeny coat o the new shelt in the stable, an feedin the ither breets, accordin tae habit.

‘Hash on, Heathcliff!’ quo I, ‘the kitchie is sae comfy; an Joseph is upstairs: hash on, an lat me dress ye smert afore Miss Cathy cams oot, an syne ye can sit thegether, wi the hale hairth tae yersels, an hae a lang blether till bedtime.’

He gaed on wi his darg, an niver turned his heid tae me.

‘Cam—are ye camin?’ I gaed on. ‘There’s a wee cake fur each o ye, near eneuch; an ye’ll nott hauf-an-oor’s riggin yersel oot.’

I wyted five meenits, bit winnin nae repon, left him. Kirsty ett wi her brither an sister-in-law: Joseph an masel jyned at an unsociable meal, sizzoned wi repruifs on ae side an impidence on the ither. His cake an cheese bedd on the brod aa nicht fur the feys. He tcyauved till nine o’clock, an syne merched dumb an dour tae his chaumer. Kirsty bedd up late, haein a warld o ferlies tae order fur the tryst wi her new friens: she cam intae the kitchie aince tae spikk tae her auld ane; bit he wis gaen, an she anely bedd tae speir fit wis the maitter wi him, an syne gaed back. In the mornin he raise early; an, as it wis a holiday, cairried his ill-natur ontae the muirs; nae re-appearin till the faimily wir awa at the kirk. Fastin an thocht seemed tae hae brocht him tae a better speerit. He dauchled aboot me fur a whylie, an haein screwed up his virr, quo sherp ‘Nelly, makk me decent, I’m gaun tae be gweed.’

‘Aboot time, Heathcliff,’quo I; ‘ye *hae* hurtit Kirsty: she’s sorry she iver cam hame, nae doot! It luiks as gin ye envied her, because she’s mair thocht o than ye.’

The notion o *envyin* Kirsty he cudnae takk in, bit the notion o hurtin her he unnerstude weel eneuch.

‘Did she say she wis hurtit?’ he speired, luikin verra serious.

‘She grat fin I telt her ye wir aff again this mornin.’

‘Weel, I grat last nicht,’ he reponed, ‘an I’d mair rizzon tae greet than her.’

‘Aye: ye’d the rizzon o gaun tae bed wi a prood hairt an a teem wyme,’ quo I. ‘Prood fowk breed dule sorras fur thirsels. Bit, gin ye be affronted o yer touchiness, ye maun prig pardon, mind, fin she cams in. Ye maun gae up an offer tae kiss her, an tell her—ye ken best fit tae tell her; anely dae it hairtily, an nae as gin ye thocht her cheenged intae a stranger bi her gran dress. An noo, tho I hae denner tae get ready, I’ll makk time tae redd ye up sae that Edgar Linton’ll luik like a dall aside ye: an sae he dis. Ye’re younger, an yet, I’ll warrant, ye’re heicher an twice as braid ower the shouders; ye could caa him doon in a glisk; dae ye nae feel that ye could?’

Heathcliff’s face brichtened a meenit; syne it wis dooncast again, an he maened.

‘Bit, Nelly, gin I caad him doon twinty times, that wouldnae makk him less braw or me mair sae. I wish I’d licht hair an a fair skin, an wis riggit oot an behaved as weel, an hid a chaunce o bein as rich as he will be!’

‘An grat fur mamma at ilkie meenit,’ I addit, ‘an trimmlit gin a kintra loon liftit his neive agin him, an sat at hame aa day fur a shooer o rain. Och, Heathcliff, yer shawin a puir speerit! Cam tae the glaiss, an I’ll lat ye see fit ye should wish. Dae ye merk thon twa lines atween yer een; an thon thick broos, that, insteid o risin booed, sink in the mids; an thon pair o blaik deevils, sae deeply beeried, fa niver open their windaes bauldly, bit lurk glentin unner them, like deevil’s spies? Wish an larn tae smeeth awa the gurly wrunkles, tae heist yer lids frankly, an cheenge thon fiends tae cantie, weel-daein angels, suspeckin an dootin naethin, an ayweys seein friens far they arenae certain o faes. Dinna takk the luik o a nesty tyke that seems tae ken the cloors it gets are its due, an yet hates aa the warld, as weel as the bully, fur fit it tholes.’

‘In ither wirds, I maun wish fur Edgar Linton’s muckle blae een an smeeth broo,’ he reponed. ‘I dae—an that winna help me tae them.’

‘A gweed hairt’ll help ye tae a bonny face, ma lad,’ I gaed, ‘gin ye were a reg’lar blaik; an a coorse ane’ll turn the bonniest intae somethin waur than ugsome. An noo that we’ve dane washin, an caimbin, an huffin—tell me gin ye dinna think yersel rael braw? I’ll tell ye, I dae. Yer fit fur a prince in disguise. Fa kens bit yer faither wis Emperor o China, an yer mither an Indian queen, each o them able tae buy up, wi ae wikk’s income, Whudderin Heichts an Thrushcross Grange thegether? An ye wir kidnappit bi coorse sailors an brocht tae England. Wir I in yer place, I’d think on heich notions o ma birth; an the thochts o fit I wis should gie me virr an smeddum tae support the doonpitten o a wee fermer!’

Sae I blethered on; an Heathcliff bittie bi bittie tint his froon an stertit tae luik rael pleisunt, fin aa at aince oor spikk wis brukken bi a rummlin soun meevin up the road an enterin the coort. He ran tae the windae an I tae the yett, jist in time tae see the twa Lintons win doon frae the faimily cairriage, smored in plaids an furs, an the Earnshaws dismoont frae their shelts: they aften rade tae kirk in winter. Kirsty tuik a haun o each o the bairns, an brocht them intae the hoose an set them afore the lowe, that faist pit colour intae their fite faces.

I telt ma fier tae hash on noo an shaw his gweed humour, an he willinly obeyed; bit ill luck wid hae it that, as he opened the yett leadin frae the kitchie on ae side, Hindley lowsed it on the ither. They met, an the maister, roosed at seein him clean an cheerie, or, mebbe, keen tae keep his promise tae Mrs. Linton, shoved him back wi a faist meevement, an angeret bade Joseph ‘keep thon vratch ooto the chaumer—sen him tae the laft till denner is ower. He’ll be crammin his fingers in the tarts an rypin the fruit, if left alane wi them a meenit.’

‘Na, sir,’ I couldnae help bit repon, ‘he’ll touch naethin, nae he: an I jelouse he maun hae his share o the deinties as weel as wirsels.’

‘He’ll hae his share o ma haun, gin I catch him doonstairs till derk,’ cried Hindley. ‘Awa ye cyard! Fit! Yer ettlin tae be bonnie, are ye? Wyte till I get haud o thon braw locks—see gin I winna rug them a bittie langer!’

‘They’re lang eneuch already,’ quo Maister Linton, teetin frae the yett; ‘I winner they dinna makk his heid stoon. It’s like a shelt’s mane ower his een!’

He spak this remairk wioot ony intent tae insult; bit Heathcliff’s heidstrang natur wisnae willin tae thole fit seemed tae be chikk frae ane fa he seemed tae hate, even then, as a rival. He grippit a tureen o hett aipple sauce (the first ferlie that cam unner his grip) an flang it fu agin the spikker’s face an thrapple; fa straicht aff stertit a girn that brocht Isabella an Kirsty hashin tae the place. Mr. Earnshaw wheeched up the coorse ane richt aff an tuik him to his chaumer; far, dootless, he gaed oot a roch remeid tae cweel the fit o roose, fur he cam back reid an pechin. I got the dishcloot, an raither spiteful scoored Edgar’s snoot an moo, sayin it served him richt fur meddlin. His sister stertit greetin tae gae hame, an Kirsty stude by dumfounert, blushin fur aa.

‘You shouldnae hae spukken tae him!’ she telt Maister Linton. ‘He wis in a ill teen, an noo ye’ve spyled yer veesit; an he’ll be threwshed: I hate him tae be threwshed! I canna ett ma denner. Foo did ye spikk tae him, Edgar?’

‘I didnae,’ grat the loon, winnin free frae ma hauns, an feenishin the lave o the washin wi his cambric snifter-dichter. ‘I promised mammy that I widnae say ae wird tae him, an I didnae.’

‘Weel, dinna greet,’ reponed Kirsty, doonpitten like ‘yer nae killed. dinna makk mair tribble; ma brither’s camin: be quaet! Wheesht, Isabella! His onybody hurtit ye?’

‘Cam, cam, bairnies—tae yer seats!’ cried Hindley, steerin in. ‘Thon breet o a lad his warmed me gran. Neist time, Maister Edgar, takk the law intae yer ain neives—it’ll gie ye an appetite!’

The wee pairty settled doon at the sicht o the braw feast. They wir hungeret efter their ride, an easy pacifeed, since nae rael herm hid cam tae them. Mr. Earnshaw carved boskers o ashetfus, an the mistress cheered them wi lively spikk. I wyted ahin her cheer, an wis hurtit tae see Kirsty, wi dry een an a deil me care air, stert cuttin up the wing o a goose afore her. ‘An unfeelin bairn,’ I thocht tae masel; ‘foo lichtsome she pits aff her auld frien’s tribbles. I couldnae hae thocht her tae be sae selfish.’ She heistit a moufu tae her lips: syne she set it doon again: her chikks reidened, an tears poored ower them. She drappit her fork tae the fleer, an dived faist unner the claith tae hide her emotion. I didnae caa her unfeelin lang; fur I saw she wis hurtin ben the day, an wearyin tae finn a chaunce o gettin by hersel, or pyin a veesit tae Heathcliff, fa’d bin lockit up bi the maister: as I fand, on ettlin tae bring tae him a secret platefu o maet.

In the evenin we’d a daunce. Kirsty priggit that he micht be freed syne, as Isabella Linton hid nae pairtner: her priggin wis eeseless, an I wis appyntit tae smack up the need. We shook aff aa gloom in the steer o the daunce, an oor pleisur wis increased bi the incam o the Gimmerton band, aathegither fifteen strang: a trumpet, a trombone, clarionets, bassoons, French horns, an a bass viol, as weel as singers. They gae the rouns o aa the genteel hooses, an win gifties ilkie Yule, an we thocht it a first-rate treat tae hear them. Efter the ordnar carols hid bin sung, we set them tae sangs an glees. Mrs. Earnshaw lued the music, an sae they gaed us a rowth.

Kirsty lued it as weel: bit she said it soundit sweetest at the tap o the steps, an she gaed up in the derk: I follaed. They shut the hoose yett ablow, niver takkin tent o oor absence, it wis sae fu o fowk. She didnae bide at the stairs’-heid, bit gaed farrer, tae the left far Heathcliff wis cribbit in, an cried him. He thrawnly didnae repon fur a while: she didnae gie up, an at the hinnereyn perswadit him tae spikk tae her throw the brods. I lat the puir things blether untribbled, till I jeloused the sangs wir gaun tae stop, an the singers tae get some maet: syne I sclimmed up the laidder tae warn her. Insteid o finnin her ootside, I heard her voyce inbye. The wee nickum hid creepit bi the skylicht o ae laft, alang the reef, intae the skylicht o the ither, an it wis wi the utmaist tcyuave I could coax her oot again. Fin she did cam, Heathcliff cam wi her, an she insistit that I should takk him intae the kitchie, as Joseph hid gaen tae a neebour’s, tae be awa frae the soun o oor ‘deil’s psalmody,’ as it suitit him tae caa it. I telt them I intendit bi nae wey tae encourage their pliskies: bit as the prisoner hid niver brukken his fast since yestreen’s denner, I wid wink at his cheatin Mr. Hindley that aince. He gaed doon: I gaed him a steel bi the ingle, an offered him a wylin o gweed things: bit he wis sick an couldnae ett muckle, an ma ettlin tae entertain him wir haived awa. He leant his twa elbucks on his knees, an his chin on his hauns an bedd rapt in seelent thocht. On ma sikkin the subjeck o his thochts, he reponed gravely ‘I’m ettlin tae sattle foo I’ll pye Hindley back. I dinna care foo lang I wyte, gin I can anely dae it at last. I hope he winna dee afore I dae!’

‘Ye should be affrontit Heathcliff!’ quo I. ‘It’s fur God tae punish coorse fowk; we should larn tae forgie.’

‘Na, God winna hae the satisfaction that I shall,’ he telt me. ‘I anely wish I kent the best wey! Lat me alane, an I’ll plan it oot: fin I’m thinkin o thon I dinna feel pain.’

‘Bit, Mr. Lockwood, I forget thon tales canna divert ye. I’m pit oot that I should be bletherin on at sic a rate; an yer brose cauld, an ye noddin fur bed! I could hae telt Heathcliff’s history, aa that ye nott hear, in hauf a dizzen wirds.’

Sae interruptin hersel the hoosekeeper raise, an gaed tae pit doon her shewin; bit I felt I cudnae meeve frae the hairth, an I wis verra far frae sleepin. ‘Bide still, Mrs. Dean,’ I priggit; ‘bide anither hauf-oor. Ye’ve dane jist richt tae tell the story lazy-like. Thon’s the wey I like; an ye maun feenish it in the same wey. I’m interestit in ilkie body ye’ve spukken o, mair or less.’

‘The wag at the waa’s on the straik o eleyven, sir.’

‘Nae maitter—I’m nae eesed tae gae tae bed in the lang hours. Ane or twa is early eneuch fur a body fa lies tae ten.’

‘You shouldnae lie tae ten. Thon’s the verra best o the mornin gaen lang afore thon time. A body fa hisnae dane ae-hauf o his day’s wark bi ten o’clock, rins a chaunce o leavin the ither hauf undane.’

‘Nae maitter, Mrs. Dean, resume yer cheer; because the morn I intend tae sleep till efterneen. I foresee fur masel a thrawn cauld, at least.’

‘I hope nae, sir. Weel, ye maun lat me lowp ower some three years; durin thon space Mrs. Earnshaw..

‘Na, na, I’ll allue naethin o the sort! Are ye aquwant wi the mood o mind far, gin ye wir seated alane, an the cattie lickin its kittlin on the rug afore ye, ye wid watch the darg sae intent that the cattie’s negleck o ae lug wid pit ye richt ooto temper?’

‘An unca lazy mood, I’d say.’

‘On the contrar, an unca active ane. It’s mine, eenoo; an, sae, gae on minutely. I see that fowk in this airt gain ower fowk in toons the value that a wyver in a dungeon gains ower a wyver in a hoose, tae their various tenants; an yet the deepened likin is nae aathegither due tae the situation o the luiker-on. They *dae* live mair in earnest, mair in thirsels, an less in surface, cheenge, an flummery flammery things. I could think a luve fur life here near possible; an I wis a fixed unbeliever in ony luve o a year’s staunin. Ae state’s like settin a hungeret chiel doon tae a single dish, on which he micht concentrate his hale appetite an dae it justice; the ither, introducin him tae a brod laid oot bi French cooks: he can mebbe draw as muckle pleisur frae the hale; bit ilkie pairt is a mere bittickie in his regaird an myndin.

‘Och! here we are the same as onywey else, fin ye get tae ken us,’ quo Mrs. Dean, a thochtie bumbazed at ma spikk.

‘Excuse me,’ I reponed; ‘ye, ma gweed frien, are a strikin evidence agin thon notion. Barrin a fyew provincialisms o slicht maitter, ye hae nae merks o the mainners that I’m eesed tae thinkin as peculiar tae yer class. I’m siccar ye hae thocht muckle mair than the lave oo skiffies think. Ye hae bin gart tae strengthen yer thochts fur wint o whylies fritterin yer life awa in daft ferlies.’

Mrs. Dean leuch.

‘I certainly regaird masel a steidy, rizzonable kinno a body,’quo she; ‘nae exackly frae bidin amang the knowes an seein ae set o faces, an ae series o actions, frae ae year’s eyn tae the neist; bit I hae tholed sherp discipline, that has larned me wyceness; an syne, I hae read mair than ye wid jelouse, Mr. Lockwood. Ye couldnae open a buik in this librar that I hinna luiked intae, an wyled somethin ooto as weel: unless it be thon reenge o Greek an Latin, an that o French; an those I ken ane frae anither: it’s as muckle as ye can expeck o a puir cheil’s dother. Hoosaeiver, gin I’m tae follae ma story in true sklaik’s wye, I’d better gae on; an insteid o lowpin three years, I’ll be blythe tae gae forrit tae the neist simmer—the simmer o 1778, that is near twinty-three years syne.’

**The Doonfaa o the Earnshaws Chapter 8**

On the mornin o a braw June day ma first bonnie wee nurslin, an the hinmaist o the auncient Earnshaw stock, wis born. We wir thrang wi the hey in a hyne-awa park, fin the quine that in the ordnar wey brocht oor brakkfaists cam rinnin an oor ower sune ower the ley an up the lane, caain me as she ran.

‘Och, sic a gran bairn!’ she peched oot. ‘The brawest loon that iver breathed! Bit the doctor sez the mistress maun gae: he sez she’s bin tholin TB these mony months. I heard him tell Mr. Hindley: an noo she his naethin tae keep her, an she’ll be deid afore yule. Ye maun cam hame richt aff. Ye’re tae nurse it, Nelly: tae feed it wi sugar an milk, an takk tent o it day an night. I wish I wir ye, because it will be aa yer ane fin there’s nae mistress!’

‘Bit is she verra nae weel?’ I speired, haivin doon ma hyew an tyin ma bunnet.

‘I’d say she is; yet she luiks brave-like,’ reponed the quine, ‘an she spikks as if she thocht o livin tae see it grow tae be chiel. She’s ooto her heid fur blytheness, it’s sae bonnie! Gin I wis her I’m siccar I shouldnae dee: I’d get better at the verra sicht o it, in spite o Kenneth. I wis fair roosed at him. Dame Archer brocht the dearie doon tae the maister, in the hoose, an his face jist stertit tae licht up, fin the old taed steps forrit, an says “Earnshaw, it’s a blissin yer wife has bin spared tae leave ye this son. Fin she cam, I felt siccar we shouldnae keep her lang; an noo, I maun tell ye, the winter will likely feenish her. Dinna girn, an murn aboot it ower muckle: it canna be helped. An mairower, ye should hae kent better than tae wyle sic a peely-wallie o a lass!”’

‘An fit did the maister repon?’ I speired.

‘I think he banned: bit I didnae heed him, I wis raxxin tae see the bairn,’ an she stertit again tae describe it wi virr. I, as keen as hersel, hashed faist hame tae admire, on ma pairt; tho I wis unca wae fur Hindley’s sake. He’d space in his hairt anely fur twa idols—his wife an himsel: he doted on baith, an adored ane, an I couldnae think foo he wid thole the loss.

Fin we won tae Whudderin Heichts, there he stude at the front yett; an, as I gaed in, I speired, ‘foo wis the babby?’

‘Near ready tae rin aboot, Nell!’ he reponed, pittin on a cheerie smile.

‘An the mistress?’ I cannily speired; ‘the doctor sez she’s—’

‘Damn the doctor!’ he brakk in, reiddenin. ‘Frances is fine: she’ll be richt weel bi this time neist wikk. Are ye gaun upstairs? will ye tell her that I’ll cam, gin she’ll promise nae tae spikk. I left her because she widnae haud her tongue; an she maun—tell her Mr. Kenneth sez she maun be quaet.’

I gaed this message tae Mrs. Earnshaw; she seemed in flichty speerits, an reponed blythe, ‘I hardly spakk a wird, Ellen, an there he’s gaen oot twice, greetin. Weel, say I promise I winna spikk: bit thon disnae bind me nae tae lauch at him!’

Puir sowel! Till inbye a wikk o her daith thon gay hairt niver failed her; an her man thrawnly, na, frantically, in affirmin her health improved ilkie day. Fin Kenneth warned him that his cures wir eeseless at thon stage o the illness, an he neednae pit him tae farrer expense bi attendin her, he reponed, ‘I ken ye neednae—she’s weel—she disnae wint ony mair veesits frae ye! She niver hid consumption. It wis a fever; an it’s gane: her pulse is as slaw as mine noo, an her chikk as cweel.’

He telt his wife the same story, an she seemed tae believe him; bit ae nicht, fin leanin on his shouder, in the mids o sayin she thocht she should be able tae get up the morn, a fit o hoastin tuik her—a verra slicht ane—he raised her in his airms; she pit her twa hauns aboot his neck, her face cheenged, an she wis deid.

As the quine hid jeloused, the bairn Hareton fell aathegither intae ma hauns. Mr. Earnshaw, gin he saw him healthy an niver heard him greet, wis satisfeed, as far as regairded him. Fur himsel, he grew desperate: his sorra wis o thon kind that winna murn. He neither grat nur prayed; he banned an raged: banned God an man, an gaed himsel up tae ram stam dissipation. The servants couldnae thole his tyrant-like coorse wyes lang: Joseph an I wir the anely twa that wid bide. I hidnae the hairt tae leave the babby; an mairower, ye ken, I’d bin his foster-sister, an excused his wyes easier than a stranger wid. Joseph bedd tae deave the tenants an wirkers; an because it wis his delicht tae be a Haly Willie he’d a rowth o coorseness tae repruve.

The maister’s ill weys an ill fiers vrocht an unca example fur Kirsty an Heathcliff. His treatment o the latter wis eneuch tae makk a deil o a sanct. An, truly, it seemed as gin the loon *wis* grippit bi something deevilish at thon whyle. He delichtit tae see Hindley degrade himsel ayont savin; an becam daily mair notit fur savage dourness an ferocity. I couldnae hauf tell fit a hellish hoose we had. The meenister stoppit veesitin, an naebody decent cam near us, at the hinnereyn; unless Edgar Linton’s veesits tae Miss Kirsty micht be an exception. At fifteen she wis the queen o the kintra-side; she’d nae peer; an she did turn oot a prood, heidstrang craitur! I ain I didnae like her, efter bairnhood wis by; an I misfittit her aften bi ettlin tae bring doon her vauntieness: she niver tuik a pikk at me, tho. She’d a winnerfu constancy tae auld friens: even Heathcliff keepit his haud on her likin wioot cheenge; an young Linton, wi aa his superiority, fand it hard tae win an equally deep haud. He wis ma late maister: thon is his pictur ower the lowe. It eesed tae hing on ae side, an his wife’s on the ither; bit hers his bin taen awa, or else ye micht see somethin o it she wis. Can ye makk thon oot?

Mrs. Dean heistit the caunle, an I saw a saft-featured face, unca like the young leddy at the Heichts, bit mair thochtfu an frienly in luik. It vrocht a swete pictur. The lang licht hair curled slichtly on the broo; the een wir large an serious; the corp near ower gracefu. I didnae mervel foo Kirsty Earnshaw could forget her first frien fur sic a chiel. I mervelled muckle foo he, wi harns tae his corp, could fancy ma notion o Kirsty Earnshaw.

‘A verra fine pictur,’ I telt the hoose-keeper. ‘Is it like?’

‘Aye’ she reponed; ‘bit he luikit better fin he wis steered up; thon’s his ordnar luik: he winted speerit in general.’

Kirsty hid keepit up her frienship wi the Lintons since her five-wikks’ stay amang them; an as she’d nae enticements tae shaw her roch side in their company, an hid the mense tae be affrontit o bein rude far she wis gien sic ongaun genteelness, she pit unwittin on the auld leddy an gentleman bi her bairnlike frienliness; won the likin o Isabella, an the hairt an sowel o her brither: gains that flattered her frae the first aff—fur she wis fu o ambition—an led her tae takk on a double character wioot exackly intendin tae swick onybody. In the airt far she heard Heathcliff caad a ‘coorse young vratch,’ an ‘waur than a breet,’ she tuik tent nae tae act like him; bit at hame she’d sma wint tae shaw her genteel side that wid anely be lauched at, an grip in a din raisin natur fin it wid bring her neither gain nur praise.

Mr. Edgar didnae aften gaither virr tae veesit Whudderin Heichts open. He wis terrifeed o Earnshaw’s repute, an coored frae meetin him; an yet he wis aye met wi oor best attempts at ceevility: the maister himsel avoydit msfittin him, kennin foo he cam; an gin he couldnae be gracious, keepit ooto the wye. I raither think his luiks syne wir distasteful tae Kirsty; she wisnae airtfu, niver played the flirt, an he’d clearly an objection tae her twa friens meetin at aa; fur fin Heathcliff shawed contempt o Linton in his presence, she couldnae hauf agree, as she did in his absence; an fin Linton shawed grue an ill will tae Heathcliff, she daured na treat his feelins wi indifference, as gin rinnin doon o her playmate wir o feint the consequence tae her. I’ve hid mony a lauch at her worries an untelt tribbles, that she eeselessly strove tae hide frae ma mockery. Thon souns ill-naturet: bit she wis sae prood it becam near impossible tae peety her sorras, till she should be brocht doon a thochtie. She did bring hersel, at the hinnereyn, tae confess, an tae confide in me: there wisnae a sowel else that she micht makk intae an adviser.

Mr. Hindley’d gaen frae hame ae efterneen, an Heathcliff chaunced tae gie himsel a holiday because o’t. He’d reached the age o saxteen syne, I think, an wioot haein ill features, or bein puir in thocht, he ettled tae convoy a luik o inbye an ootbye scunner that his present luiks haud nae merks o. In the first place, he’d bi thon time tint the gains o his early lear: ongaun hard darg, stertit sune an feenished late, hid smored ony ill fashence he aince ained in gaitherin education, an ony luve fur buiks or larnin. His bairnhood’s sense o superiority, dinned intae him bi the favours o auld Mr. Earnshaw, wis dwined awa. He warssled lang tae keep up wi Kirsty in her larnin, an yielded wi sair tho seelent wae: bit he yielded aathegither; an there wis nae garrin him tae takk a step in the wye o meevin upwird, fin he fand he maun, o necessarily, sink aneth his former level. Syne personal luiks sympatheesed wi mental dwinin: he tuik on a bumshayvelt wauk an ignoble luik; his natural inwird wye wis exaggeratit intae a near gyte excess o unsociable dourness; an he tuik a grim pleisur, seemin, in steerin up the ill thochts raither than the praise o the fyew in his cercle.

Kirsty an he wir ongaun friens yet at his sizzons o rest frae darg; bit he’d stoppit tae form his likin fur her in wirds, an drew back wi angeret suspicion frae her quine-like pettin, as if kennin there could be nae gratification in grantin sic merks o likin on him. On the afore-nemmed time he cam intae the hoose tae tell us his intent o daein naethin, while I wis helpin Miss Kirsty tae redd up her dress: she hidnae thocht on his takkin it intae his heid tae be idle; an imaginin she’d hae the hale hoose tae hersel, she ettled, bi some means, tae lat Mr. Edgar ken o her brither’s absence, an wis then getting ready tae greet him.

‘Kirsty, are ye eident this efterneen?’ speired Heathcliff. ‘Are ye gaun onywye?’

‘Na, it’s rainin,’ she reponed.

‘Fit wye dae ye hae on thon silk frock, then?’ he speired. ‘Naebody’s camin here, I hope?

‘Nae that I ken o,’ hubbered Miss: ‘bit ye should be in the park noo, Heathcliff. It’s an oor past dennertime: I thocht ye wir gaen.’

‘Hindley disnae aften free us frae his cursed sel,’ quo the loon. ‘I’ll nae wirk ony mair the day: I’ll bide wi ye.’

‘Och, bit Joseph’ll tell,’ she telt him; ‘ye’d better awa!’

‘Joseph is loadin lime on the far side o Penistone Crags; it’ll takk him till derk, an he’ll niver ken.’

Sae, sayin, he merched tae the lowe, an dowpit doon. Kirsty thocht a meenit, wi knittit broos—she fand it needfu tae smeeth the wey fur a veesit. ‘Isabella an Edgar Linton spakk o veesitin this efterneen,’ quo she, at the eyn o a meenit’s seelence. ‘As it rains, I dinna expeck them; bit they micht cam, an gin they dae, ye rin the risk o bein raged fur nae eese.’

‘Order Ellen tae say yer engaged, Kirsty,’ he gaed on; ‘dinna turn me oot fur thon peetifu, gypit friens o yours! I’m on the pynt, whyles, o girnin that they—bit I’ll nae—’

‘That they fit?’ cried Kirsty, luikin at him wi a tribbled luik. ‘Och, Nelly!’ she added smertly, yarkin her heid awa frae ma hauns, ‘ye’ve caimbed ma hair richt ooto curl! Thon’s eneuch; lat me alane. Fit are ye on the pynt o girnin aboot, Heathcliff?’

‘Naethin—anely teet at the almanack on thon waa;’ he pynted tae a framed sheet hingin near the windae, an gaed on, ‘The crosses are fur the evenins ye’ve spent wi the Lintons, the dots fur thon spent wi me. D’ye see? I’ve merked ilkie day.’

‘Aye—clean gyte: as if I tuik tent!’ reponed Kirsty in a girny tone. ‘An far’s the mense o thon?’

‘Tae shaw that I *dae* takk tent,’ quo Heathcliff.

‘An should I aye be sittin wi ye?’ she demandit, growin mair roosed. ‘Fit gweed dae I get? Fit dae ye spikk aboot? Ye micht be dumb, or a littlin, fur onythin ye say tae amuse me, or fur onythin ye dae, either!’

‘Ye niver telt me afore that I spakk ower little, or that ye dislikit ma company, Kirsty!’ quo Heathcliff, steered up.

‘It’s nae company at aa, fin fowk ken naethin an say naethin,’ she mummlit.

Her frien raise up, bit he hidnae time tae say mair, fur a shelt’s feet wir heard on the flags, an haein chappit saftly, young Linton cam in, his face sheenin wi delicht at the unexpeckit invite he’d gotten. Dootless Kirsty merked the difference atween her friens, as ane cam in an the ither gaed oot. The contrast wis fit ye’d see in excheengin a dreich, humphy, coal kintra fur a bonnie fertile glen; an his voyce an greetin wir as opposite as his aspeck. He’d a douce, laigh wye o spakkin, an spakk his wirds as ye dae: thon’s less roch than we spikk here.

‘I’m nae cam ower sune, am I?’ he speired, luikin at me: I’d stertit tae dicht the ashet, an redd up some drawers at the far eyn in the press.

‘Na,’ reponed Kirsty. ‘Fit are ye daein there, Nelly?’

‘Ma darg, Miss,’ I telt her. (Mr. Hindley’d gien me directions tae makk a third pairty in ony private veesits Linton chuse tae pey.)

She steppit ahin me an fuspered nesty like, ‘Takk yersel an yer cloots awa fin veesitors are in the hoose, skiffies dinna stert scoorin an cleanin in the chaumer far they are!’

‘It’s a guid chaunce, noo that maister’s awa,’ I spakk aloud: ‘he hates me tae be ficherin ower thon ferlies in his presence. I’m siccar Mr. Edgar will excuse me.’

‘I hate ye tae be ficherin in *ma* presence,’ exclaimed the young leddy proodly, nae lattin her veesitor time tae spikk: she hidden won back her gweed natur since the wee argy bargy wi Heathcliff.

‘I’m sorry fur it, Miss Kirsty,’ wis ma respon; an I gaed on eidently wi ma darg.

She, jelousin Edgar couldnae see her, yarked the cloot frae ma haun, an nippit me, wi a lang yark, verra spitefu on the airm. I’ve said I didnae lue her, an raither enjoyed mortifeein her pride whyles: mairower, she hurt me sair; sae I stertit up frae ma knees, an skreiched oot, ‘Och, Miss, thon’s a nesty ploy! Ye hae nae richt tae nip me, an I’m nae gaun tae thole it.’

‘I didna touch ye, ye leein vratch!’ cried she, her fingers yokey tae repeat the nip, an her lugs reid wi roose. She niver had pouer tae hide her roose, it aywis set her hale face in a bleeze.

‘Fit’s thon, syne?’ I reponed, shawin a merked poorpie skaith tae pruve it.

She stampit her fit, swithered a meenit, an syne, driven on bi the coorse roose in her, skelpit me on the chikk: a wechty cloor that fulled baith een wi watter.

‘Kirsty, luve! Kirsty!’ brukk in Linton, unca bumbazed at the double faut o

lees an violence that his dearie hid committed.

‘Leave the chaumer, Ellen!’ she gaed on, trimmlin aa ower.

Wee Hareton, fa follaed me aawye, an wis sittin near me on the fleer, at seein me greetin stertit greetin himsel, an sabbit oot plaints agin ‘nesty auntie Kirsty,’ that drew her rage ontae his unchauncy heid: she grippit his shouders, an shuik him till the puir bairn turned fite, an Edgar thochtlessly laid haud o her hauns tae free him. In a meenit ane wis wrung lowse, an the dumfounert young cheil felt it skelped ower his ain lug in a wey that couldnae be mistaen fur play. He drew back misfittit. I heistit Hareton in ma airms, an wauked aff tae the kitchie wi him, leavin the yett ajee, fur I wis sikkin tae watch foo they wid sattle their faa oot. The strukken veesitor meeved tae the spot far he’d laid his bunnet, pale an wi a shakkin lip.

‘Thon’s richt!’ quo I tae masel. ‘Takk tent an be aff! It’s a kindness tae lat ye hae a glisk o her real natur.’

‘Far are ye gaun?’ demandit Kirsty, hashin tae the yett.

He jinkit aside, an ettled tae pass.

‘Ye mauna gae!’ she exclaimed, wi virr.

‘I maun an shall!’ he reponed in a quaet voyce.

‘Na,’ she gaed on, grappin the haunle; ‘nae yet, Edgar Linton: sit doon; ye winna leave me in thon temper. I’d be dowie aa nicht, an I winna be dowie fur ye!’

‘Can I bide efter ye hae struck me?’ speired Linton.

Kirsty wis seelent.

‘Ye’ve made me feart an affrontit o ye,’ he gaed on; ‘I’ll nae cam here again!’

Her een stertit tae glisten an her lids tae twinkle.

‘An ye telt a deliberate lee!’ quo he.

‘I didnae!’ she cried, winnin back her spikk; ‘I did naethin deliberate. Weel, gae, gin ye wint—get awa! An noo I’ll greet—I’ll greet masel seek!’

She drappit doon on her knees bi a cheer, an set tae greetin richt sair. Edgar won as far as the coort; thonner he dauchled. I socht tae eek him on.

‘Miss is dreadful heidstran, sir,’ I cried oot. ‘As coorse as ony marred bairn: ye’d better be ridin hame, or else she’ll be sick, anely tae vex us.’

The saft thing luikit agley throwe the windae: he’d the pouer tae depairt as muckle’s a cat his the pouer tae leave a moose hauf killt, or a bird hauf etten. Ach, I thocht, there’ll be nae savin him: he’s doomed, an flees tae his weird! An sae it wis: he turned smertly, hashed intae the hoose again, steekit the yett ahin him; an fin I gaed in a while efter tae tell them that Earnshaw hid cam hame stottin fu, ready tae pu the hale place aboot oor lugs (his ordnar frame o mind in thon state), I saw the faain oot hid jist vrocht a closer likin—hid brukken the ootwirks o youthfu blateness, an lat them shakk aff the hap o frienship, an confess thirsels luvers.

Hearin o Mr. Hindley’s camin drave Linton faist tae his shelt an Kirsty tae her chaumer. I gaed tae hide wee Hareton, an tae takk the shot ooto the maister’s gun,that he likit tae play wi in his gyte excitement, tae the hazard o the lives o ony fa provoked, or even drew his notice ower muckle; an I’d hit on the plan o removin it, that he micht dae less ill gin he did gae the length o firin it.

The Waa-gaun o Heathcliff

**Chapter 9**

He cam in, spikkin sweirs dreidfu tae lippen tae; an catched me in the mids o stappin his son awa in the kitchie press. Hareton wis owercam wi a byordnar terror o winnin either his wud breet’s likin or his gyte cheil’s roose; fur in ane he’d a chaunce o bein grippit an kissed tae daith, an in the ither o being flang intae the lowe, or dunted agin the waa; an the puir craitur bedd perfeck quaet-like fariver I socht tae pit him.

‘There, I’ve fand it oot at last!’ cried Hindley, puin me back bi the skin o ma neck, like a tyke. ‘Bi heiven an hell, ye’ve sworn atween ye tae murder thon bairn! I ken foo it is, noo, that he’s aywis ooto ma wey. Bit, wi the help o the Deil, I’ll makk ye swallae the carvin-knife, Nelly! Ye neednae lauch; fur I’ve jist plunked Kenneth, heid-doon, in the Blaik-shelt bog; an twa is the same as ane—an I wint tae kill some o ye: I’ll hae nae rest till I dae!’

‘Bit I dinna like the carvin-knife, Mr. Hindley,’ I reponed; ‘it’s bin cuttin reid herrin. I’d raither be shot, gin ye please.’

‘Ye’d raither be damned!’ quo he; ‘an sae ye shall. Nae law in England can hinner a chiel frae keepin his hoose decent, an mine’s a nichtmare! Open yer moo.’ He grippit the knife in his haun, an rammed its pynt atween ma teeth: bit, fur ma pairt, I wis niver muckle feart o his pliskies. I spat oot, an telt him it tasted nesty—I widnae takk it on ony accoont.

‘Och!’ quo he, releasin me, ‘I see thon orra wee vratch isnae Hareton: I’m sorry, Nell. Gin it be, he deserves skinnin alive fur nae rinnin tae walcam me, an fur skreichin as if I wis a trowie. Unnatural vratch, cam in aboot! I’ll teach ye tae swick a gweed-hairtit, gyte faither. Noo, dinna ye think the laddie wid be brawer clippit? It maks a tyke fiercer, an I lue somethin fierce—gie me a shears—somethin fierce an snod! Mairower, it’s damnt quine-like—deevilish pride it is, tae worship oor lugs—we’re cuddies eneuch wioot them. Wheesht, bairn, wheesht! Weel then, it is ma dawtie! Wheesht…dry yer een—there’s a delicht; kiss me. Fit! it winna? Kiss me, Hareton! Damn ye, kiss me! By God, as gin I’d rear sic a monster! As sure’s I’m leevin I’ll brakk the vratch’s neck.’

Puir Hareton wis squallichin an kickin in his faither’s airms wi aa his micht, an redoobled his skirls fin he cairried him upstairs an heistit him ower the banister. I cried oot that he’d fear the bairn intae fits, an ran tae save him. As I reached them, Hindley booed forrit on the rails tae lippen tae a soun aneth; near forgettin fit he hid in his hauns. ‘Fa’s thon?’ he speired, hearin somebody nearin the stairs’-fit. I raxxed forrit as weel, meanin tae sign tae Heathcliff, fas step I kent, nae tae cam farrer; an, at the meenit fin I tuik ma ee aff Hareton, he gaed a lowp o a suddenty, freed himsel frae the careless grip that held him, an drappit.

There wis scarce time tae feel a jeel o horror afore we saw that the wee craitur wis safe. Heathcliff cam aneth jist at the richt meenit; bi a natural impulse he stoppit the faa, an settin Hareton on his feet, keekit up tae see fa caused the mishanter. A miser fa’s pairtit wi a lucky lottery ticket fur five shillins, an finns neist day he’s tint in the swap five thoosan puns, couldnae shaw a blanker luik than he did on seein the corp o Mr. Earnshaw abune. It shawed, plainer than wirds could dae, the sairest grue at haein made himsel the thwarter o his ain revenge. Hid it bin derk, I daursay he’d hae ettled tae sort the mistakk bi blooterin Hareton’s skull on the steps; bit, we saw his salvation; an I wis sune ablow wi ma preecious chairge grippit tae ma bosie. Hindley cam doon mair cannie, sober an affrontit.

‘It’s yer wyte, Ellen,’ quo he; ‘ye should hae keepit him ooto sicht: ye should hae taen him frae me! Is he hurtit onywey?’

‘Hurtit!’ I raged; ‘gin he isnae killt, he’ll be a daftie! Och! I winner his mither doesnae rise frae the mools tae see foo ye haunle him. Yer waur than a heathen—treatin yer ain flesh an bluid thon wye!’ He ettled tae touch the bairn, fa, on finnin himsel wi me, sabbit aff his terror direck. At the first finger his faither pit on him, hoosaeiver, he skreiched again looder than afore, an warssled as gin he’d gae intae fits.

‘Ye winna misfit him!’ I gaed on. ‘He hates ye—they aa hate ye—thon’s the truith! A blythe faimily ye hae; an a bonnie like state ye’ve cam tae!’

‘I’ll cam tae a bonnier, yet, Nelly,’ leuch the drukken chiel, winnin back his hardness. ‘Noo, takk yersel an him awa. An takk tent Heathcliff! Ye clear aff as weel frae ma grip an hearin. I winna murder ye the nicht; less, mebbe, I set the hoose in a lowe: bit thon’s as ma fancy takks me.’

Sayin this he tuik a pint bottle o brandy frae the press, an poored some intae a tummler.

‘Na, dinna!’ I priggit. ‘Mr. Hindley, dae takk tent. Hae mercy on this puir loon, if ye care naethin fur yersel!’

‘Onybody’ll dae better fur him than I shall,’ he reponed.

‘Hae mercy on yer ain sowel!’ quo I, ettlin tae wheech the glaiss frae his haun.

‘Nae I! On the contrar, I’ll hae muckle pleisur in sennin it tae hell tae punish its Makker,’ spakk the blasphemer. ‘Here’s tae its hairty damnation!’

He suppit the speerits an forcey telt us tae g’wa; eynin his command wi a wheen o ill banns ower coorse tae repeat or mynd.

‘It’s a peety he canna kill himsel wi drink,’ quo Heathcliff, mummlin an echo o banns back fin the yett wis steekit. ‘He’s daein his verra best; bit his constitution defies him. Mr. Kenneth says he wid bet his shelt that he’ll ootlive ony chiel on this side o Gimmerton, an gae tae the mools a fire haired sinner; unless some blythe chaunce ooto the common coorse befaa him.’

I gaed intae the kitchie, an sat doon tae showd ma wee lammie tae sleep. Heathcliff, as I thocht, wauked throw tae the barn. It turned oot efterwirds that he anely won as far as the ither side o the settle, fin he flang himsel on a bench bi the waa, awa frae the lowe an bedd seelent.

I wis showdin Hareton on ma knee, an hummin a sang that stertit—

*“It wis far in the nicht, an the bairnies grat,*

*The mither aneth the mools heard that—”*

fin Miss Kirsty, fa’d lippened tae the melee frae her chaumer, pit her heid in, an fuspered ‘Are ye alane, Nelly?’

‘Aye, Miss,’ I reponed.

She cam in an ower tae the hairth. I, jelousin she wis gaun tae say somethin, keekit up. The luik o her face seemed misfittit an anxious. Her lips wir hauf open, as gin she meant tae spikk, an she drew a braith; bit it escaped in a sough insteid o a sentence. I restertit ma sang; nae haein forgotten her recent ongauns.

‘Far’s Heathcliff?’ she speired, interruptin me.

‘Aboot his darg in the stable,’ wis ma repon.

He didnae cwanter me; mebbe he’d faaen intae a dwaum. There follaed anither lang devaul, durin thon while I saw a drap or two treetle frae Kirsty’s chikk tae the flags. Is she sorry fur her shamefu wyes?—I winnert. Thon’ll be a first: bit she maun cam tae the pynt—as she will—I winna help her! Na, she felt nae tribble ower ony subjeck, barrin her ain consarns.

‘Ochone!’ she cried at the hinnereyn. ‘I’m verra disjaskit!’

‘A peety,’ I telt her. ‘Ye’re ill tae please; sae mony friens an sae feyw cares, an canna makk yerself content!’

‘Nelly, will ye keep a secret fur me?’ she gaed on, kneelin doon bi me, an heistin her bonnie een tae ma face wi thon sort o luik that turns aff ill natur, even fin a body his aa the richt in the warld tae indulge it.

‘Is it wirth keepin?’ I speired, less ill naturet.

‘Aye an it worries me, an I maun lat it oot! I wint tae ken fit I should dae. This day, Edgar Linton his socht me tae mairry him, an I’ve gien him a repon. Noo, afore I tell ye whether it wis aye or na, ye maun tell me fit it should hae bin.’

‘Och, Miss Kirsty, foo can I ken?’ I reponed. ‘Tae be sure, conseederin the ongauns ye performed afore him this efterneen, I micht say it wid be wyce tae say na: since he socht ye efter thon, he maun either be eeslessly gyte or an unca daftie.’

‘Gin ye spikk sae, I winna tell ye ony mair,’ she reponed, dourly risin tae her feet. ‘I said Aye, Nelly. Be faist, an say gin I wis wrang!’

‘Ye said aye! Weel fit gweed is it gaun ower the maitter? Ye hae gaen yer wird, an canna takk it back.’

‘Bit say gin I should hae dane sae—dae it!’ she exclaimed in a ragie tone; rubbin her hauns thegether, an froonin.

‘There are mony things tae be conseedered afore thon question can be answered richt,’quo I, sairious. ‘First an foremaist, dae ye lue Mr. Edgar?’

‘Foo can help it? Of coorse I dae,’ she reponed.

Syne I pit her throwe the follaein catechism: fur a quine o twinty-twa it wis nae nochtie

‘Foo dae ye lue him, Miss Kirsty?’

‘Styte, I dae—thon’s eneuch.’

‘Bi nae means; ye maun say fit wye?’

‘Weel, because he’s bonnie, an pleisant tae be wi.’

‘Ill!’ wis ma spikk.

‘An because he’s young an cheerie.’

‘Ill, still.’

‘An because he lues me.’

‘Weel weel, winnin there.’

‘An he’ll be rich, an I’d be the greatest woman o the neebourhood, an I’ll be prood o haein sic a man.’

‘Warst o aa. An noo, say foo ye lue him?’

‘As aabody lues—ye’re daft, Nelly.’

‘Nae a bit—tell me’

‘I lue the grun unner his feet, an the air ower his heid, an aathin he touches, an ilkie wird he spikks. I lue aa his luiks, an aa his darg, an him entire an aathegether. There noo!’

‘An foo?’

‘Na; yer makkin a joke o’t: it’s unca ill-natured! It’s nae a joke tae me!’ quo the young leddy, girnin, an turnin her face tae the lowe.

‘I’m verra far frae jokin, Miss Kirsty,’ I reponed. ‘Ye lue Mr. Edgar because he’s bonnie, an young, an cheerie, an rich, an lues ye. The hinmaist, hoosaeiver, gaes fur naethin: ye wid lue him wioot thon, likely; an wi it ye widnae, unless he ained the fower former attractions.’

‘Na, tae be siccar na: I should anely peety him—hate him, mebbe, gin he wir ugsome, an a gype.’

‘Bit there are mony ither bonnie, rich young cheils in the warld: bonnier, mebbe, an richer than he is. Fit should hinner ye frae luin them?’

‘Gin there be ony, they’re ooto ma wey: I’ve seen nane like Edgar.’

‘Ye may see some; an he winna aye be bonnie, an young, an michtna aywis be rich.’

‘He is noo; an I hae anely tae dae wi eenoo. I wish ye wid spikk wi mense.’

‘Weel, thon sattles it: gin ye hae anely tae dae wi eenoo, mairry Mr. Linton.’

‘I dinna wint yer permission fur that—I *shall* mairry him: an yet ye hinna telt me whether I’m richt.’

‘Richt eneuch; gin fowk be richt tae mairry anely fur eenoo. An noo, lat us hear fit ye’re dowie aboot. Yer brither will be blythe; the auld leddy an auld gentleman winna objeck, I think; ye’ll escape frae a bumshayvelt, roch hame intae a wealthy, respeckit ane; an ye lue Edgar, an Edgar lues ye. Aa seems hunky dory: far’s the haud up?’

‘*Here!* an *here!*’ cried Kirsty, strikkin ae haun on her broo, an the ither on her breist: ‘in fitiver airt the sowel bides. In ma sowel an in ma hairt, I’m convinced I’m wrang!’

‘Thon’s unca fey! I canna makk it oot.’

‘It’s ma secret. Bit gin ye winna mock me, I’ll explain it: I canna dae it distinck; bit I’ll gie ye a hint o foo I feel.’

She dowpit doon aside me again: her luik grew mair dowie an mair sairious, an her grippit hauns trimmlit.

‘Nelly, dae ye niver dream fey dreams?’ she speired, o a suddenty, efter some meenits’ thocht.

‘Aye noo an then,’ I reponed.

‘An sae dae I. I’ve dreamt in ma life dreams that hae bedd wi me iver efter, an cheenged ma thochts: they’ve gaen throwe an throwe me, like wine throwe watter, an cheenged the colour o ma harns. An this is ane: I’m gaun tae tell it—bit takk tent nae tae smile at ony pairt o it.’

‘Oh! dinna Miss Kirsty!’ I cried. ‘We’re waesome eneuch wioot thinkin up ghaists an veesions tae vex us. Cam, cam, be blythe an like yersel! Luik at wee Hareton! *He’s* dwaumin naethin dowie. Foo doucely he smiles in his sleep!’

‘Aye; an foo doucely his faither banns in his alaneness. Ye mynd him, I daursay, fin he wis jist sic anither as thon creashie babby: near as young an innocent. Hoosaeiver, Nelly, I’ll obleege ye tae lippen: it’s nae lang; an I’ve nae pouer tae be blythe this nicht.’

‘I winna lippen, I winna lippen!’ I repeatit, faist.

I wis superstitious aboot dreams then, an am still; an Kirsty hid a byordnar dreichness in her luik, that gart me dreid somethin frae which I micht makk a foretellin an foresee a fearfu mishanter. She wis vexed, bit she didnae gae on. Seemin tae takk up anither subjeck, she restertit in a wee whyle.

‘Gin I wir in heiven, Nelly, I’d be unca dowie.’

‘Because ye arenae fit tae gae there,’ I reponed. ‘Aa sinners wid be dowie in heiven.’

‘Bit it isnae fur thon. I dreamt aince that I wis thonner.’

‘I tell ye I winna lippen tae yer dreams, Miss Kirsty! I’ll gae tae bed,’ I brukk in again.

She leuch, an held me doon; fur I made a meevement tae leave ma cheer.

‘This is naethin,’ quo she: ‘I wis anely gaun tae say that heiven didnae seem tae be ma hame; an I brukk ma hairt wi greetin tae cam back tae Eirde; an the angels wir sae roosed that they haived me oot intae the mids o the heath on the tap o Whudderin Heichts; far I waukened sabbin fur blytheness. Thon’ll dae tae explain ma secret, as weel as the ither. I’ve nae mair business tae mairry Edgar Linton than I hae tae be in heiven; an gin the coorse cheil inbye hidnae brocht Heathcliff sae laigh, I shouldnae hae thocht o it. It wid degrade me tae mairry Heathcliff noo; sae he’ll niver ken foo I lue him: an that, nae because he’s bonnie Nelly, bit because he’s mair masel than I am. Fitiver oor sowels are vrocht o, his an mine are the same; an Linton’s is as different as a meenbeam frae lichtnin, or cranreuch cauld frae a lowe.’

Afore this spikk eyndit I felt Heathcliff’s presence. Haein taen tent o a slicht meevement, I turned ma heid, an saw him rise frae the bench, an creep oot sounessly. He’d lippened till he heard Kirsty say it wid degrade her tae mairry him, an syne he bedd tae hear nae mair. My fier, sittin on the grun, wis blockit bi the back o the settle frae seein his presence or waa-gaun; bit I sterted, an gart her wheesht!

‘Fit wye?’ she speired, teetin nervous roon.

‘Joseph’s here,’ I reponed, catchin bi chaunce the rowe o his cairtwheels up the wye; ‘an Heathcliff’ll cam in wi him. I’m nae siccar whether he wisnae at the yett this meenit.’

‘Och, he couldnae hear me at the yett!’ quo she. ‘Gie me Hareton, while ye get the supper, an fin it’s ready speir me tae sup wi ye. I wint tae swick ma uncomfy conscience, an ken that Heathcliff his nae notion o thon maitters. He hisnae, his he? He disnae ken fit bein in luve is!’

‘I see nae rizzon that he shouldnae ken, as weel as ye,’ I reponed; ‘an gin ye are his choyce, he’ll be the maist unfortunate craitur that iver wis born! As sune as ye becam Mrs. Linton, he losses frien, an luve, an aa! Hae ye conseedered foo ye’ll thole the separation, an foo he’ll thole tae be aathegither desertit in the warld? Because, Miss Kirsty—’

‘Aathegither desertit! we separated!’ she skreiched, wi an accent o roose. ‘Fa is tae separate us? They’ll meet the weird o Milo! Nae as lang as I live, Ellen: fur nae mortal craitur. Ilkie Linton on the face o the Eirde micht thaw intae naethin afore I could agree tae forsakk Heathcliff. Och, thon’s nae fit I intend—thon’s nae fit I mean! I shouldnae be Mrs. Linton wir sic a price socht! He’ll be as muckle tae me as he’s bin aa his lifetime. Edgar maun shakk aff his scunner, an thole him, at least. He will, fin he kens ma true feelins fur him. Nelly, I see noo ye think me a selfish vratch; bit did it niver strikk ye that gin Heathcliff an I mairried, we’d be beggars? Forbye, gin I mairry Linton I can aid Heathcliff tae rise, an pit him ooto ma brither’s pooer.’

‘Wi yer man’s siller, Miss Kirsty?’ I speired ‘Ye’ll finn him nae sae pliable as ye think: an, tho I’m nae a joodge, I think thon’s the wirst rizzon ye’ve gien yet fur bein the wife o young Linton.’

‘It isnae,’ she reponed; ‘it’s the best! The ithers wir the satisfaction o ma whims: an fur Edgar’s sake, as weel, tae satisfee him. This is fur the sake o ane fa kens in himsel ma feelins tae Edgar an masel. I canna express it; bit surely ye an aabody hae a notion that there is or should be a life o yours ayont ye. Fit wid be the eese o ma creation, gin I wir halely contained here? Ma muckle waes in this warld hae bin Heathcliff’s waes, an I watched an felt each frae the stert: ma great thocht in livin is himsel. Gin aa else deid, an *he* lived, I’d still continue tae be; an gin aa else lived, an he deid, the universe wid turn tae a fremmit body: I shouldnae seem a pairt o it.—Ma lue fur Linton is like the leaves in the wids: time’ll cheenge it, I’m weel awaur, as yule cheenges the trees. Ma luve fur Heathcliff’s the aybydan rocks aneath: a soorce o smaa veesible delicht, bit necessar. Nelly, I *am* Heathcliff! He’s aywis in ma thochts: nae as a pleisur, ony mair than I am aywis a pleisur tae masel, bit as ma ain bein. Sae dinna spikk o oor separation again: it’s nae practicable; an—’

She devauled, an happit her face in the faulds o ma goun; bit I yarked it forcey awa. I wis ooto patience wi her daftness!

‘Gin I can makk ony sense o yer styte, Miss,’quo I, ‘it anely gaes tae convince me that ye’re blinn tae the duties ye unnertakk in mairryin; or else yer a coorse, unprincipled quine. Bit dinna fash me wi mair secrets: I’ll nae promise tae keep them.’

‘Ye’ll keep thon?’ she speired, wi virr.

‘Na, I winna promise,’ I repeatit.

She wis aboot tae insist, fin the incam o Joseph feenished oor blethers; an Kirsty meeved her seat tae a neuk, an nursed Hareton, fin I made the supper. Efter it wis cuiked, ma fella-servant an I stertit tae argy aboot fa should cairry some tae Mr. Hindley; an we didnae sattle it till aa wis near cauld. Syne we cam tae the agreement that we’d lat him speir, gin he wintit ony; fur we feared particular tae gae intae his chaumer fin he’d bin some time alane.

‘An foo isnae thon breet cam in frae the park, bi this time? Fit’s he up tae? muckle idle sumph!’ demandit the auld bodach, luikin roon fur Heathcliff.

‘I’ll cry on him,’ I reponed. ‘He’s in the barn, I’ve nae doot.’

I gaed an cried, bit got nae repon. On camin back, I fuspered tae Kirsty that he’d heard a gweed pairt o fit she said, I wis siccar; an telt foo I saw him quit the kitchie jist as she maned o her brither’s conduct regairdin him. She lowped up in a fine fricht, haived Hareton ontae the settle, an ran tae seek fur her frien hersel; nae takkin time tae conseeder foo she wis sae steered up, or foo her spikk wid hae affeckit him. She wis awa sae lang that Joseph said we should wyte nae langer. He sleekit like jeloused they were bidin awa in tae avoyd hearin his drawn oot blissin. They were ‘ill eneuch fur ony fool mainners,’ quo he. An on their behauf he addit thon nicht a speecial prayer tae the ordnar quarter-o-an-oor’s say-awa afore meat, an wid hae tacked anither tae the eyn o the grace, hidnae his young mistress brukken in upon him wi a hashed command that he maun run doon the road, an, fariver Heathcliff hid stravaiged, finn an makk him cam back direck!

‘I wint tae spikk tae him, an I *maun*, afore I gae upstairs,’quo she. ‘An the yett’s ajee: he’s somewye ooto hearin; fur he widnae repon, tho I skreiched at the tap o the fauld as lood as I could.’

Joseph objeckit at first; she wis ower muckle in earnest, hoosaeiver, tae thole bein cwantered; an at the hinnereyn he pit his bunnet on his heid, an wauked grummlin furth. Betimes, Kirsty merched up an doon the fleer, sayin ‘I winner far he is—I winner far he can be! Fit did I say, Nelly? I canna mynd. Wis he vexed at ma ill natur this efterneen? Dyod! tell me fit I’ve said tae misfit him? I wish he’d cam. I wish he wid!’

‘Fit a soun fur naethin!’ I cried, tho raither uneasy masel. ‘Fit a nochtie flegs ye! It’s surely nae a maitter o consarn that Heathcliff should takk a meenlicht daunder on the muirs, or even lie ower huffed tae spikk tae us in the hey-laft. I’ll warrant he’s hidin thonner. See if I dinna ferret him oot!’

I depairtit tae restert ma search; its result wis disappyntment, an Joseph’s quest eyndit the same.

‘Yon lad growes waur an waur!’ quo he on re-enterin. ‘He’s left the yett at full swing, an Miss’s shelt’s trampit doon twa rigs o corn, an plytered ben, raicht ower intae the ley. Hoosaeiver, the maister’ll play the Deil the morn, an he’ll dae weel. He’s patience itsel wi sic careless, affcast craiters—patience itsel he is! Bit he’ll nae be aye sae—ye’ll see, aa o ye! Ye’ll drive him oot o his heid fur naethin!’

‘Hae ye fand Heathcliff, ye gype?’ brukk in Kirsty. ‘Hae ye bin luikin fur him, as I ordered?

‘I should mair like luik fur the shelt,’ he reponed. ‘It’d makk mair sense. Bit I can luik fur neither shelt nur chiel on a nicht like this—as blaik as the lum! An Heathcliff’s nae the loon tae cam at *ma* fussle—happen he’ll be less hard o’ hearin wi’ *ye*!’

It *wis* an unca derk evenin fur simmer: the clouds luikit like tae thunner, an I said we’d better aa sit doon; the oncamin rain wid be siccar tae bring him hame wioot mair tribble. Hoosaeiver, Kirsty widnae be perswadit intae quaet. She keepit wannerin back an fore, frae the gate tae the yett, in a steer that gaed her nae peace; an at length tuik up a staun on ae side o the waa, nearhaun the road: far, heedless o ma priggin an the gurly thunner, an the muckle draps that stertit tae plash aroon her, she bedd, caain oot whyles, an syne lippenin, an syne greetin ootricht. She beat Hareton, or ony bairn, at a gweed forcey fit o greetin.

Aboot midnicht, fin we still sat up, the storm cam rattlin ower the Heichts in full rage. There wis a violent win, as weel as thunner, an either ane or the ither split a tree aff at the neuk o the biggin: a muckle bough drappit ower the reef, an caad doon a daud o the east lum-stack, caain a rickle o stanes an seet intae the kitchie-lowe. We thocht a bolt hid faaen in the mids o us; an Joseph booed ontae his knees, priggin the Lord tae mynd the patriarchs Noah an Lot, an, as in former times, spare the richteous, dooncaa the ungodly. I felt some sense that it maun be a joodgement on us as weel. The Jonah, in my harns, wis Mr. Earnshaw; an I shuik the haunle o his den that I micht ken gin he wis still leevin. He reponed clear eneuch, in a wey that gart ma fier cry, mair loodly than afore, that a braid distinction maun be drawn atween saints like himsel an sinners like his maister. Bit the stooshie passed awa in twinty meenits, leavin us aa unhairmed; barr Kirsty, fa got aathegither drookit fur her thrawness in refusin tae sikk a beild, an staunin bunnetless an plaid-less tae catch as muckle watter as she could wi her hair an claes. She cam in an lay doon on the settle, aa drookit as she wis, turnin her face tae the back, an pittin her hauns afore it.

‘Weel, Miss!’ quo I, touchin her shoulder; ‘ye arenae bent on gettin yer daith, are ye? Dae ye ken fit o’clock it is? Hauf-past twalve. Cam, cam tae bed! there’s nae eese wytin ony langer on thon daft loon: he’ll be gane tae Gimmerton, an he’ll bide there noo. He jelouses we shouldnae wyte up fur him till this late oor: at least, he jelouses that anely Mr. Hindley wid be up; an he’d raither avoyd haein the yett opened bi the maister.’

‘Na, na, he’s nae at Gimmerton,’ quo Joseph. ‘I niver winner bit he’s at the boddom o a bog-hole. This veesitation wisnae fur nocht, an I wid hae ye luik oot, Miss—ye maun be the neist. Thank Heiven fur aa! Aa warks thegither fur gweed tae them as is chusen, an pyked oot frae the dirt! Ye ken fit the Scriptur sez.’ An he stertit quotin a puckle texts, referrin us tae chapters an verses far we micht finn them.

I, haein eeselessly priggit the wilfu quine tae rise an tirr her weet things, left him preachin an her chitterin, an tuik masel to bed wi wee Hareton, fa sleepit as faist as gin onybody hid bin sleepin roon him. I heard Joseph read on a whyle efterwards; syne I heard his slaw step on the laidder, an syne I drappit asleep.

Camin doon a thochtie later than ordnar, I saw, bi the sunbeams piercin the chinks o the shutters, Miss Kirsty still sat near the ingle. The hoose-yett wis ajee, as weel; licht entered frae its unsteeked windaes; Hindley hid cam oot, an stude on the kitchie hairth, peely wally an sleepy.

‘Fit ails ye, Kirsty?’ he wis sayin fin I gaed in: ‘ye luik as dowie as a drooned whelp. Fit wey are ye sae dreepin an fite, bairn?

‘I’ve bin weet,’ she telt him, reluctant, ‘an I’m cauld, thon’s aa.’

‘Och, she’s ill trickit!’ I cried, seein the maister tae be hauf sober. ‘She wis drookit in the shouer o yestreen evenin, an thonner she’s sat the hale nicht throwe, an I couldnae garr her steer.’

Mr. Earnshaw glowered at us in begeck. ‘The nicht throwe,’ he repeatit. ‘Fit keepit her up? nae feart o the thunner, surely? Thon wis ower oors since.’

Neither o us socht tae mention Heathcliff’s absence, as lang as we could hide it; sae I reponed, I didnae ken foo she tuik it intae her heid tae sit up; an she said naethin. The mornin wis caller an cweel; I flang back the lattice, an sune the chaumer fulled wi swete scents frae the gairden; bit Kirsty caad peevishly tae me, ‘Ellen, steek the windae. I’m stervin!’ An her teeth chittered as she cooried closer tae the near deid cinners.

‘She’s nae weel,’ quo Hindley, takkin her wrist; ‘I jelouse thon’s the rizzon she widnae gae tae bed. Damn it! I dinna wint tae be tribbled wi mair seekness here. Fit tuik ye intae the rain?’

‘Rinnin efter the loons, as ordnar!’ craiked Joseph, catchin an chaunce frae oor hesitation tae pit in his coorse spikk. ‘Gin I wir ye, maister, I’d jist slam the yett in the faces o aa o them, genteel an roch! Niver a day that yer aff, bit thon cat o Linton cams sneakin here; an Miss Nelly, she’s a fine lass! she sits watchin fur ye in the kitchie; an as yer in at ae yett, he’s oot at the ither an, syne, oor gran leddy gaes a-coortin on the side! It’s bonnie ongauns lurkin amang the parks, efter twal o the nicht, wi thon ill, fleysome deil o a cyard, Heathcliff! They think *I’m* blin; bit I’m nae: naethin o the sort!—I saw young Linton baith camin an gaun, an I saw *ye*’ (direckin his spikk tae me), ‘ye gweed fur naethin, sleisterin witch! nip up an steek intae the hoose, the meenit ye heard the maister’s shelt-fit clatter up the road.’

‘Seelence, lugger-in!’ cried Kirsty; ‘nane o yer chikk afore me! Edgar Linton cam yestreen bi chaunce, Hindley; an it wis masel fa telt him tae be aff: because I kent ye widnae like tae hae met him as ye wir.’

‘Ye lee, Kirsty, nae doot,’ reponed her brither, ‘an ye are a dashed gyte! Bit niver mind Linton eenoo: tell me, wir ye nae wi Heathcliff last nicht? Spikk the truith, noo. Ye neednae be feart o hairmin him: tho I hate him as muckle as iver, he did me a gweed turn a short time back that’ll makk ma conscience douce o brakkin his neck. Tae prevent it, I’ll sen him aboot his business this verra mornin; an efter he’s awa, I’d advise ye aa tae luik sherp: I’ll anely hae the mair ill natur fur ye.’

‘I niver saw Heathcliff last nicht,’ reponed Kirsty, stertin tae sab sair ‘an gin ye dae turn him oot, I’ll gae wi him. Bit, mebbe, ye’ll niver hae a chaunce: mebbe, he’s gaen.’ Here she brakk intae unca sorra, an the lave o her wirds wir mummlit.

Hindley haived on her a heeze o scornfu rage, an badd her get tae her chaumer straicht aff, or she shouldnae greet fur naethin! I obleeged her tae obey; an I’ll niver forget fit a scene follaed fin we reached her chaumer: it terrifeed me. I thoht she wis gaun gyte, an I priggit Joseph tae rin fur the doctor. It pruved the stert o delirium: Mr. Kenneth, as sune as he saw her, pronounced her verra ill; she’d a fever. He bled her, an he telt me tae lat her bide on whey an watter-gruel, an takk tent she didnae throwe hersel doonstairs or ooto the windae; an syne he left: fur he’d eneuch tae dae in the pairish, far twa or three miles wis the ordinar distance atween sheilin an sheilin.

Tho I canna say I made a gentle nurse, an Joseph an the maister wir nae better, an tho oor patient wis as trauchelsome an heidstrang as a patient could be, she weathered it throwe. Auld Mrs. Linton pyed us a puckle veesits, tae be sure, an set maitters tae richts, an scaulded an ordered us aa; an fin Kirsty wis recoverin, she insisted on convoyin her tae Thrushcross Grange: fur which we wir verra gratefu. Bit the puir dame hid rizzon tae repent o her kindness: she an her man baith tuik the fever, an deed in a fyew days o each ither.

Oor young leddy returned tae us saucier an mair thrawn, an prooder than iver. Heathcliff hid niver bin heard o since the evenin o the thunner-storm; an, ae day, I’d the misfortune, fin she’d deaved me sair, tae lay the blame o his disappearance on her: far it belanged, as she weel kent. Frae thon whyle, fur a whyle months, she stoppit spikkin wi me, save as tae a mere skiffy. Joseph fell unner a ban aa weel: he wid spikk his thochts, an lecture her aa the same as gin she wir a wee quine; an she thocht hersel a wumman, an oor mistress, an thocht that her recent seekness gaed her a claim tae be gaen muckle conseederation. Syne the doctor hid said that she widnae thole crossin muckle; she oucht tae hae her ain wey; an it wis naethin less than murder in her een fur onybody tae daur tae staun up an cwanter her. Frae Mr. Earnshaw an his fiers she keepit aloof; an tutored bi Kenneth, an sairious threats o a fit that aften attendit her rages, her brither alloued her fitiver she socht, an in the ordnar wye avoydit aggravatin her roosy natur. He wis raither ower gweed in humourin her pliskies; nae frae likin, bit frae pride: he sair wished tae see her bring honour tae the faimily bi a mairriage wi Linton, an as lang as she lat him alane she micht trample on us like slaves, fur ocht he cared! Edgar Linton, as thoosans hae bin afore an will be efter him, wis besottit: an thocht himsel the blythest cheil alive on the day he led her to Gimmerton kirk three years eftir his faither’s daith.

Agin ma wintin, I wis perswuadit tae leave Whudderin Heichts an gae wi her here. Wee Hareton wis near five years auld, an I’d jist stertit tae teach him his letters. We made a sad pairtin; bit Kirsty’s tears wir mair pouerfu than oors. Fin I widnae gae, an fin she fand her priggin didnae meeve me, she gaed murnin tae her man an brither. The former offered me braw pye; the latter gart me pack up: he wintit nae wumman in the hoose, he said, noo that there wis nae mistress; an as tae Hareton, the meenister wid takk him in haun, sune. An sae I’d anely ae chyce left: tae dae as I wis gart. I telt the maister he got rid o aa decent fowk anely tae wrack himself aa the faister; I kissed Hareton, said cheerie-bye; an since then he’s bin fremmit tae me an it’s verra fey tae think it, bit I’ve nae doot he his aathegither forgotten aa aboot Ellen Dean, an that he wis iver mair than aa the warld tae her an she tae him!

At this pynt o the hoosekeeper’s tale she chaunced tae keek tae the wag-at-the-waa ower the lum; an wis dumfounert on seein the meenit-haun meisur hauf-past ane. She widnae hear o bidin a secunt langer: in truith, I felt raither like deferrin the lave o her tale masel. An noo that she’s gaen tae her bed, an I hae thocht fur anither oor or twa, I’ll gaither virr tae gae as weel, in spite o sair laziness o heid an limbs.

Mr Heathcliff Cams Back

**Chapter 10**

A chermin walcam tae a laner’s life! Fower wikks o grue, flingin aboot, an seekness! Och, thon wersh wins an wersh norlan lift, an blockit roads, an latchy kintra sawbanes! An och, this wint o a human face! an, waur nur aa the terrible annooncement o Kenneth that I neednae expeck tae be ootside till spring!

Mr. Heathcliff his jist honoured me wi a veesit. Aboot seeven days syne he sent me a brace o grouse—the last o the sizzon. Vratch! He’s nae aathegither guiltless in this seekess o mine; an thon I’d a mind tae tell him. Bit, och! foo could I misfit a chiel fa wis gweed eneuch tae sattle at ma bedside a gweed oor, an spikk on some ither subjeck than peels an drauchts, blisters an leeches? This is a rael easy whylie. I’m ower dweeble tae read; yet I feel as gin I could enjoy somethin interestin. Foo nae hae up Mrs. Dean tae feenish her tale? I can recolleck its main threid, as far as she’d gane. Ay: I mynd her hero hid run aff, an niver bin heard o fur three years; an the heroine wis wadded. I’ll ring: she’ll be delichtit tae finn me up tae spikkin blythely. Mrs. Dean cam.

‘It wints twenty meenits, sir, tae takk the medicine,’ she stertit.

‘Awa, awa wi it!’ I reponed; ‘I wint tae hae—’

‘The doctor sez ye maun drap the pooders.’

‘Wi aa ma hairt! Dinna interrupt me. Cam an takk yer seat here. Keep yer fingers frae thon wersh heeze o bottlies. Draw yer wyvin ooto yer pooch—thon’ll dae—noo restert the history o Mr. Heathcliff, frae far ye left aff, tae eenoo. Did he feenish his larnin in the Muckle Furth an cam back a gentleman? or did he get a sizar’s place at college, or gyang tae Americay, an earn honours bi drawin bluid frae his foster-kintra? or makk a fortune faister on the English highweys?’

‘He micht hae dane a bittie in aa thon weys, Mr. Lockwood; bit I couldnae gie ma wird fur ony. I statit afore that I didnae ken foo he won his siller; neither dae I ken o the wey he raised his harns frae the savage ignorance far it wis sunk: bit, wi yer leave, I’ll gae on in ma ain style, gin ye think it’ll amuse an nae trauchle ye. Are ye feelin better this mornin?’

‘Aye, indeed.’

‘Thon’s gweed news.’

I got Miss Kirsty an masel tae Thrushcross Grange; an, tae ma agreeable disappyntment, she behaved far better than I daured expeck. She seemed near ower-fond o Mr. Linton; an even tae his sister she shawed a rowth o likin. They wir baith tuik great tent o her comfort. It wisnae the thorn booin tae the hinneysuckles, bit the hinneysuckles bosyin the thorn. There wir nae mutual concessions: ane stude straicht, an the ithers booed: an fa can be ill-naturet an roozy fin they met neither opposition nur cauldness? I saw that Mr. Edgar hid a deep-reetit fear o raisin her roose. He keepit it frae her; bit gin iver he heard me repon sherply, or saw ony ither servant growe gurly at some prood order o hers, he wid shaw his tribble bi a froon o displeisure that niver derkened on his ain accoont. He mony a whyle spakk stern tae me aboot ma impidence; an telt me that the stab o a knife couldnae gie a waur stoun than he tholed at seein his wife vexed. Nae tae misfit a kind maister, I larned tae be less touchy; an, fur the space o hauf a year, the gunpooder lay as hermless as san, because nae lowe came nearhaun tae kinnle it. Kirsty hid sizzons o derk an seelence whyles: they wir respeckit wi sympatheezin seelence bi her man, fa pit it doon tae a cheenge in her, brocht on bi her risky seekess; as she wis niver subjeck tae depression o speerits afore. The return o sunsheen wis walcomed bi answerin sunsheen frae him. I think I micht say that they wir stertin tae hae a deep an growin blytheness.

It eyndit. Weel, we *maun* be fur oorsels in the lang run; the douce an generous are anely mair richtly selfish than the domineerin; an it eyndit fin maitters gart each tae finn that the ane’s interest wisnae the chief conseederation in the ither’s thochts. On a warm evenin in Septemmer, I wis camin frae the gairden wi a wechty scull o aipples that I’d bin gaitherin. It hid gotten dusk, an the meen luikit ower the heich waa o the coort, garrin blae shaddas tae lurk in the neuks o the mony projeckin pairts o the biggin. I pit ma burden on the hoose-steps bi the kitchie-yett, an dauchled tae rest, an sook in a fyew mair braiths o the saft, swete air; ma een wir on the meen, an ma back tae the entrance, fin I heard a vyce ahin me quo ‘Nelly, is thon ye?’

It wis a deep vyce, an furreign in tone; yet there wis somethin in the mainner o spikkin ma nemme that gart it soun kent. I birled aboot tae finn fa spakk, fearie-like; fur the yetts wir steekit, an I’d seen naebody on nearin the steps. Somethin steered in the porch; an, meevin nearer, I saw a heich cheil riggit in derk claes, wi derk face an hair. He leant agin the side, an held his fingers on the snib as gin sikkin tae lowse it himsel. ‘Fa can it be?’ I thocht. ‘Mr. Earnshaw? Och, na! The vyce is nae like his ava.’

‘I hae wyted here an oor,’ he gaed on, as I gaed on glowerin; ‘an the hale o thon time aa roon his bin as still as daith. I daurednae enter. Ye dinna ken me? Luik, I’m nae fremmit!’

A ray fell on his face; the chikks waur pale, an hauf happit wi blaik fuskers; the broos lowerin, the een deep-set an byordnar. I myndit the een.

‘Fit!’ I cried, nae kennin whether tae regaird him as a warldly veesitor, an I heistit ma hauns in begeck. ‘Fit! ye cam back? Is it really ye? Is it?’

‘Aye, Heathcliff,’ he reponed, keekin frae me up tae the windaes, that refleckit a score o glimmerin meens, bit shawed nae lichts frae inbye. ‘Are they at hame? far is she? Nelly, ye arenae gled! ye neednae be sae misfittit. Is she here? Spikk! I wint tae hae ae wird wi her—yer mistress. Gae, an say some chiel frae Gimmerton wints tae see her.’

‘Foo will she takk it?’ I speired. ‘Fit will she dae? The begeck bumbazes me—it’ll pit her ooto her heid! An yae *are* Heathcliff! Bit cheenged! Na, there’s nae unnerstaunin it. Hae ye bin fur a sodjer?’

‘Gae an cairry ma message,’ he brukk in, forcey-like. ‘I’m in hell till ye dae!’

He heistit the snib, an I gaed in; bit fin I won tae the parlour far Mr. an Mrs. Linton wir, I couldnae perswad masel tae gae on. At length I decidit on makkin an excuse tae speir gin they wid hae the caunles lichtit, an I opened the yett.

They sat thegether in a windae fas lattice lay back agin the waa, an shawed, ayont the gairden trees, an the wud green park, the glen o Gimmerton, wi a lang line o mist wyndin near tae its tap (fur verra sune efter ye pass the chapel, as ye micht hae taen tent, the sough that rins frae the bog jynes a burn that follaes the neuk o the glen). Whudderin Heichts raise abune this siller mist; bit oor auld hoose wisnae veesible; it raither dips doon on the ither side. Baith the chaumer an its occupants, an the scene they owerluikit, wis winnerfu peacefu. I coored awa frae cairryin ma news; an wis gaun tae gae ae awa leavin it unsaid, efter haein pit ma speirin aboot the caunles, fin a sense o ma daftness gart me turn, an mummle, ‘A chiel frae Gimmerton wints tae see ye ma’am.’

‘Fit dis he wint?’ socht Mrs. Linton.

‘I didnae speir,’ I reponed.

‘Weel, steek the curtains, Nelly,’ quo she; ‘an bring up tea. I’ll be back again direck.’

She left the chaumer; Mr. Edgar speired, careless, fa it wis.

‘Somebody mistress disnae expeck,’ I reponed. ‘Thon Heathcliff—ye mynd him, sir—fa eesed tae bide at Mr. Earnshaw’s.’

‘Fit! the cyard—the ploo loon?’ he cried. ‘Foo did ye nae say thon tae Kirsty?’

‘Wheesht! Ye maunna caa him bi thon nemmes, maister,’ quo I. ‘She’d be sair pit oot tae hear ye. She wis near hairtbrukken fin he ran aff. I jelouse his return will makk a jubilee tae her.’

Mr. Linton wauked tae a windae on the ither side o the chaumer that owerluikit the coort. He unfaistened it, an booed oot. I expeck they wir ablow, fur he spakk faist: ‘Dinna staun thonner, ma joe! Bring the chiel in, gin it be onybody particlar.’ Afore lang, I heard the click o the snib, an Kirsty flew upstairs, pechin an wud; ower steered up tae shaw gledness: mairower, bi her face, ye’d raither hae thocht on an awfu calamity.

‘Och, Edgar, Edgar!’ she peched, haivin her airms roon his neck. ‘Och, Edgar dearie! Heathcliff’s cam back—he is!’ An she tichtened her bosie tae a squeeze.

‘Weel, weel,’ cried her man, roosed, ‘dinna thrapple me fur thon! He niver strukk me as sic a mervellous treisur. There’s nae need tae be sae heich!’

‘I ken ye didnae like him,’ she reponed, tonin doon the strength o her delicht. ‘Yet, fur me, ye maun be friens noo. Shall I tell him tae cam up?’

‘Here,’ he speired, ‘intae the parlour?’

‘Far else?’ she reponed.

He luikit vexed, an suggestit the kitchie as a mair suitable airt fur him. Mrs. Linton eed him wi a fey luik—hauf angeret, hauf lauchin at his fussiness.

‘Na’ she addit efter a while; ‘I canna sit in the kitchie Set twa brods here, Ellen: ane fur yer maister an Miss Isabella, bein genteel the ither fur Heathcliff an masel, bein o the laigher orders. Will thon please ye, ma dearie? Or maun I hae a lowe lichtit some ither wey? If sae, gie orders. I’ll rin doon an meet ma guest. I’m feart the blytheness is ower great tae be real!’

She wis aboot tae jink aff again; bit Edgar stoppit her.

‘*Ye* bid him cam in,’ quo he, tae me; ‘an, Kirsty, ettle tae be gled, wioot bein daft. The hale hoose neednae see the sicht o yer walcamin a runawa servant as a brither.’

I gaed doon, an fand Heathcliff wytin unner the porch, expeckin an invite tae cam in. He follaed ma guidance wioot waste o wirds, an I led him intae the chaumer o the maister an mistress, fas reid chikks spakk o argy bargyin. Bit the leddy’s glimmered wi anither feelin fin her frien cam tae the yett: she breenged forrit, tuik baith his hauns, an led him tae Linton; an syne she grippit Linton’s unwillin fingers an squeezed them intae his. Noo, fully lichtit bi the lowe an caunle licht, I wis bumbazed, mair than iver, tae see the transmogrification o Heathcliff. He’d grown intae a heich swack, weel-faired cheil; aside fa ma maister seemed rael shilpit like a hauflin. His upricht cairriage suggested the notion o his haein bin in the airmy. His face wis much aulder in luik an turn o feature than Mr. Linton’s; it luikit cliver, an keepit nae merks o former shame. A hauf-ceevilised ferocity bedd yet in the doon drawn broos an een fu o blaik lowe, bit it wis smored; an his mainner wis even dignifeed: aathegither tint o rochness, tho stern fur grace. Ma maister’s begeck equalled or wis mair than mine: he bedd fur a meenit nae kennin foo tae spikk tae the ploo loon, as he’d caaed him. Heathcliff drappit his slicht haun, an stude luikin at him cweely till he chuse tae spikk.

‘Sit doon, sir,’ quo he. ‘Mrs. Linton, myndin on auld times, wid hae me gie ye a frienly walcam; an, of coorse, I’m gratifeed fin onythin that happens tae please her.’

‘As dae I,’ reponed Heathcliff, ‘speecially gin it be onythin in which I hae a pairt. I’ll bide an oor or twa wullinly.’

He dowpit doon opposite Kirsty, fa keepit her een fixed on him as gin she wis feart he wid vanish wir she tae remove them. He didnae raise his tae her aften: a faist glisk noo an again wis eneuch; bit it bleezed back, ilkie time mair confidently, the unhappit delicht he drank frae hers. They wir ower taen up wi thisels tae takk tent o Linton, he grew fite wi ill natur, a feelin that reached its heicht fin his leddy rose, an steppin ben the basse, grippit Heathcliff’s hauns again, an leuch like a gype.

‘I’ll think it a dwaum the morn!’ she cried. ‘I winna be able tae believe that I hae seen, an touched, an spukken tae ye aince mair. An yet, coorse Heathcliff! ye dinna warrant this walcam. Tae be awa an seelent fur three years, an niver tae think o me!’

‘A bittie mair than ye hae thocht o me,’ he mummlit. ‘I heard o yer mairriage, Kirsty, nae lang syne; an, fin wytin in the yaird ablow, I conseedered this plan—jist tae hae ae glisk o yer face, a luik o begeck mebbe, an makk on pleisur; efterwirds sattle ma score wi Hindley; an syne forestaa the law bi daein awa wi masel. Yer walcam his pit thon notions ooto ma harns; bit takk tent o meetin me wi anither luik neist time! Na, ye’ll nae drive me aff again. Ye wir rael sorry fur me, wir ye? Weel, there wis cause. I’ve focht ben a wersh life since I last heard yer vyce; an ye maun forgie me, fur I warssled anely fur ye!’

‘Kirsty, unless we’re tae hae cauld tea, please cam tae the brod,’ brukk in Linton, ettlin tae preserve his ordnar tone, an a due meisur o politeness. ‘Mr. Heathcliff’ll hae a lang wauk, finiver he micht ludge the nicht; an I’m drouthy.’

She tuik her post afore the urn; an Miss Isabella cam, lippenin tae the bell; syne, haein haundit their cheers forrit, I left the chaumer. The meal didnae laist ten meenits. Kirsty’s cup wis niver fulled: she couldnae ett nor drink. Edgar hid vrocht a slop in his saucer, an scarce swallaed a moufu. Their guest didnae bide thon evenin abune an oor langer. I speired, as he depairtit, gin he gaed tae Gimmerton?

‘Na, tae Whudderin Heichts,’ he reponed: ‘Mr. Earnshaw socht me, fin I cried inbye this foreneen.’

Mr. Earnshaw socht *him*! an *he* cried inbye on Mr. Earnshaw! I conseedered this sentence painfu, efter he wis gaen. Is he turnin oot a bittie o a heepocrite, an camin intae the kintra tae wirk ill unner a plaid? I mused: I hid a feelin in the boddom o ma hairt that he’d better hae bidden awa.

Aboot the mids o the nicht, I wis wakkened frae ma first nap bi Mrs. Linton camin intae ma chaumer, takkin a seat on my bedside, an puin me bi the hair tae steer me.

‘I canna rest, Ellen,’ quo she, bi wey o apology. ‘An I wint some leevin craitur tae jyne in ma blytheness! Edgar is huffin, because I’m gled o a maitter that doesnae interest him: he winna open his mou, cept tae spikk footerie, gyte spikks; an he telt me I wis coorse an selfish fur wintin tae blether fin he wis sae seek an sleepy. He aywis ettles tae be seek at the first cross! I gaed a fyew sentences o praise tae Heathcliff, an he, either fur a sair heid or a stang o envy, stertit tae greet: sae I got up an left him.’

‘Fit eese is it reezin Heathcliff oot tae him?’ I reponed. ‘As loons they could thole ane anither, an Heathcliff wid hate jist as much tae hear him reesed oot: it’s human natur. Lat Mr. Linton alane aboot him, unless ye’d like a richt fecht atween them.

‘Bit dis it nae shaw great dweebleness?’she gaed on. ‘I’m nae jealous: I niver feel hurtit at the brichtness o Isabella’s yalla hair an the fiteness o her skin, at her deinty bonnieness, an the fondness aa the faimly shaw fur her. Even ye, Nelly, gin we hae a faain oot whyles, ye back Isabella at aince; an I yield like a daft mither: I caa her a dearie, an flatter her intae gweed natur. It pleases her brither tae see us frienly, an thon pleases me. Bit they’re unca alike: they’re twa spyled bairns, an think the warld wis vrocht fur them; an tho I saft soap baith, I think a smert scauldin micht better them aa the same.’

‘Ye’re mistaen, Mrs. Linton,’ quo I. ‘They humour ye: I ken the tirrivee there’d be gin they didnae. Ye can weel afford tae lat them hae their antrin fancies as lang’s they gie wey tae aa yer wints. Ye micht, hoosaeiver, faa oot, at the hinnereyn, ower somethin o equal maitter tae baith sides; an syne them ye caa peely wally are verra like tae be as thrawn as ye.’

‘An syne we’ll fecht tae the daith, sae we will, eh, Nelly?’ she reponed, lauchin. ‘Na! I tell ye, I hae sic faith in Linton’s luve, that I believe I micht kill him, an he widnae wint tae retaliate.’

I coonselled her tae value him the mair fur his luve.

‘I dae,’ she telt me, ‘bit he neednae faa back on girnin fur nochtie ferlies. It’s bairnie an, insteid o meltin intae greets because I said that Heathcliff wis noo wirthy o onybody’s regaird, an it wid honour the first laird in the kintra tae be his frien, he oucht tae hae said it fur me, an bin delichtit frae sympathy. He maun get eesed tae him, an he micht as weel like him: conseederin foo Heathcliff his rizzon tae objeck tae him, I’m siccar he behaved brawly!’

‘Fit d’ye think o his gaun to Whudderin Heichts?’ I speired. ‘He’s cheenged in ilkie respeck: a rael Christian: offerin the richt haun o frienship tae his faes aa aroon!’

‘He explained it,’ she reponed. ‘I winner as muckle as ye. He telt me he cried inbye tae gaither lear consarnin me frae ye, jelousin ye still bedd there; an Joseph telt Hindley, fa cam oot an speired at him fit he’d bin daein an foo he’d bin leevin; an at the hinnereyn, socht him in. There wis a puckle o fowk playin cairds; Heathcliff jyned them; ma brither tint some siller tae him, an, finnin him rich eneuch, he socht him back in the evenin: an he agreed. Hindley is ower reckless tae wyle his fiers cannily: he doesnae tribble himsel tae refleck on the rizzons he micht hae fur mistrustin ane fa he’s coorsely hurtit. Bit Heathcliff tells me his main aim fur restertin a link wi his auncient persecutor is wintin tae bide at waukin distance frae the Grange, an a likin fur the hoose far we bedd thegither; an likewise a hope that I’ll hae mair chaunces o seein him thonner than I could hae gin he sattled in Gimmerton. He means tae gie gweed peyment fur ludgin at the Heichts; an dootless ma brither’s greed’ll prompt him tae accept the terms: he wis aywis greedy; tho fit he grips wi ae haun he haives awa wi the ither.’

‘It’s a braw airt fur a young chiel tae bide!’ quo I. ‘Hae ye nae fear o the ootcam, Mrs. Linton?’

‘Nane fur ma frien,’ she reponed: ‘his strang heid’ll keep him frae ill; a bittie fur Hindley: bit he canna be made waur than he is; an I staun atween him an bodily hairm. This nicht his reconciled me tae God an mankind! I hid risen in angeret rebellion agin ma Weird. Och, I’ve tholed verra, verra wersh wae Nelly! Gin thon craitur kent foo wersh he’d be blate tae spyle its removal wi idle huffin. It wis kindness fur him that gart me thole it alane: hid I spukken the agony I aften felt, he wid hae langed fur its easin as strangly as masel. Hoosaeiver, it’s ower, an I’ll takk nae revenge on his daftness; I can afford tae thole onythin noo! Should the meanest ferlie leevin skelp me on the chikk, I’d nae anely turn the ither, bit I’d prig pardon fur provokin it; an, as a pruif, I’ll gae makk ma peace wi Edgar straicht aff. Gweed-nicht! I’m an angel!’

In this self-satisfeed state she depairtit; an the success o her fulfilled resolution wis clear neist day: Mr. Linton hidnae anely stoppit huffin (tho his speerits seemed still quaetened bi Kirsty’s owerpouerin virr), bit he didnae objeck tae her takkin Isabella wi her tae Whudderin Heichts in the efterneen; an she rewarded him wi sic a simmer o douceness an luve in return as made the hoose a paradise fur a wheen days; baith maister an servants gainin frae the ongaun sunsheen.

Heathcliff—Mr. Heathcliff I should say noo—tuik tae veesitin Thrushcross Grange cannily, at first: he seemed tae be wirkin oot foo far its ainer wid thole his incams. Kirsty, as weel, thocht it best tae damp doon her splairges o pleisure in meetin him; an he slawly established his richt tae be expeckit. He keepit muckle o the reserve that merked his bairnhood; an thon served tae haud back aa bumbazin ootbursts o feelin. My maister’s uneasiness tuik a steppie back, an farrer maitters divertit it intae anither channel fur a whylie

His new soorce o tribble cam frae the unthocht misfortune o Isabella Linton shawin o a suddenty an owerpouerin likin o the tolerated guest. She wis at thon time a chermin young leddy o eichteen; bairn like in mainners, tho wi keen wit, keen feelins, an a keen roose, as weel, gin vexed. Her brither, fa lued her weel, wis affrontit at this fey likin. Leavin aside the dooncam o a waddin wi a nemmeless chiel, an the fack that his gear, gin he’d nae male heirs, micht pass intae sic a chiel’s pouer, he’d mense tae unnerstaun Heathcliff’s natur: tae ken that, tho his luiks wir cheenged, his harns wir uncheengeable an uncheenged. An he dreidit thon harns: they gart him grue: he cooried forebodin frae the thocht o haunin Isabella tae their keepin. He’d hae bin gart grue still mair hid he kent that her likin wis unsocht, an wis gaen far it waukened nae reciprocation o feelin; fur the meenit he kent foo matters stude, he pit the blame on Heathcliff’s plottin.

We’d aa remairked, fur a whylie, that Miss Linton girned an dwined ower somethin. She grew ill naturet an scunnerin; snappin at an deavin Kirsty aywis, at the risk o brakkin doon her leemited patience. We excused her, a thochtie , bi rizzon o ill-health: she wis dwinin an crinin afore oor een. Bit ae day, fin she’d bin byordnar cwanter, nae takkkin her brakkfaist, girnin that the servants didnae dae fit she telt them; that the mistress wid lat her be naethin in the hoose, an Edgar negleckit her; that she’d catched a cauld wi the yetts bein left ajee, an we lat the parlour lowe gae oot tae misfit her, wi a hunner yet mair nochtie accusations, Mrs. Linton straicht aff sent her aff tae bed; an, haein scaulded her hairtily, threatened tae sen fur the doctor. Mention o Kenneth gart her tae say, that her health wis perfeck, an it wis anely Kirsty’s nestiness that gart her grue ‘Foo can ye say thon, ye ill trickit pettit craitur?’cired the mistress, bumbazed at the unrizzonable spikk. ‘Ye’ve gaen gyte. Fan hae I bin nesty, tell me?’

‘Yestreen,’ sabbit Isabella, ‘an noo!’

‘Yestreen!’ quo her sister-in-law. ‘Fan?’

‘In oor wauk alang the muir: ye telt me tae stravaig far I likit fin ye daundered on wi Mr. Heathcliff?’

‘An thon’s yer notion o nestiness?’ speired Kirsty, lauchin. ‘It wis nae hint that yer company wis unnecessar? We didnae care gin ye keepit wi us or nae; I jist thocht Heathcliff’s spikk wid hae naethin o pleisur fur yer lugs.’

‘Na na,’ grat the young quine; ‘ye wintit me awa, because ye kent I likit tae be thonner!’

‘Is she gyte?’ speired Mrs. Linton, tae me. ‘I’ll repeat wir bletherin, wird fur wird, Isabella; an ye can wyle oot ony cherm it could hae hid fur ye.’

‘I dinna care aboot the sklaik,’ she reponed: ‘I wintit tae be wi—’

“Weel?’ quo Kirsty seein her dauchle at feenishin the sentence.

‘Wi him: an I winna be aywis sent aff!’ she gaed on, kittlin up. ‘Yer are a dug in the manger, Kirsty, an wint naebody tae be lued bit yersel!’

‘Yer an uppity wee puggie!’ cried Mrs. Linton, in begeck. ‘Bit I’ll nae believe this daftness! It’s impossible that ye can wint the luve o Heathcliff—that ye conseeder him a braw body! I hope I hae mistaen ye, Isabella?’

‘Na, ye hinna,’ quo the infatuatit quine. ‘I lue him mair than iver ye lued Edgar, an he micht lue me, gin ye wid lat him!’

‘I widnae be ye fur a kingdom!’ Kirsty cried, forcie: an she seemed tae spikk sincere. ‘Nelly, help me tae convince her o her gyteness. Tell her fit Heathcliff is: an unreclaimed craitur, wioot genteelity, wioot lear; a dreich wudness o breem an whuns. I’d as sune pit thon wee canary intae the park on a winter’s day, as lat ye gie yer hairt tae him! It’s a sorry miskennin o his character, bairn, an naethin else, that makks thon dwaum enter yer heid. Na, dinna think that he haps depths o gweedness an douceness aneth a stern front! He’s nae a roch diamond—a pearl-haudin oyster o a teuchter: he’s a fierce, peetiless, wolfish chiel. I niver say tae him, “Lat this or thon fae alane, because it wid be ungenerous or coorse tae herm them;” I say, “Lat them alane, because *I* should hate them tae be wranged:” an he’d brakk ye like a spurgie’s egg, Isabella, gin he fand ye a tribblesome chairge. I ken he couldnae lue a Linton; an yet he’d be quite up tae mairryin yer siller an hopes: greed is growin wi him a besettin sin. There’s ma pictur: an I’m his frien—sae much sae, that hid he thocht seriously tae catch ye, I should, mebbe, hae bedd quaet, an lat ye faa intae his trap.’

Miss Linton regairdit her sister-in-law wi rooze.

‘Ye should be affrontit!’ she repeatit, angeret. ‘Ye’re waur than twinty faes, ye pysonous frien!’

‘Ach! ye winna believe me, syne?’ quo Kirsty. ‘Ye think I spikk frae coorse selfishness?’

‘I’m siccar ye dae,’ reponed Isabella; ‘an I shudder at ye!’

‘Gweed!’ cried the ither. ‘Try fur yersel, gin thon be yer speerit: I hae dane, an yield the maitter tae yer unca insolence.’

‘An I maun thole her egotism!’ she sabbit, as Mrs. Linton left the chaumer. ‘Aa, aa is agin me: she’s blichtit ma lane consolation. Bit she spakk lees, didn’t she? Mr. Heathcliff is nae a deevil: he his an honourable sowel, an a true ane, or foo could he mynd her?’

‘Pit him ooto yer thochts, Miss,’ quo I. ‘He’s a bird o ill omen: nae man fur ye. Mrs. Linton spakk forcie, bit I canna cwanter her. She’s better acquant wi his hairt than masel, or ony ither body; an she niver wid peint him as waur than he is. Honest fowk dinna hap their deeds. Foo his he bin leevin? foo his he gotten siller? foo is he bidin at Whudderin Heichts, the hoose o a cheil fa he hates? They say Mr. Earnshaw is waur an waur since he cam. They sit up aa nicht thegether aywis, an Hindley’s bin borraein siller on his lan, an daes naethin bit play an drink: I heard anely a wikk syne—it wis Joseph fa telt me—I met him at Gimmerton: “Nelly,” quo he, “we hae a richt coroner’s inquest noo, at the Heichts’. Ane o them’s near gotten his finger cut aff wi haudin the ither frae stabbin himsel like a cawf. That’s maister, ye ken, fa’s ’aye gaun ower the tap in maitters. He’s nae feart o a bench o judges, neither Paul, nur Peter, nur John, nur Matthew, nor ony o them, nae him! He fair likes—he langs tae set his brazened face agin them! An thon bonnie lad Heathcliff, ye mind, he’s a rare kind. He can girn a lauch as weel’s onybody at a richt deevil’s jest. Daes he niver say nocht o his fine leevin amang us, fin he gaes tae the Grange? This is the wey o’t:—up at sunset: dice, brandy, steekit windaes, an caunle-licht till neist day at noon: syne the gype gangs bannin an rantin tae his chaumer, makkin decent fowks stap their fingers in their lugs fur verra affront; an the vratch, weel he can coont his siller, an ett, an sleep, an aff tae his neebor’s tae sklaik wi the wife. Of course, he tells Mistress Kirsty foo her faither’s gowd rins intae his pooch, an her faither’s son gallops doon the braid road, whyle he flees afore tae lowse the yetts!” Noo, Miss Linton, Joseph’s an auld scunner, bit nae leear; an, gin his accoont o Heathcliff’s ongauns be true, ye wid niver think o wintin sic a man, wid ye?’

‘Ye’re like the lave, Ellen!’ she reponed. ‘I’ll nae lippen tae yer lees. Fit evil ye maun hae tae ettle tae convince me there’s nae blytheness in the warld!’

Gin she’d hae gotten ower this fancy, left tae herself, or nursed it ongaun, I canna say: she’d sma time tae refleck. The day efter, there wis a justice-tryst at the neist toon; ma maister wis obleeged tae attend; an Mr. Heathcliff, kennin o his absence, veesited raither earlier than ordnar. Kirsty an Isabella wir dowpit in the librar, on ill terms, bit seelent: the latter fleggit at her recent spikk, an the disclosure she’d made o her secret feelins in a passin fit o passion; the former, on serious thocht, raelly misfittit wi her fier; an, gin she leuch again at her chikk, inclined tae makk it nae lauchin maitter tae her. She did lauch as she saw Heathcliff pass the windae. I wis swypin the hairth, and I tuik tent o an ill trickit smile on her mou. Isabella, deep in her thochts, or a buik, bedd till the yett opened; an it wis ower late tae ettle tae escape, that she’d gledly hae dane gin she could.

‘Cam in, that’s richt!’ quo the mistress, blythely, ruggin a cheer tae the lowe. ‘Here are twa fowk sair in need o a third tae thaw the ice aween them; an ye’re the verra ane we should baith o us chuse. Heathcliff, I’m prood tae shaw ye, at last, somebody that adores ye mair than masel. I expeck ye tae feel flattered. Na, it’s nae Nelly; dinna luik at her! Ma puir wee sister-in-law is brakkin her hairt bi jist thinkin o yer pheesical an moral brawness. It’s in yer pouer tae be Edgar’s brither! Na, na, Isabella, ye winna rin aff,’ she gaed on, blockin, wi makk on playfulness, the affrontit quine, fa’d risen indignant like. ‘We wir argyin like cats aboot ye, Heathcliff; an I wis fairly threwshed in spikkins o devotion an admiration: an, mairower, I wis telt that gin I’d hae the mainners tae staun aside, ma rival, as she’d hae hersel tae be, wid sheet a shaft intae yer sowel that wid fix ye foraye, an sen ma face intae ongaun derkness!’

‘Kirsty!’ cried Isabella, caain up her pride, an nae warsslin frae the ticht grip that held her, ‘I’d thank ye tae bide tae the truith an nae slander me, even in fun! Mr. Heathcliff, be gweed eneuch tae badd this frien o yours tae release me: she forgets that ye an I arenae close friens; an fit amuses her is painfu tae me ayont tellin.’

As the veesitor didnae spikk, bit tuik his seat, an luikit aathegither uncarin as tae fit feelins she held fur him, she turned an fuspered an earnest priggin fur freedom tae her tormentor.

‘Na na!’ cried Mrs. Linton in repon. ‘I winna be caad a dug in the manger again. You *will* bide: noo syne! Heathcliff, foo dae ye nae shaw pleisure at ma braw news? Isabella sweirs that the luve Edgar his fur me is naethin tae that she hauds fur ye. I’m siccar she made some spikk o the kind; did she nae, Ellen? An she’s fasted iver since the day afore yestreen’s wauk, frae sorra an rooze that I sent her awa frae ye unner the idea o its bein unacceptable.’

‘I think yer wrang,’ quo Heathcliff, turnin his cheer tae face them. ‘She wiints awa frae noo in ony event!’

An he glowered hard at the objeck o their blethers, as ye micht dae at a fey scunnersome breet: a centipede frae the Indies, mebbe, that ill fashence leads ye tae examine in spite o the scunner it raises. The puir craitur couldnae thole thon; she grew fite an reid in faist succession, an, as tears wattit her lashes, bood the virr o her wee fingers tae lowse the firm grip o Kirsty; an seein that as faist as she heistit ae finger aff her airm anither closed doon, an she coulnae remove the hale thegether, she stertit tae makk eese o her nails; an their sherpness sune ornamented Kirst’s haun wi crescents o reid.

‘Here’s a tigress!’ quo Mrs. Linton, settin her lowse, an shakkin her haun wi pain. ‘Awa, fur God’s sake, an hap yer tod’s face! Foo daft tae shaw thon cleuks tae *him*. Can ye fancy the thochts he’ll makk? Luik, Heathcliff! They’re cleuks that will dae herm—ye maun takk tent o yer een.’

‘I’d yark them aff her fingers, gin they iver menaced me,’ he reponed, rochly, fin the yett hid steeked ahin her. ‘Bit fit did ye mean bi teasin the craitur in thon mainner, Kirsty? ye werenae spikkin the truith, wir ye?’

‘Oh bit I wis,’ she telt him. ‘She’s bin deein fur your sake a puckle wikks, an rantin aboot ye this foreneen, an poorin furth a flood o abuse, because I shawed yer failins in a braid licht, tae tamp doon her adoration. Bit dinna takk tent o it farrer: I wintit tae punish her sauciness, thon’s aa. I like her ower weel, ma dear Heathcliff, tae lat ye aathegither seize an ett her up.’

‘An I like her ower ill tae dae it,’ quo he, ‘barrin in an unca ghoulish wey. Ye’d hear o fey ongauns gin I bedd alane wi thon peelywally, waxen face: the maist ordnar wid be peintin on its fite the colours o the wattergaw, an turnin the blae een blaik, ilkie day or twa: they luik scunnersomely like Linton’s.’

‘Delichtfu!’ Kirsty reponed. ‘They’re doo’s een—angel’s!’

‘She’s her brither’s heir, is she nae?’ he speired, efter a thochtie’s seelence.

‘I’d be sorry tae think sae,’ she telt him ‘Hauf a dizzen nephews’ll dicht awa her title, please heiven! Cheenge the subject: ye’re ower prone tae wint yer neebour’s gear; mynd *this* neebour’s gear is mine.’

‘Gin they wir *mine*, they wid be nane the less that,’ quo Heathcliff; ‘bit tho Isabella Linton micht be daft, she’s nae gyte; an, in short, we’ll feenish spikkin aboot it.’

Frae their spikk they did dismiss it; an Kirsty, nae doot, frae her thochts. The ither, I felt siccar, myndit it aften ben the evenin. I saw him smile tae himsel—grin raither—an fa intae grim thocht finiver Mrs. Linton left the chaumer.

I set masel tae watch his meevements. Ma hairt chose ma maister’s, rather than Kirsty’s side: wi rizzon I thocht, fur he wis kind, an leal, an honourable; an she—she couldnae be caad *opposite*, yet she seemed tae gie herself sic wide latitude, that I’d sma faith in her principles, an still less sympathy fur her feelins. I wintit somethin tae happen that micht hae the effeck o freein baith Whudderin Heichts an the Grange o Mr. Heathcliff quaetly; leavin us as we’d bin afore his incam. His veesits wir an ongaun widdendreme tae me; an, I jeloused, tae ma maister as weel. His bidin at the Heichts wis a wecht by explainin. I felt that God hid lat the stray sheep thonner tae its ain coorse wannerins, an a coorse breet prowled atween it an the fauld, wytin his time tae lowp an feenish it aff.

“The Milk-Bluidit Feartie”

**Chapter 11**

Whyles, fin thinkin ower thon maitters fin alane, I’ve gotten up o a suddenty in terror, an pit on ma bunnet tae gae an see foo aathin wis at the ferm. I’ve perswadit masel that it wis ma place tae warn him foo fowk spakk regairdin his weys; an syne I’ve myndit his set coorse weys, an, wi nae hope o improvin him, hae jouked frae enterin again thon dowie hoose, dootin gin I could thole tae be taen at ma wird.

Ae time I passed the auld yett, gaun ooto ma wey, on a traivel tae Gimmerton. It wis aboot the time that ma tale his reached: a bricht cauld efterneen; the grun bare, an the road hard an dry. I cam tae a stane far the highwey forks aff ontae the muir at yer left haun; a roch san-pillar, wi the letters W. H. cuttit on its nor side, on the east, G., an on the sooth-wast, T. G. It serves as a guide tae the Grange, the Heichts, an clachan. The sun sheened yalla on its grey heid, myndin me o simmer; an I canna say foo, bit aa at aince a heeze o bairn-like feelins cam intae ma hairt. Hindley an masel held it a favourite neuk twinty years afore. I luikit lang at the weathered block; an, booin doon, spied a hole near the boddom still stappit wi snail-shells an stanes, that we likit tae store thonner wi mair perishable ferlie; an, as fresh as reality, it seemed that I could see ma early playmate dowpit on the wizzened girse: his derk, squar heid booed forrit, an his wee haun scoopin oot the yird wi a daud o sclate. ‘Puir Hindley!’ I cried, involuntary-like. I jinkit: ma bodily ee wis swickit intae a meenit’s belief that the bairn heistit its face an glowered straicht intae mine! It vanished in a glisk; bit straicht aff I felt an owerpouerin langin tae be at the Heichts. Superstition gart me follae this impulse: suppose he wis deid! I thocht—or should be sune—supposin it wis a warnin o daith! The nearer I won tae the hoose the mair steered up I grew; an on catchin sicht o it I trimmlit in ilkie limb. The ghaist hid ootran me: it stude luikin throwe the yett. Thon wis ma first idea on seein an elf-curled, broon-eed loon pittin his reid chikks agin the bars. Deeper thocht suggestit this maun be Hareton, *my* Hareton, nae muckle cheenged since I left him, ten months syne.

‘God bless ye, dearie’ I cried, forgettin richt aff ma daft fears. ‘Hareton, it’s Nelly! Nelly, yer nurse.’

He wauked ooto airm’s length, an heistit up a muckle flint.

‘I’m cam tae see yer faither, Hareton,’ I addit, jelousin frae the action that Nelly, gin she bedd in his myndin at aa, wisnae kent as bein masel.

He heistit his wappon tae hurl it; I stertit a soothin spikk, bit couldnae stop his haun: the stane strukk ma bunnet; an syne cam, frae the hubberin lips o the wee craitur, a rowth o banns, that, whether he kent them or nae, wir spukken wi ease, an thrawed his babby features intae an awfu luik o deevilishness. Ye may ken this grieved mair than angeret me. Fit tae greet, I tuik an orange frae ma pooch, an offered it tae win him ower. He dauchled, an syne snatched it frae ma haun; as gin he thocht I anely intendit tae tempt an disappynt him. I shawed anither, keepin it ooto his reach.

‘Fa’s larned ye thon fine wirds, ma bairn?’ I speired. ‘The meenister?’

‘Damn the meenister, an ye! Gie me thon,’ he reponed.

‘Tell’s far ye got yer lessons, an ye’ll hae it,’ quo I. ‘Fa’s yer dominie?’

‘Deevil da,’ wis his repon.

‘An fit dae ye larn frae da?’ I gaed on.

He lowpit at the fruit; I heistit it heich. ‘Fit dis he teach ye?’ I speired.

‘Nocht,’ quo he, ‘bit tae bide ooto his wey. Da canna thole me, because I sweir at him.’

‘Ah! an the deevil larns ye tae sweir at da?’ I remairked.

‘Ay—na,’ he hubbered.

‘Fa, syne?’

‘Heathcliff.’

‘I speired gin he likit Mr. Heathcliff.’

‘Ay!’ he telt me.

Wintin tae hae his rizzons fur likin him, I could anely gaither the sentences ‘I ken it he peys da back fit he gaes tae me—he banns da fur bannin me. He sez I maun dae as I like.’

‘An the meenister doesnae larn ye tae read an write, syne?’ I gaed on.

‘Na, I wis telt the meenister should hae his — teeth duntit doon his — thrapple, gin he steppit ower the threshauld; Heathcliff hid promised thon!’

I pit the orange in his haun, an badd him tell his faither that a wumman caaed Nelly Dean wis wytin tae spikk wi him, bi the gairden yett. He gaed up the wauk intae the hoose; bit, insteid o Hindley, Heathcliff appeared on the door-stanes; an I turned direck an ran down the road as hard as iver I could race, makkin nae devaul till I won the guide-post, an feelin as feart as gin I’d raised a broonie. This isnae muckle conneckit wi Miss Isabella’s affair: cept that it gart me staun greater guaird, an daein ma hardest tae check the spreid o sic coorse influence at the Grange: even tho I should wauken a domestic stoooshie, bi thwartin Mrs. Linton’s pleisur.

The neist time Heathcliff cam ma young leddy chaunced tae be feedin a puckle doos in the coort. She’d niver spukken a wird tae her sister-in-law fur three days; bit she’d likewise drappit her fretfu girnin, an we fand it a great comfort. Heathcliff hidnae the wey o giein a single unnecessar ceevility on Miss Linton, I kent. Noo, as sune as he saw her, his first step wis tae takk a swypin luik o the hoose-front. I wis staunin bi the kitchie-windae, bit I drew oot o sicht. He syne steppit ower the pavement tae her, an spakk somethin: she seemed affrontit, an sikkin tae win awa; tae stop it, he pit his haun on her airm. She turned awa her face: he seemed tae pit some speirin that she’d nae mind tae repon tae. There wis anither faist glisk at the hoose, an jelousin himsel unseen, the vratch hid the impidence tae bosie her.

‘Judas! Traitor!’ I cried. ‘Ye’re a hypocrite, as weel, are ye? A deliberate leear.’

‘Fa is, Nelly?’ speired Kirsty’s vyce at ma elbuck: I’d been ower-taen up watchin the pair ootbye tae merk her incam.

‘Yer wirthless frien!’ I reponed, warmly: ‘thon ill-daein vratch thonner. Ah, he’s catched a sicht o us—he’s camin in! I winner will he hae the hairt tae finn a likely rizzon fur makkin luve tae Miss, fin he told ye he hatit her?’

Mrs. Linton saw Isabella teir hersel free, an ran intae the gairden; an a meenit efter, Heathcliff opened the yett. I couldnae haud back giein some lowse tae ma rooze; bit Kirsty angeret insisted on seelence, an threatened tae sen me ooto the kitchie, gin I daured tae be sae uppity as tae say mair.

‘Tae lippen tae ye, fowk micht think ye wir the mistress!’ she cried. ‘Ye wint settin doon in yer richt place! Heathcliff, fit are ye aboot, raisin this stooshie? I said ye maun lat Isabella alane!—I prig that ye will, unless ye’re trauchelt o bein received here, an wish Linton tae draw the snibs agin ye!’

‘God forbid that he’d try!’ reponed the blaik deevil. I hatit him jist then. ‘God keep him meek an patient! Ilkie day I growe wudder efter sendin him tae heiven!’

‘Wheesht!’ quo Kirsty, steekin the inbye yett! ‘Dinna vex me. Foo hae ye disregairded ma wishes? Did she cam across ye on purpose?’

‘Fit is it tae ye?’ he gurred. ‘I hae a richt tae kiss her, gin she chuses; an ye hae nae richt tae maen. I’m nae *yer* man *ye* neednae be jealous o me!’

‘I’m nae jealous *o* ye,’ reponed the mistress; ‘I’m jealous *fur* ye. Clear yer face: ye winna glower at me! Gin ye like Isabella, ye’ll mairry her. Bit dae ye like her? Tell the truith, Heathcliff! There, ye winna repon I’m siccar ye dinna.

‘An wid Mr. Linton approve o his sister mairryin that cheil?’ I speired.

‘Mr. Linton wid approve,’ quo ma leddy,forcie-like.

‘He micht save himsel the tribble,’ quo Heathcliff: ‘I could dae as weel wioot his say-so. An as tae ye, Kirsty, I hae a mind tae spikk a fyew wirds noo, while we’re at it. I wint ye tae be awaur that I *ken* ye hae treatit me infernally—infernally! D’ye lippen? An gin ye flatter yersel that I dinnae ken it, ye’re a gype; an gin ye think I can be saft soaped bi swete wirds, ye’re a gype: an gin ye think I’ll suffer unrevenged, I’ll shaw ye the contrar, in a verra wee while! Betimes, thank ye fur tellin me yer sister-in-law’s secret: I sweir I’ll makk the maist o it. An staun ye aside!’

‘Fit new style o his natur is this?’ cried Mrs. Linton, bumbazed. ‘I’ve treated ye infernally—an ye’ll takk yer revenge! Foo will ye takk it, ungratefu breet? Foo hae I treatit ye infernally?’

‘I sikk nae revenge on ye,’ reponed Heathcliff, less forcie. ‘Thon’s nae the plan. The tyrant grinds doon his slaves an they dinna turn agin him; they crush thon fowk aneath them. Ye’re walcam tae torture me tae daith fur yer pleisur, anely lat me amuse masel a bittie in the same wey, an haud back frae insult as much as ye can. Haein levelled ma palace, dinna bigg a sheddie an admire yer ain charity in giein me thon fur a hame. Gin I imagined ye really wintit me tae mairry Isabel, I’d cut ma thrapple!’

‘Oh, the evil is that I’m *nae* jealous, is it?’ cried Kirsty. ‘Weel, I winna repeat ma offer o a wife: it’s as coorse as offerin Auld Hornie a tint sowel. Yer bliss lies, like his, in inflictin wae. Ye pruve it. Edgar is cheenged frae the ill-natur he gaed wey tae at yer camin; I begin to be siccar an calm; an ye, restless tae ken us at peace, seem set on steerin up an argy bargy. Fecht wi Edgar, gin ye please, Heathcliff, an deceive his sister: ye’ll hit on exack the best wey o revengin yersel on me.’

The blether stoppit. Mrs. Linton sat doon bi the lowe, reid faced an dowie. Her speerit wis growin thrawn: she couldnae lay nor control it. He stude on the hairth wi fauldit arims, broodin on his ill thochts; an in this state I left them tae finn the master, fa wis winnerin fit keepit Kirsty ablow sae lang.

‘Ellen,’ quo he, fin I entered, ‘hae ye seen yer mistress?’

‘Aye; she’s in the kitchie, sir,’ I reponed. ‘She’s sair pit oot bi Mr. Heathcliff’s behaviour: an, mairower I dae think it’s time tae arreenge his veesits on anither fittin. There’s hairm in bein ower saft, an noo it’s cam tae this—’ An I telt him o the scene in the coort, an, as near as I daured, the hale ongaun dispute. I thocht it couldnae be verra prejudicial tae Mrs. Linton; unless she vrocht it sae efterwirds, bi assumin the defensive for her guest. Edgar Linton hid deefficulty lippenin tae the eyn. His first wirds shawed that he didnae clear his wife o blame.

‘This is nae tae be tholed!’ he cried. ‘It’s an affront that she’d ain him fur a frien, an force his company on me! Cry me twa chiels ooto the haa, Ellen. Kirsty winna dauchle langer tae argy wi thon ne’er dae weel—I’ve humoured her eneuch.’

He cam doon, an badd the servants wyte in the lobby, an gaed, follaed bi me, tae the kitchie. Its occupants hid restertit their angeret spikk: Mrs. Linton, at least, wis scauldin wi renewed virr; Heathcliff hid meeved tae the windae, an hung his heid, a thochtie quaetened bi her forcie rantin apparently. He saw the maister first, an made a faist meevement that she should be seelent; that she obeyed, smertly, on finnin oot the rizzon.

‘Foo’s this?’ speired Linton o her; ‘fit notion o fit’s richt maun ye hae tae bide here, efter the wirds spukken tae ye bi thon deil? I jelouse, because it’s his ordinar spikk ye think naethin o it: ye’re are eesed tae his orra wyes, an, mebbe, think I can get eesed tae it as weel!’

‘Hae ye bin lippenin at the yett, Edgar?’ socht the mistress, in a tone particular set tae roose her man, a hint o baith carelessness an contempt at his anger. Heathcliff, fa’d heistit his een at the former spikk, gaed a sneerin lauch at the latter; meant, it seemed, tae draw Mr. Linton’s thochts tae him. He succeeded; bit Edgar didnae mean tae entertain him wi ony heich flichts o passion.

‘I’ve bin sae far forbearin wi ye, sir,’ quo he quaet; ‘nae that I didnae ken o your scunnersome, deevilish natur, bit I felt ye wir anely pairtly responsible fur thon; an Kirsty wintin tae haud up yer frienship, I lat her—daftly. Yer presence is a moral pyson that wid spyle the maist virtuous: fur thon cause, an tae prevent waur ootcams, I deny ye hereaifter incam tae this hoose, an gie notice noo that I sikk yer straicht aff depairture. Three meenits’ devaul will mak it involuntar an ugsome.

Heathcliff meisured the heicht an braidth o the spikker wi an ee fu o contempt.

‘Kirsty, this lammie o yers threatens like a bull!’ quo he. ‘It’s in danger o brakkin its skull agin ma neive. Hell’s teeth! Mr. Linton, I’m unca sorry that ye’re nae wirth caain doon!’

Ma maister keeked tae the lobby, an signed me tae fetch the men: he’d nae intent o haein a personal fecht. I obeyed the hint; bit Mrs. Linton, suspeckin somethin, follaed; an fin I ettled tae caa them, she rugged me back, yarked the yett tee, an snibbit it.

‘Fair means!’ quo she, in repon tae her man’s luik o angered bumbazement. ‘Gin ye hinna virr tae fecht him, makk an apologee, or lat yersel be threwshed. It’ll stop ye claimin mair virr than ye ain. Na, I’ll swallae the key afore ye’ll get it! I’m delichtfu rewarded fur ma kindness tae baith o ye! Efter ongaun tholin o ane’s dweeble natur, an the ither’s coorse ane, I earn fur thanks twa samples o blin thanklessness, gyte tae absurdity! Edgar, I wis defendin ye an yers; an I wish Heathcliff micht threwsh ye seek, fur daurin tae think a coorse thocht o me!’

It didnae need a threwshin tae makk thon effeck on the maister. He ettled tae warssle the key frae Kirsty’s grip, an fur safety she flang it intae the hettest pairt o the lowe; an syne Mr. Edgar wis taen wi a nervous chitterin, an his face grew deidly pale. Spite o aa he couldnae hide thon excess o emotion: minglin wae an affront owercam him aathegither. He leant on the back o a cheer, an happit his face.

‘Och, heivens! Langsyne this wid win ye a knichthood!’ quo Mrs. Linton. ‘We’re owercam! We’re owercam! Heathcliff wid as sune lift a finger at ye as the king wid merch his airmy agin a heeze o mice. Cheer up! Ye winna be hurtit! Yer type isnae a lammie, it’s a sookin leveret.’

‘Enjoy yer milk-bluidit feartie, Kirsty!’ quo her frien. ‘I reese oot yer taste. An thon is the slivverin, chitterin thing ye preferred tae me! I widnae strikk him wi ma neive, bit I’d kick him wi my fit, an finn unca pleisur. Is he greetin, or is he gaun tae feint fur fleg?’

The chiel cam ower an gaed the cheer far Linton rested a shove. He should hae keepit awa, ma maister faist lowped up an strukk him full on the thrapple a cloor that wid hae drappit a slichter body. It tuik his braith fur a meenit; an fin he chokit, Mr. Linton wauked oot bi the back yett intae the yaird, an frae there tae the front yett.

‘Weel! ye’ve dane wi camin here,’ cried Kirsty. ‘Get awa, noo; he’ll return wi a brace o pistols an hauf-a-dizzen helpers. Gin he did hear us, of coorse he’d niver forgie ye. Ye’ve played me ill, Heathcliff! Bit awa—be faist haste! I’d raither see Edgar cornered than ye.’

‘Dae ye think I’m gaun wi thon cloor stoonin in ma thrapple?’ he skreiched. ‘By hell, na! I’ll brakk his ribs like a fooshty hazel-nut afore I leave! Gin I dinna caa him doon noo, I’ll murder him some time; sae, as ye value his life, lat me win at him!’

‘He’s nae camin,’ I brukk in, tellin a bittie o a lee. ‘There’s the coachman an the twa gairdeners; ye’ll surely nae wyte tae be haived intae the road bi them! Ilkie ane his a club; an maister will, verra like, be watchin frae the parlour-windaes tae see that they cairry oot his orders.’

The gairdeners an coachman wir thonner: bit Linton wis wi them. They’d already gaen intae the coort. Heathcliff, on secunt thochts, decidit tae jink a warssle agin three servants: he grippit the poker, blootered the snib frae the inbye yett, an escaped as they strade in.

Mrs. Linton, fa wis verra steered up, badd me gae wi her upstairs. She didnae ken ma pairt in addin tae the stooshie, an I wis keen tae keep her nae kennin.

‘I’m near by masel, Nelly!’quo she, haivin hersel ontae the sofa. ‘A thoosan smiths’ haimmers are duntin in ma heid! Tell Isabella tae bide awa frae me; this stooshie wis brocht on tae her; an should she or ony ither raise ma roose at present, I’ll growe wud. An, Nelly, tell Edgar, gin ye see him again the nicht, that I’m in danger o bein verra ill. I wish it micht pruve true. He’s dumfounert an misfittit me unca! I wint tae frichten him. Mairower, he micht cam an stert a tirivee o rants or girns; I’m siccar I’d dae likewise, an Gweed kens far we’d eyn! Will ye dae sae, ma gweed Nelly? Ye ken that I’m nae wey tae blame in this maitter. Fit possessed him tae lippen in? Heathcliff’s spikk wis ootrageous, efter ye left us; bit I could sune hae divertit him frae Isabella, an the lave meant naethin. Noo aa’s gaen wrang; bi the gype’s cravin tae hear evil o himsel, that haunts some fowk like a deil! Hid Edgar niver gaithered oor spikk, he wid niver hae bin the waur fur it. Really, fin he rantit at me in thon unrizzonable tone o displeisure efter I’d scauldit Heathcliff till I wis hairse fur *him* , I didnae care hardly fit they did tae each ither; speecially as I felt that, hooseiver the stooshie feenished, we’d aa be riven apairt fur naebody kens foo lang! Weel, gin I canna keep Heathcliff fur ma frien—gin Edgar will be coorse an jealous, I’ll ettle tae brakk their hairts bi brakkin ma ain. Thon’ll will be a faist wey o feenishin aa, fin I’m fair pushed tae the leemit! Bit it’s a darg tae be keepit fur a lane hope; I’d nae takk Linton bi begeck wi it. Tae this pynt he’s bin cannie in dreidin tae roose me; ye maun warn him o the danger o eyndin thon policy, an mynd him o ma passionate temper, vergin, fin kinnlit, on wudness. I wish ye could pit thon apathy ooto yer face, an luik raither mair worriet aboot me.’

The quaet wi which I tuik thon orders wis, nae doot, raither misfittin: fur they wir gaen in perfeck sincerity; bit I jeloused a body fa could plan the turnin o her fits o passion tae accoont, aforehaun, micht, bi makkin eese o her will, ettle tae control hersel tolerabe, even fin unner their influence; an I didnae wint tae ‘frichten’ her husband, as she pit it, an multiplee his waes fur the eese o servin her selfishness. Sae I said naethin fin I met the maister camin tae the parlour; bit I turned back tae lippen tae hear gin they’d restert their argy bargy thegither. He stertit tae spikk first.

‘Bide far ye are, Kirsty,’ quo he; wioot ony roose in his vyce, bit wi muckle sorra an wae. ‘I winna dauchle. I’m neither cam tae argy nur be reconciled; bit I wint tae ken gin, efter this evenin’s ongauns, ye sikk tae cairry on yer frienship wi—’

‘Och, fur peety’s sake,’ brukk in the mistress, stampin her fit, ‘fur mercy’s sake, lat’s hear nae mair o it noo! Yer cauld bluid canna be vrocht intae a fever: yer veins are stappit wi ice-watter; bit mine are bylin, an the sicht o sic cauldness gars them daunce.’

‘Tae win shot o me, repon tae ma speirin,’ gaed on Mr. Linton. ‘Ye maun repon; an thon violence doesnae fleg me. I hae fand that ye can be as calm as onybody, fin ye like. Will ye gie up Heathcliff hereaifter, or will ye gie up me? Ye canna be *my* frien an *his* at the same time; an I aathegither *maun* ken which ye chuse.’

‘I maun be lat alane!’ skreiched Kirsty, roosed. ‘I demand it! Dae ye nae see I can scarce staun Edgar, ye—ye leave me!’

She yarked the bell till it brukk wi a twang; I cam in, leisurely. It wis eneuch tae try the natur o a saint, sic menseless, coorse rages! Thonner she sprauchled duntin her heid agin the airm o the sofa, an grindin her teeth, sae that ye micht fancy she wid brakk them tae smithereens! Mr. Linton stude luikin at her in faist worry an fleg. He telt me tae fetch a suppie watter. She’d nae braith fur spikkin. I brocht a glaiss full; an as she wouldnae drink, I skirpit it on her face. In a fyew meenits she streeked hersel oot stiff, an turned up her een, while her chikks, at aince fite an roosed, tuik on the luik o daith. Linton luikit terrified.

‘There’s naethin in the warld the maitter,’ I fuspered. I didnae wint him tae yield, tho I couldnae help bein feart in ma hairt.

‘She his bluid on her mou!’ quo he, chitterin.

‘Niver mind!’ I reponed, wershly. An I telt him foo she’d set oot, afore he cam his camin, on pittin on a fit o wudness. I daftly telt him aloud, an she heard me; fur she lowpit up—her hair fleein ower her shoulders, her een flashing, the muscles o her thrapple an airms staunin oot byordnar. I expeckit brukken banes, at least; bit she anely glowered aboot her fur a meenit, an syne hashed frae the chaumer. The maister gart me follae; I did, tae her chaumer-yett: she hinnered me frae gaun farrer bi securin it agin me.

As she niver ettled tae gae doon tae brakkfaist neist mornin, I gaed tae speir gin she’d hae some cairried up. ‘Na!’ she reponed, forcie. The same speirin wis repeatit at denner an tea; an again on the mornin efter, an won the same repon. Mr. Linton, on his pairt, spent his time in the librar, an didnae speir consarnin his wife’s ongauns. Isabella an he hid an oor’s interview, durin fan he ettled tae draw frae her some feelin o ootricht horror fur Heathcliff’s advaunces: bit he could makk naethin o her sleekit repons, an wis obleeged tae close the examination unsatisfactory-like; addin, hoosaeever, a stern warnin, that gin she wir sae gyte as tae eeke on thon wirthless suitor, it wid cut aa ties o kinship atween hersel an him.

Frenesy

**Chapter 12**

Fin Miss Linton mooched aboot the park an gairden, aywis seelent, an near aywis greetin; an her brither cuttit himsel aff amang buiks that he niver opened—scunnered, I jeloused, wi an ongaun feint hope that Kirsty, repentin o her weys, wid cam o her ain accord tae prig pardon, an sikk a reunion—an *she* sterved herself thrawnly, unner the notion, dootless, that at ilkie meal Edgar wis ready tae dwine fur her bidin ootower, an pride alane stoppit him frae rinnin tae haive himsel at her feet; I gaed aboot ma housewifery darg, fair thinkin that the Grange hid bit ae mensefu body in its waas, an thon ludged in ma body. I threw awa nae peety on Miss, nur ony rizzonin on ma mistress; nur did I pey muckle tent tae the soughs o ma maister, fa langed tae hear his leddy’s nemme, since he michtna hear her voyce, an decidit they should dae as they likit withoot ma tippence haepenny wirth; an tho it wis a foonerin slaw process, I stertit tae rejoyce at the hinnereyn in a feint inklin o betterment: as I thocht at first.

Mrs. Linton, on the third day, unsneckit her yett, an haein feenished the watter in her joog an decanter, socht a new supply, an a bowl o brose, fur she thocht she wis deein. Thon I set doon as a spikk meant fur Edgar’s lugs; I thocht nae sic thing, sae I keepit it tae masel an brocht her some tay an dry toast. She ett an drank eidently, an sank back on her bowster again, grippin her hauns an maenin. ‘Och, I will dee,’ she skreiched, ‘since naebody cares onythin aboot me. I wish I hadnae taen thon.’ Syne a gweed while efter I heard her mummle, ‘Na, I’ll nae dee—he’d be gled—he doesnae lue me at aa—he wid niver miss me!’

‘Did ye wint onythin, ma’am?’ I speired, still keepin up ma ootbye calm, in spite o her ghaistly luik an fey, exaggeratit mainner.

‘Fit’s thon peely wally body daein?’ she demandit, shovin the thick taigled locks frae her dwined face. ‘His he faaen intae a dwaum, or is he deid?’

‘Neither,’ quo I; ‘Gin ye mean Mr. Linton. He’s rael weel, I think, tho his lear consarns him raither mair than they ocht: he’s aywis amang his buiks, since he’s nae ither company.’

I should nae have spukken sae gin I’d kent her true condition, bit I could nae shakk aff the notion that she acted a pairt o her illness.

‘Amang his buiks!’ she skreiched, dumfounert. ‘An masel deein! Masel on the lip o the mools! Ma God! Dis he ken foo I’m cheenged?’ she gaed on, glowerin at her face in a keekin glaiss hingin agin the opposite waa. ‘Is thon Kirsty Linton? He thinks me in a huff—in makkie on, mebbe. Can ye tell him that it’s deidly earnest? Nelly, gin it’s nae ower late, as sune as I larn foo he feels, I’ll chuse atween thon twa: either tae sterve at aince—that wid be nae punishment unless he hid a hairt—or tae recover, an quit the kintra. Are ye spikkin the truith aboot him noo? Takk tent. Is he raely sae aathegither indifferent fur ma life?’

‘Foo, ma’am,’ I reponed, ‘the maister his nae thocht o ye bein gyte; an of coorse he disnae fear that ye’ll lat yersel dee o hunger.’

‘Ye think nae? Can ye tell him I will?’ she telt me. ‘Perswaad him! spikk yer ain harns: say yer siccar I will!’

‘Na, ye forget, Mrs. Linton,’ quo I, ‘that ye hae etten some maet wi delicht this evenin, an the morn ye’ll feel its gweed effecks.’

Gin I wir anely siccar it wid kill him,’ she brukk in, ‘I’d kill masel direck! Thon three awfu nichts I’ve niver steekit ma een—an och, I’ve bin tormentit! I’ve bin hauntit, Nelly! Bit I stert tae jelouse ye dinna like me. Foo fey! I thocht, tho aabody hatit an despised each ither, they couldnae avoyd luin me. An they hae aa turned tae faes in a fyew oors: they hae, I’m siccar; the fowk here. Foo dreich tae meet daith, surroundit bi their cauld faces! Isabella, terrifeed an feart, feart tae enter the chaumer, it wid be sae dreidfu tae watch Kirsty gae. An Edgar staunin waesome by tae see it ower; syne offerin prayers o thanks tae God fur restorin peace tae his hoose, an gaun back tae his *buiks*! Fit in the nemme o aa that feels his he tae dae wi *buiks*, fin I am deein?’

She couldnae thole the notion that I’d pit intae her heid o Mr. Linton’s pheelosophical resignation. Warsslin aboot, she increased her wud hett bumbazement tae gyteness, an ruggit the bowster wi her teeth; syne heistin hersel up aa burnin, socht me tae caa the windae ajee. We wir in the mids o winter, the win blew strang frae the nor-east, an I objeckit. Baith the expressions flichterin ower her face, an the cheenges o her moods, stertit tae alarm me unca; an brocht tae ma myndin her former ailment, an the doctor’s warnin that she shouldnae be crossed. A meenit afore she wis violent; noo, supportit on ae airm, an nae takkin tent o ma refusal tae obey her, she seemed tae finn bairn like fun in puin the feathers frae the teirs she’d jist vrocht, an reengin them on the sheet accordin tae their different species: her harns hid wanneret tae ither associations.

‘Thon’s a bubblyjock’s,’ she mummlit tae hersel; ‘an this is a wud dyeuk’s; an this is a doo’s. Ah, they pit doo’s feathers in the bowster—nae wunner I couldnae dee! Lat me takk tent tae haive it on the fleer fin I lie doon. An here is a muir-cock’s; an this—I should ken it amang a thoosan—it’s a teuchit’s. Bonny birdie; furlin ower oor heids in the mids o the muir. It wintit tae get tae its nest, fur the clouds hid touched the swalls, an it felt rain camin. This feather wis pickit up frae the heath, the birdie wisnae shot: we saw its nest in the winter, fu o wee skeletons. Heathcliff set a trap ower it, an the auld anes daurdnae cam. I gart him promise he’d niver sheet a teuchit efter thon, an he didnae Aye, here are mair! Did he sheet ma teuchits, Nelly? Are they reid, ony o them? Lat me luik.’.

‘Stop thon bairnie-wirk!’ I brukk in, ruggin the bowster awa, an turnin the holes tae the mattrass, fur she wis puuin oot its contents bi haunfus. ‘Lie doon an steek yer eyes: ye’re raivelled. Thon’s a soss! The down is fleein aboot like snaa.’

I gaed back an fore colleckin it.

‘I see in ye, Nelly,’ she gaed on in a dwaum, ‘an auld wumman: ye hae grey hair an booed shouders. This bed is the fey cave aneth Penistone crags, an ye are gaitherin elf-bolts tae skaith oor heifers; makkin on, while I’m near, that they’re anely dauds o oo. Thon’s fit ye’ll cam tae fifty years frae noo: I ken ye arenae sae noo. I’m nae wannerin: ye’re mistaen, or else I should believe ye really *wir* thon wizzened cailleach, an I should think I *wis* unner Penistone Crags; an I ken it’s nicht, an there are twa caunles on the brod makkin the blaik press sheen like jet.’

‘The blaik press? far is thon?’ I speired. ‘Ye’re spikkin in yer sleep!’

‘It’s agin the waa, as it aywis is,’ she reponed. ‘It *dis* seem fey—I see a face in it!’

‘There’s nae press in thon chaumer, an niver wis,’ quo I, dowpin doon again an bindin up the curtain that I micht watch her.

‘Dinna *ye* see thon face?’ she speired, glowerin lang at the keekin glaiss

An say fit I could, I couldna makk her unnerstaun it tae be her ain; sae I raise an happit it wi a plaidie

‘It’s ahin there yet!’ she gaed on, worriet. ‘An it steered. Fa is it? I hope it winna cam oot fin ye are gaen! Och! Nelly, the chaumer is hauntit! I’m feart o bein alane!’

I tuik her haun in mine, an bad her sattle; fur a wheen o chitters rattlit her frame, an she *wid* keep raxxin her een tae the keekin glaiss.

‘There’s naebody thonner!’ I telt her. ‘It wis *yersel* Mrs. Linton: ye ken it a while syne.’

‘Masel!’ she peched, ‘an the wag at the waa is strikkin twalve! It’s true, syne! thon’s dreidfu!’

Her fingers cleukit the claes, an gaithered them ower her een. I ettled tae win tae the yett wi the thocht o caain her husband; bit I wis taen back bi an awfu skirl—the plaidie hid drapped frae the frame.

‘Weel, fit *is* the maitter?’ I speired. ‘Fa is cooard noo? Wauken up! Thon is the glaiss—the keekin glaiss, Mrs. Linton; an ye see yersel in it, an there am I as weel bi yer side.’

Trimmlin an bumbazed, she held me faist, bit the grue gradual passed frae her face; its peely-walliness gaed wey tae a glimmer o affront.

‘Och, dear! I thocht I wis at hame,’ she maened. ‘I thocht I wis leein in ma chaumer at Whudderin Heichts. Because I’m dweeble, ma harns got kerfuffled, an I skirled unconscious. Dinna say onythin; bit bide wi me. I dreid sleepin: ma dreams fear me.’

‘A soun sleep wid dae ye gweed, ma’am,’ I reponed: ‘an I hope this sufferin will stop ye ettlin tae sterve again.’

‘Och, gin I wir bit in ma ain bed in the auld hoose!’ she gaed on wershly, wringin her hauns. ‘An thon win sounin in the firs bi the lattice. Dae lat me feel it—it cams straicht doon the muir—dae lat me hae ae braith!’ Tae pacifee her I held the yett ajee a few seconds. A cauld bluffert breenged in; I steekit it, an gaed tae ma seat. She lay quaet noo, her face weet wi greets. Weariness o body hid aathegither owercam her speerit: oor fiesty Kirsty wis nae better than a girny bairn.

‘Foo lang is it sin I shut masel in here?’ she speired, o a suddenty revivin.

‘It wis Monday evenin,’ I reponed, ‘an this is Thursday nicht, or raither Friday mornin, eenoo.’

‘Fit! o the same wikk?’ quo she. ‘Anely thon smaa time?’

‘Lang eneuch tae live on naethin bit cauld watter an ill-natur,’ I telt her.

‘Weel, it seems a trauchlesome nummer o oors,’ she mummlit dootfu: ‘it maun be mair. I mynd bein in the parlour efter they’d argyed, an Edgar bein unca misfittin, an me rinnin intae this chaumer in a rooze. As sune as I’d steekit the yett, a hale blaikness dinged me doon, an I fell on the fleer. I couldnae shaw Edgar foo siccar I felt o haein a fit, or gaun aathegither gyte, gin he gaen on roozin me! I’d nae command o tongue, or harns, an he didnae jelouse ma agony, mebbe: it barely left me mense tae ettle tae escape frae him an his voyce. Afore I recovered eneuch tae see an hear, it stertit tae be daybrak, an, Nelly, I’ll tell ye fit I thocht, an fit his keepit recurrin an recurrin till I wis feart fur ma rizzon. I thocht as I lay thonner, wi ma heid agin thon brod leg, an ma een dimly made oot the grey squar o the windae, that I wis in the aik-panelled bed at hame; an ma hairt dirled wi some muckle wae that, on waukenin, I couldnae mynd. I thocht, an worriet masel tae ken fit it could be, an, maist fey, the hale hinmaist sivven years o ma life grew a blank! I didnae mynd that they’d bin at aa. I wis a bairn; ma faither wis jist beeried, an ma wae arose frae the separation that Hindley hid ordered atween me an Heathcliff. I wis laid alane, fur the first time; an, raisin frae a dowie doze efter a nicht o greetin, I lifted ma haun tae push the panels aside: it strukk the brod-tap! I swypit it alang the bass, an syne myndin brukk in: ma late wae wis swallaed in a steer o despair. I canna say foo I felt sae affa disjaskit: it maun hae bin temporary wudness; fur there is scarce cause. Bit, supposin at twal years auld I’d bin yarked frae the Heichts, an ilkie early links, an ma aa in aa, as Heathcliff wis at thon time, an bin cheenged at a straik intae Mrs. Linton, the leddy o Thrushcross Grange, an the wife o a stranger: an exile, an ootcast, thereaifter, frae fit hid bin ma warld. Ye may fancy a glisk o the abyss far I wummled! Shakk yer heid as ye will, Nelly, *ye* hae helped tae unsattle me! Ye should hae spukken tae Edgar, loshtie ye should, an gart him tae leave me quaet! Och, I’m burnin! I wish I wir ootbye! I wish I wir a quine again, hauf sauvage an hardy, an free; an lauchin at skaiths, nae maddenin unner them! Foo am I sae cheenged? Foo dis ma bluid rush intae a hell o stooshie at a fyew wirds? I’m siccar I should be masel wir I aince amang the heather on thon bens. Caa ajee the widae again: faisten it ajee! Quick, foo dae ye nae meeve?’

‘Because I winna gie ye yer daith o cauld,’ I reponed.

‘Ye winna gie me a chaunce o life, ye mean,’ quo she, sullenly. ‘Hoosaeiver, I’m nae eeseless yet; I’ll open it masel.’

An slidderin frae the bed afore I could hinner her, she crossed the chaumer, waukin very shoogly, haived it back, an booed oot, nae heedin the cranreuch air that cut aboot her shouders as keen as a knife. I priggit, an finally ettled tae gar her retire. Bit I sune fand her deleerious virr sair owercam mine (she wis deleerious, I becam convinced bi her subsequent meevements an ravins). There wis nae meen, an aathin aneath lay in misty derkness: nae a licht glimmered frae ony hoose, far or near aa hid bin pit oot langsyne: an thon at Whudderin Heichts wir niver veesible—still she telt me she catched their sheenin.

‘Luik!’ she cried wi virr, ‘thon’s ma chaumer wi the caunle in it, an the trees sweyin afore it; an the ither caunle is in Joseph’s laft. Joseph sits up late, dis hae na? He’s wytin till I cam hame that he maun steek the yett. Weel, he’ll wyte a whylie yet. It’s a roch journey, an a dowie hairt tae traivel it; an we maun pass by Gimmerton Kirk tae gae thon journey! We’ve braved its ghaists aften thegither an daured each ither tae staun amang the mools an sikk them tae cam. Bit, Heathcliff, gin I daur ye noo, will ye cam? Gin ye dae, I’ll keep ye. I’ll nae lie thonner bi masel: they may beery me twalve feet deep, an haive the kirk doon ower me, bit I winna rest till ye’re wi me. I niver will!’

She dauchled, an resumed wi a fey smile. ‘He’s conseederin—he’d raither I’d cam tae him! Finn a wey, syne! nae throwe thon kirkyaird. Ye’re slaw! Be content, ye ayweys follaed me!’

Seein it eeseless tae argy agin her gyteness, I wis thinkin foo I could reach somethin tae wipp aboot her, wioot lossin ma haud o her (fur I couldnae trust her alane bi the open windae), fin, tae ma worry, I heard the rattle o the yett-haunle an Mr. Linton entered. He’d anely then cam frae the librar; an, in passin ben the lobby, hid taen tent o oor spikkin an bin drawn bi ill faschence, or fear, tae see fit it signifeed, at thon late oor.

‘Och, sir!’ I cried, checkin the wirds that cam tae his lips at the sicht that met him, an the dreich air o the chaumer. ‘Ma puir mistress is nae weel, an she quite maisters me: I canna manage her at aa; pray, cam an persuad her tae gae tae bed. Forget yer rooze, fur she’s hard tae kepp onyewy bit her ain.’

‘Kirsty nae weel?’quo he, hashin tae us. ‘Steek the windae, Ellen! Kirsty! foo—’

He wis seelent. The haggardness o Mrs. Linton’s face strukk him spikkless, an he could anely luik frae her tae me in horrifeed bumbazement.

‘She’s bin frettin here,’ I gaed on, ‘an ettin scarce onythin, an niver complainin: she wid lat nane o us in till this evenin, an sae we couldnae tell ye o her state, as we werenae awaur o it oorsels; bit it’s naethin.’

I felt I spakk ma explanations awkward; the maister frooned. ‘It is naethin, is it, Ellen Dean?’ he telt me sternly. ‘Ye’ll accoont mair clearly fur keepin me unkennin o this!’ An he tuik his wife in his airms, an luikit at her wi wae.

At first she gaed him nae glimmer o kennin: he wis inveesible tae her wannerin glower. The deleerium wisnae fixed, hoosaeiver; haein weaned her een frae watchin the ooter derkness, bi bitties she centred her een on him, an discovered fa it wis that held her.

‘Ach! Ye’ve cam, hae ye, Edgar Linton?’ quo she, wi angeret virr. ‘Ye’re ane o thon things that are iver fand fin least winted, an fin ye are wintit, niver! I jelouse we’ll hae a rowth o lamentations noo—I see we shall—bit they canna keep me frae ma nerra hame oot thonner: ma restin-airt, far I’m gaun afore spring is ower! Thonner it is: nae amang the Lintons, mind, unner the kirk-reef, bit in the open air, wi a heid-stane; an ye may please yersel whether ye gae tae them or cam tae me!’

‘Kirsty, fit hae ye dane?’ speired the maister. ‘Am I naethin tae ye ony mair? Dae ye lue thon vratch Heath—’

‘Wheesht!’ cried Mrs. Linton. ‘Wheesht, this meenit! Ye spikk thon nemme an I eyn the maitter eenoo bi a lowp frae the windae! Fit ye touch noo ye may hae; bit ma sowel will be on thon knowe-heid afore ye lay hauns on me again. I dinna wint ye, Edgar: I’m past wintin ye. Return tae yer buiks. I’m gled ye hae a consolation, fur aa ye hid in me is gaen.’

‘Her harns wanner, sir,’ I brukk in. ‘She’s bin spikkin styte the hale evenin; bit lat her hae quaet, an richt care, an she’ll rally. Hereaifter, we maun be cannie foo we vex her.’

‘I wint nae farrer advice frae ye,’ reponed Mr. Linton. ‘Ye kent yer mistress’s natur, an ye eekit me on tae vex her. An nae tae gie me ae hint o foo she’s bin thon three days! It wis hairtless! Months o seekness couldnae cause sic a cheenge!’

I stertit tae defen masel, thinkin it ower coorse tae be blamed fur anither’s weywardness. ‘I kent Mrs. Linton’s natur tae be heidstrang an domineerin,’ cried I: ‘bit I didnae ken that ye socht tae foster her wud rooze temper! I didnae ken that, tae humour her, I should wink at Mr. Heathcliff. I unnertuik the darg o a faithfu servant in tellin ye, an I hae gotten a faithfu servant’s wages! Weel, it’ll larn me tae be cannie neist time. Neist time ye may gaither intelligence fur yersel!’

‘The neist time ye bring a tale tae me ye’ll quit ma service, Ellen Dean,’ he reponed.

‘Ye’d raither hear naethin aboot it, I jelouse, Mr. Linton?’ quo I. ‘Heathcliff his yer blissin tae gae wooin tae Miss, an tae drap in at ilkie chaunce yer absence offers, jist tae pyson the mistress agin ye?’

Kerfuffled as Kirsty wis, her wits wir quick at follaein oor confab.

‘Ach! Nelly his played traitor,’ quo she wi virr. ‘Nelly is ma hidden fae. Ye witch! Sae ye dae sikk elf-bolts tae skaith us! Lat me gae, an I’ll gar her grue! I’ll makk her skirl a recantation!’

A gyte body’s rage kinnlit unner her broos; she warssled sair tae free herself frae Linton’s airms. I felt nae willinness tae raxx oot the event; an resolvin tae win medical aid on ma ain, I quit the chaumer.

In passin the gairden tae reach the road, at a placie far a bridle hyeuk is driven intae the waa, I saw somethin fite meeve irregular, bi anither force than the win. Even tho I wis in a hurry, I bedd tae examine it, for fear iver efter I should hae the thocht prentit on ma harns that it wis an itherwardly craitur. My begeck an winnerment wir great on finnin, bi touch mair than sicht, Miss Isabella’s springer, Fanny, hingin bi a snifterdichter, an near at its hinmaist pech. I quickly lowsed the breet, an heistit it intae the gairden. I’d seen it follae its mistress upstairs fin she gaed tae bed; an winneret foo it could hae gotten oot thonner, an fit vratch hid treatit it sae. Fin lowsin the knot roon the hyeuk, it seemed tae me that I repeatedly catched the dunt o shelties’ feet gallopin hyne aff; bit there wir sic a nummer o ferlies tae occupee ma thochts that I scarce gaed the happenin a thocht: tho it wis a fey soun, in thon airt, at twa o’clock in the mornin.

Mr. Kenneth wis bi gweed chaunce jist leavin his hoose tae see a patient in the clachan as I cam up the street; an ma accoont o Kirsty Linton’s seekness gart him follae me back straicht aff. He wis a plain roch cheil; an he made nae effort tae hide his doots o her survivin this secunt attack; unless she wis mair submissive tae his warnin than she’d shawn hersel afore.

‘Nelly Dean,’ quo he, ‘I canna help fancyin there’s an extra cause fur this. Fit’s bin happenin at the Grange? We’ve fey reports up here. A stoot, hairty lass like Kirsty disnae faa seek fur nocht an thon kinno fowk shouldnae either. It’s hard wirk bringin them throwe fevers, an sic things. Foo did it stert?’

‘The maister will tell ye,’ I reponed; ‘bit ye’re acquant wi the Earnshaws’ violent naturs, an Mrs. Linton caps them aa. I say this; it stertit in a quarrel. She wis strukk durin the heicht o rooze wi a kind o fit. Thon’s her accoont, onywey: fur she flew aff in the mids o it, an lockit hersel up. Efter, she widnae ett, an noo she alternately rants an bides in a hauf dwaum; kennin those aboot her, bit haein her harns fulled wi aa sorts o fey ideas .’

‘Mr. Linton’ll be sorry?’ speired Kenneth.

‘ Sorry? he’ll brakk his hairt should onythin happen!’ I reponed. ‘Dinna fear him mair than necessar.’

‘Weel, I telt him tae ca cannie,’ quo ma fier; ‘an he maun thole the consequences o negleckin ma warnin! Hasnae he bin frienly wi Mr. Heathcliff this whylie?’

‘Heathcliff aften veesits at the Grange,’ quo I, ‘tho mair on the strength o the mistress haein kent him fin a loon, than because the maister likes him. Enoo he’s dischairged frae the tribble o caain; due tae some hopes o winnin Miss Linton that he shawed. I dinna think he’ll be taen in again.’

‘An dis Miss Linton turn a cauld shouder on him?’ wis the doctor’s neist speirin.

‘I’m nae in her confidence,’ I reponed, unwillin tae gae on wi the subjeck.

‘Na, she’s a sleekit ane,’ he remairked, shakkin his heid. ‘She keeps her ain coonsel! Bit she’s a rael wee gype. I hae it frae a gweed soorce that last nicht (an a bonnie nicht it wis!) hersel an Heathcliff wir waukin in the plantins at the back o yer hoose abune twa oors; an he priggit her nae tae gae in again, bit jist moont his shelt an awa wi him! Ma soorce said she could anely pit him aff bi pledgin her wird o honour tae be ready on their first meetin efter thon: fin it wis tae be he didnae hear; bit ye maun tell Mr. Linton tae luik sherp!’

Thon news fulled me wi unca flegs; I ootstrippit Kenneth, an ran maist o the wey back. The wee tyke wis still bowfin in the gairden. I spared a meenit tae open the yett fur it, bit insteid o gaun tae the hoose yett, it breenged up an doon snuffin the girse, an wid hae escaped tae the road, hid I nae seized it an convoyed it in wi me. On sclimmin tae Isabella’s chaumer, ma suspicions wir confirmed: it wis teem. Hid I bin a fyew oors suner Mrs. Linton’s illness micht hae stoppit her gyte step. Bit fit could be dane noo? There wis a bare chaunce o owertakkin them gin pursued straicht aff. I couldnae pursue them, hoosaeiver; an I daurednae tell the faimly, an pit the place in a steer; still less unfauld the maitter tae ma maister, in the mids o his current waes, an haein nae hairt tae spare fur a secunt clour! I saw naethin fur it bit tae haud ma tongue, an thole maitters tae takk their coorse; an Kenneth haein cam, I gaed wi an ill settled luik tae annoonce him. Kirsty lay in a tribbled sleep: her husband hid succeeded in calmin the excess o frenezy; he noo hung ower her bowster, watchin ilkie pikk an ilkie cheenge o her painfu expressive face.

The doctor, on examinin the case himsel, spakk hopefu tae him o its haein a gweed ootcam, gin we could anely keep aroun her perfeck an ongaun peace. Tae me, he signifeed the threatenin danger wisnae sae much daith, as permanent gyteness.

I didna steek ma een thon nicht, nor did Mr. Linton: mairower, we niver gaed tae bed; an the servants wir aa up lang afore the ordnar oor, meevin throwe the hoose wi cannie step, an excheengin fuspers as they met each ither in their darg. Ilkie ane wis steerin bit Miss Isabella; an they stertit tae note foo soun she sleepit: her brither, as weel, speired gin she’d risen, an seemed impatient fur her presence, an hurtit that she shawed sae smaa worry fur her sister-in-law. I trimmlit lest he should sen me tae wauken her; bit I wis spared the skaith o bein the first tae tell o her flicht. Ane o the maidies, a thochtless quine fa’d bin on an early eerin tae Gimmerton, cam pechin upstairs, open-moued, an hashed intae the chaumer, skirlin: ‘Och, dearie me! Fit maun happen neist? Maister, maister, oor young leddy—’

‘Haud yer wheesht!’I cried, roosed at her din.

‘Spikk quaeter, Mary—Fit’s adee?’ speired Mr. Linton. ‘Fit’s adee wu yer young leddy?’

‘She’s gaen, she’s gaen! Thon Heathcliff’s run aff wi’ her!’ peched oot the quine.

‘Thon’s a lee’ quo Linton, risin in a steer. ‘It canna be: foo his the idea entered yer heid? Ellen Dean, gae an sikk her. It’s aa styte: it canna be.’

As he spakk he tuik the maidie tae the yett, an syne repeatit his demand tae ken her rizzons fur sic a statement.

‘Weel, I met on the road a laddie that fetches milk here,’ she hubbered, ‘an he speired whether we werenae in tribble at the Grange. I thocht he meant fur missis’s seekness, sae I reponed, aye. Syne sez he, There’s somebody gane efter them, I jelouse?” I glowered. He saw I kent nocht aboot it, an he telt foo a gentleman an leddy hid stoppit tae hae a shelt’s shee faistened at a smiddy, twa miles ooto Gimmerton, nae verra lang efter midnicht! an foo the smith’s lass hid gotten up tae spy fa they wir: she kent them baith direck. An she tuik tent o the chiel—Heathcliff it wis, she wis siccar: naebody could mistakk him,—pit a sovereign in her faither’s haun fur peyment. The leddy hid a plaid aboot her face; bit haein socht a sup o watter, fin she drank it fell back, an she saw her verra plain. Heathcliff held baith bridles as they rade on, an they set their faces frae the clachan, an gaed as faist as the roch roads wid lat them. The lass said naethin tae her faither, bit she telt it aa ower Gimmerton this foreneen.’

I ran an keeked, fur form’s sake, intae Isabella’s chaumer; confirmin, fin I cam back, the servant’s statement. Mr. Linton hid sat back doon bi the bed; on ma re-entrance, he luikit up, read the meanin o ma teem luik, an drapped them wioot giein an order, or spikkin a wird.

‘Are we tae takk ony meisures fur owertakkin an bringin her back,’ I speired. ‘Fit should we dae?’

‘She gaed o her ain accord,’ reponed the maister; ‘she’d a richt tae gae gin she wintit. Tribble me nae mair aboot her. Hereaifter she’s anely ma sister in nemme: nae because I disown her, bit because she’s disowned me.’

An thon wis aa he spakk on the subjeck: he didnae makk ae inquiry mair, or spikk o her in ony wey, cept direckin me tae sen fit gear she hid in the hoose tae her new hame, fariver it wis, fin I kent it.

**Isabella Larns Her Weird Chapter 13**

Fur twa month the rinawaas bed tint; in thon twa month, Mrs. Linton encoontered an owercam the wirst cloor o fit wis caad a fever o the harns. Nae mither could hae nursed an anely bairn mair stinchly than Edgar tuik tent o her. Day an nicht he wis watchin, an kindly tholin aa the scunners that ill naturet nerves an a shoogly rizzon could dish oot; an, tho Kenneth quo that fit he saved frae the mools wid anely reward his care bi biggin the foun o ongaun future wirry—in fack, that his health an virr wir bein sacrifeeced tae haud ontae a nochtie wrack o humanity—he kent nae bouns in thanks an blytheness fin Kirsty’s life wis declared ooto danger; an oor eftir oor he wid dowp doon aside her, merkin the gradual return tae gweed health, an biggin up his ower rosy hopes wi the illusion that her harns wid sattle back tae their richt balance as weel, an she wid sune be aathegither her former sel.

The first time she left her chaumer wis at the stert o the follaein Merch. Mr. Linton hid pit on her bowster, in the mornin, a haunfu o gowden crocuses; her ee, lang unkent tae ony glent o pleisur, saw them in waukenin, an sheened delichtit as she gaithered them eidently thegether.

‘Thon are the earliest flooers at the Heichts,’ quo she. ‘They mynd me o saft thaw wins, an warm sunsheen, an near meltit snaa. Edgar, is there nae a sooth win, an isnae the snaa near gaen?’

‘The snaa is gaen doon thonner, ma jo,’ reponed her man; ‘an I anely see twa fite skirps on the hale reenge o muirs: the lift is blae, an the levericks are singin, an the burns an riveries are aa stap fu. Kirsty, last spring at this time, I wis langin tae hae ye unner this reef; noo, I wish ye wir a mile or twa up thon knowes: the air blaws sae swete, I ken that it wid cure ye.’

‘I’ll niver be thonner bit aince mair,’ quo the invalid; ‘an syne ye’ll leave me, an I’ll bide there foraye. Neist spring ye’ll lang again tae hae me unner this reef, an ye’ll luik back an think ye wir blythe this day.’

Linton bosied her ower an ower, an ettled tae cheer her bi the swetest wirds; bit, dwauminly owerluikin the flooers, she lat the greets colleck on her lashes an treetle doon her chikks untent. We kent she wis really better, an, sae, decided that lang confinement tae ae airt brocht on this dowieness. The maister telt me tae licht a lowe in the mony-wikks’ teem parlour, an tae pit an easy-cheer in the sunsheen bi the windae; an syne he brocht her doon, an she sat a lang whyle enjoyin the heat, an, as we expeckit, revived bi the objecks roon her: that, tho weel kent, wir free frae the dreich associations tied tae her hatit seek chaumer. Bi evenin she seemed unca trauchelt; yet nae argyments could perswad her tae return tae thon chaumer, an I’d tae arreenge the parlour sofa fur her bed, till anither chaumer could be rigged up. Tae dae awa wi the trauchle o sclimmin an descendin the stairs, we set up this, far ye lie eenoo—on the same fleer wi the parlour; an she wis sune strang eneuch tae meeve frae ane tae the ither, leanin on Edgar’s airm. Ach, I thocht tae masel, she micht recover, sae wyted on as she wis. An there wis dooble rizzon tae desire it, fur on her life dependit thon o anither: we held the hope that in a wee whyle Mr. Linton’s hairt wid be gleddened, an his lan safe frae a stranger’s hauns, bi the birth o an heir.

I should tell ye that Isabella sent tae her brither, some sax wikks frae her depairture, a wee note, annooncin her waddin tae Heathcliff. It luikit wersh an cauld; bit at the boddom wis jottit in wi pencil a fey apology, an a priggin fur kind myndin an reconciliation, gin her waddin hid hurtit him: sayin that she couldnae help it thonner, an bein dane, she’d noo nae power tae repeal it. Linton didnae repon tae this, I jelouse; an, in a fortnicht mair, I got a lang letter, that I thocht fey, camin frae the pen o a bride jist ooto the hinneymeen. I’ll read it: fur I keep it yet. Ony relic o the deId is precious, gin they wir valued leevin.

Dear Ellen, it sterts—

I cam last nicht tae Whudderin Heichts, an heard, fur the first time, that Kirsty his bin, an is yet, verra nae weel. I mauna scrieve tae her, I jelouse, an ma brither is either ower angeret or ower disjaskit tae repon tae fit I sent him. Still, I maun screive tae somebody, an the anely choyce left me is yersel.

Tell Edgar that I’d gie the warld tae see his face again—that ma hairt returned tae Thrushcross Grange in twinty-fower oors efter I left it, an is there at this meenit fu o warm feelins fur him, an Kirsty! *I canna follae it tho* —(thon wirds are unnerlined)—they neednae expeck me, an they may draw fit rizzons they please; takkin tent, hoosaever, tae lay naethin at the yett o ma dweeble will or wint o luve.

The lave o the letter is fur yersel alane. I wint tae speir o ye twa questions: the first is—Foo did ye uphaud the common sympathies o human natur fin ye bedd here? I canna recognise ony feelins that thon aroon share wi me.

The secunt question I hae great interest in; is this—Is Mr. Heathcliff a cheil? If sae, is he wud? An if nae is he a deil? I winna tell ye ma rizzons fur makkin this speirin; bit I prig ye tae explain, gin ye can, fit I hae mairried: that is, fin ye caa tae see me; an ye maun caa, Ellen, verra sune. Dinna screive, bit cam, an bring me somethin frae Edgar.

Noo, ye’ll hear foo I hae bin greetit in ma new hame, as I’m led tae ken the Heichts will be. It’s tae amuse masel that I dwall on sic subjecks as the wint o ootwird comforts: they niver occupee ma thochts, cept at the meenit fin I miss them. I’d lauch an daunce fur blytheness, gin I fand their wint wis the hale o ma waes, an the lave wis an unnatural dwaum!

The sun set ahin the Grange as we turned ontae the muirs; bi thon, I jeloused it wis sax o’clock; an ma fier devauled hauf an oor tae owerluik the park, an the gairdens, an, dootless, the placie itsel, as weel as he could; sae it wis derk fin we dismountit in the paved yaird o the fairm-hoose, an yer auld fellae-servant, Joseph, cam oot tae meet us bi the licht o a dip caunle. He did it wi a courtesy that wis tae his credit. His first act wis tae heist his torch tae a level wi ma face, gley nestily, projeck his unner-lip, an turn awa. Syne he tuik the twa shelts, an led them intae the stables; reappearin fur the rizzon o steekin the ooter yett, as if we bedd in an auncient castle.

Heathcliff bedd tae spikk tae him, an I entered the kitchie—a derk, clarty hole; I dauresay ye widnae ken it, it is sae cheenged since it wis in yer charge. Bi the lowe stude a wee knickum, strang in limb an orra in claes, wi a luik o Kirsty in his een an aboot his mou.

‘This is Edgar’s legal nephew,’ I thocht, ‘mine in a mainner; I maun shakk haus, an—aye—I maun kiss him. It is richt tae bigg up a gweed unnerstaunin at the stert.’

I gaed near, an, ettlin tae takk his creashie neive, speired ‘Fit like ma dearie??’

He reponed in a spikk I didnae makk oot.

‘Will ye an masel be friens, Hareton?’ wis ma neist go at bletherin.

An aith, an a threat to set Throttler on me gin I didnae ‘get aff’ rewarded ma priggin.

‘Hey, Throttler, min!’ fuspered the wee vretch, steerin a hauf-bred bull-dug frae its lair in a neuk. ‘Noo, will ye be gaun?’ he speired wi virr.

Luve fur ma life gart me obey; I steppit back tae wyte till the ithers should cam in. Mr. Heathcliff wis naewye veesible; an Joseph, fa I follaeed tae the stables, an socht him tae takk me in, efter glowerin an mummlin tae himsel, screwed up his snoot an reponed ‘Mim! mim! mim! Did iver Christian body hear ocht like it? Mincin an mummlin! Foo can I tell fit ye say?’

‘I say, I wint ye tae cam wi me intae the hoose!’ I cried, thinkin him deef, yet unca misfittit at his rudeness.

‘Nae me! I hae somethin else tae dae,’ he reponed, an gaed on wi his darg; meevin his lantern jaas betimes an owerluikin ma rig oot an face (the former a great deal ower fine, bit the lave, I’m siccar, as dowie as he could wint) wi the utmaist scunner.

I wauked roon the yaird, an ben a wicket, tae anither yett, at which I tuik the liberty o chappin, in hopes some mair ceevil servant micht shaw himsel. Efter a wee wyte, it wis opened bi a heich, thin chiel, wioot a neckerchief, an itherwise unca orra; his face wis happit in a hoose o hudderie hair that hung on his shouders; an *his* een, as weel, wir like a ghaistly Kirsty’s wi aa their bonnieness tint.

‘Fit’s yer business here?’ he speired, dourly. ‘Fa are ye?’

‘Ma nemme wis Isabella Linton,’ I reponed. ‘Ye’ve seen me afore, sir. I’m lately wad tae Mr. Heathcliff, an he his brocht me here—I jelouse, bi yer permission.’

‘Is he back, syne?’ socht the hermit, glowerin like a hungered wolf.

‘Ay—we cam jist noo,’ quo I; ‘bit he left me bi the kitchie yett; an fin I wid hae gaen in, yer wee loon played guaird ower the place, an frichtened me aff bi the help o a bull-dug.’

‘It’s weel the hellish vratch his keepit his wird!’ gurred ma future host, glowerin intae the derkness ayont me in hope o seein Heathcliff; an syne he fell inno a spikk o banns, an threats o fit he wid hae dane hid the ‘vratch’ leed tae him.

I repented haein ettled tae makk this secunt incam, an wis near tae slippin awa afore he feenished bannin, bit afore I could dae it, he ordered me in, an steekit an re-faistened the yett. There wis a muckle lowe, an thon wis aa the licht in the great chaumer, fas fleer hid grown grey; an the aince skinklin pewter-dishes, that eesed tae draw ma een fin I wis a quine, wis jist as cheenged, spylt bi roost an stoor. I speired gin I micht caa the maidie, an be taen tae a bed chaumer! Mr. Earnshaw didna repon. He wauked up an doon, wi his hauns in his pooches, seemin tae forget me aathegither; an his abstraction wis sae deep, an his hale aspeck sae ill naturet, that I shrank frae disturbin him again.

Ye’ll nae be bumbazed, Ellen, at my feelin byordnar dowie, sattled in waur than alaneness on thon uncouthie hairth, an myndin that fower miles awa lay ma delichtful hame, haudin the anely fowk I lued on the Eirde; an there micht as weel be the Atlantic tae pairt us, insteid o thon fower miles: I couldnae cross them! I speired at masel—far maun I turn fur comfort? an—mind ye dinna tell Edgar, or Kirsty—abune ilkie sorra aside, this raise foremaist: wae at finnin naebody fa could or would be ma ally agin Heathcliff! I’d socht a bield at Whudderin Heichts, near gledly, because I wis saved bi that arreengement frae bidin alane wi him; bit he kent the fowk we wir camin amangst, an he didnae fear their interferin.

I sat an thocht a dowie time: the clock chapped eicht, an nine, an still ma fier wauked back an fore, his heid booed on his breist, an perfeckly seelent, unless a maen or a wersh bann forced itsel oot whyles. I lippened tae hear a wumman’s voyce in the hoose, an fulled the time wi wud regrets an dowie thochts, that, at last, spakk alood in an ootbrakk o soughin an greetin. I wisna awaur foo openly I maened, till Earnshaw devauled opposite, in his meisured wauk, an gaed me a glower o new-awaukened begeck. Takkin advauntage o his recovered attention, I telt him ‘I’m trauchelt wi ma traivel, an I wint tae gae tae bed! Far is the maidie? Shaw me the wye tae her, as she winna cam tae me!’

‘We hae nane,’ he reponed; ‘ye maun wyte on yersel!’

‘Far maun I sleep, syne?’ I sabbit; I wis ayont regairdin self-respeck, weyed doon bi weariness an scunneration.

‘Joseph’ll shaw ye Heathcliff’s chaumer,’ quo he; ‘open thon yett—he’s in thonner.’

I wis gaun tae obey, bit o a suddenty he stoppit me, an addit in the feyest tone ‘Be sae gweed as tae turn yer snib, an draa yer sneck—dinna forget it!’

‘Weel!’ quo I. ‘Bit foo, Mr. Earnshaw?’ I didnae like the notion o deliberately faistenin masel in wi Heathcliff.

‘Luik here!’ he reponed, ruggin frae his westcoat a fey-vrocht pistol, haein a dooble-edged spring knife agin the barrel. ‘Thon’s an unca tempter tae a desperate cheil, is it nae? I canna stop gaun up wi this ilkie nicht, an tryin his yett. Gin aince I find it ajee he’s dane fur; I dae it aywis, even tho the meenit afore I hae bin recaain a hunner rizzons that should makk me haud back: it’s some deil that gars me tae thwart ma ain schemes bi killin him. Ye fecht agin thon deil fur love as lang as ye can; fin the time cams, nae aa the angels in heiven’ll save him!’

I owerluikit the wappon close. An affa notion strukk me: foo pouerfu I should be ainin sic an ferlie! I tuik it frae his haun, an touched the blade. He luikit bumbazed at the luik ma face tuik on durin a wee secunt: it wisnae grue, it wis greed. He yarked the pistol back, jealously; steekit the knife, an returned it tae its hideyhole.

‘I dinna care gin ye tell him,’ quo he. ‘Pit him on his guaird, an watch fur him. Ye ken the terms we’re on, I see: his danger disnae bumbaze ye.’

‘Fit his Heathcliff dane tae ye?’ I speired. ‘In fit his he wranged ye, tae warrant this unca hatred? Widn’t it be wycer tae bid him quit the hoose?’

‘Na!’ thunnered Earnshaw; ‘should he sikk tae leave me, he’s a deid cheil: perswuad him tae try it, an ye are a murderess! Am I tae loss *aa* , wioot a chaunce o retrieval? Is Hareton tae be a beggar? Oh, damnation! I *will* hae it back; an I’ll hae *his* gowd as weel; an syne his bluid; an hell’ll hae his soul! It’ll be ten times blaiker wi thon guest than iver it wis afore!’

Ye’ve acquant me, Ellen, wi yer auld maister’s weys. He’s clearly near gyte: he wis sae last nicht at least. I trimmlit tae be near him, an thocht on the servant’s ill-bred dourness as aamaist agreeable. He noo restertit his moody wauk, an I liftit the sneck, an escaped inno the kitchie. Joseph wis booin ower the lowe, keekin intae a muckle pan that swung abune it; an a widden bowl o aetmeal stude on the settle nearhaun. The contents o the pan stertit tae hotter, an he turned tae ram his haun intae the bowl; I jeloused that this wis likely fur oor supper, an, bein hungeret, I decidit it should be ettable; sae, cryin oot sherply, ‘*I’ll* makk the parritch!’ I meeved the pan ooto his reach, an gaed on tae takk aff ma bunnet an ridin-claes. ‘Mr. Earnshaw,’ I gaed on, ‘tells me tae wyte on masel: I will. I’m nae gaun tae act the leddy amang ye, fur fear I should sterve.’

‘Gweed Lord!’ he mummlit, sittin doon, an straikin his ribbed hose frae the knee tae the cweet. ‘Gin there’s tae be fresh orders—jist fin I’d gotten eesed tae twa maisters, gin I maun hae a *mistress* pit o’er ma heid, it’s time tae be flittin. I niver *did* think tae see the day that I maun leave the auld place—bit I doot it’s near at haun!’

This girn drew nae notice frae me: I gaed smertly tae wirk, soughin tae mynd a whyle fin it wid hae bin aa cheerie fun; bit gart speedy tae drive aff the myndin. It wracked me tae recaa past blytheness an the greater peril there wis o conjurin up its appearance, the quicker the spurtle ran roon, an the faister the haunfus o aets fell intae the watter. Joseph saw ma mainner o cookery wi growin rooze.

‘Luik!’ he spat oot. ‘Hareton, ye winna sup yer parritch the nicht; they’ll be nocht bit dauds as big as ma neive. Luik, again! I’d fling in bowl as weel, gin I wir ye! Noo, pit in the pail tae feenish it aff, an syne ye’ll hae dane wi’ ‘t. Dunt, dunt. It’s a mercy the boddom isnae duntit oot!’

It *wis* raither a roch soss, I ain, fin poored intae the bowls; fower hid bin set oot, an a gallon joog o new milk wis brocht frae the dairy, that Hareton grippit an stertit drinkin an skailin frae the braid lip. I complained, an socht that he should hae his in a mug; sayin that I couldnae taste the milk treated sae orra. The auld cynic chose tae be unca misfittit at this gentility; tellin me, ower an ower, that ‘the barn wis ilkie bit as gweed’ as I, ‘an ilkie bit as halesome,’ an winnerin foo I could be sae prood. Betimes, the wee vratch gaed on sookin; an glowered up at me defiant-like, as he slivvered intae the joog.

‘I’ll hae ma supper in anither chaumer,’ quo I. ‘Hae ye nae place ye caa a parlour?’

‘*Parlour*!’ he echoed, doonpittn, ‘*Parlour*! Na, we’ve nae *parlours*. Gin ye dinna like oor company, there’s maister’s; an gin ye dinna like maister, there’s us.’

‘Syne I’ll gae upstairs,’ I reponed; ‘shaw me a chaumer.’

I pit my bowl on a tray, an gaed masel tae fetch some mair milk. Wi unca grummlins, the cheil raise, an gaed afore me gaun up: we sclimmed tae the garrets; he lowsed a yett, noo an again, tae luik intae the chaumers we passed.

‘Here’s a chaumer,’ quo he, at the hinnereyn, haivin back a creaky brod on hinges. ‘It’s weel eneuch tae ett a puckle parritch in. There’s a pyoke o corn in the neuk, thonner, nearly clean; gin ye’re feart o fylin yer grand silk claes, spreid yer snifterdichter on the tap on it.’

The ‘chaumer’ wis a kinno gloryhole guffin strang o malt an grain; a wheen pyokes o drappit aroon, leavin a braid, clear space in the mids.

‘Lochtie, min,’quo I, facin him angeret, ‘this is nae a place tae sleep in. I wint tae see ma bed-chaumer.’

‘*Bed-chaumer*!’ he reponed, in a tone o mockery. ‘Ye see aa the *bed-chaumers*there is—thon’s mine.’

He pyntit intae the secunt garret, anely differin frae the first in bein mair nyaakit aboot the waas, an haein a muckle, laigh, curtainless bed, wi an blue-coloured quilt, at ae eyn.

‘Fit dae I wint wi yers?’ I reponed. ‘I jelouse Mr. Heathcliff doesnae ludge at the tap o the hoose, dis he?’

‘Och! it’s Maister *Heathcliff’s* ye’re wintin?’ cried he, as if makkin a new discovery. ‘Could ye nae hae said thon, afore? An syne, I could hae telt ye, bit aa this wark, that that’s jist ane ye canna see—he aywis keeps it snibbit, an naebody iver bides in’t bit hisel.’

‘Ye’ve a gran hoose, Joseph,’ I couldnae haud aff frae sayin, ‘an pleisunt inmates; an I think the intimmers o aa the wudness in the warld tuik up its hame in ma heid the day I jyned ma weird wi theirs! Hoosaeiver thon’s nae helpin.

There are ither chaumers. Fur heiven’s sake be faist, an lat me sattle somewey!’

He made nae repon tae this priggin; anely duntin thrawnly doon the widden steps, an dauchlin, afore a chaumer that, frae the better quality o its gear, I jeloused tae be the best ane. There wis a basse—a gweed ane, bit the pattern wis happit bi stoor; a hairth hung wi cut-paper, drappin tae bitties; a braw aik-bedsteid wi a rowth o crammosie hingins o raither dear makk an modern luik; bit they’d evident gotten roch eese: the vallances hung in lirks, rugged frae their rings, an the iron rod haudin them wis booed in an arc on ae side, garrin the drapery treetle on the fleer. The cheers wir bladdit as weel, mony o them unca; an deep merks spyled the panels o the waas. I wis ettlin tae gaither virr fur enterin an sattlin, fin ma gype o a guide annoonced ‘This is the maister’s.’ Ma supper bi this time wis cauld, ma hunger gaen, an ma patience tint. I insisted on bein gaen richt aff wi a bield, an place tae sleep.

‘Far the deil?’ stertit the religious elder. ‘The Lord bliss us! The Lord forgie us! Far the *hell* wid ye gyang? Ye awkward, scunnerin breet! Ye’ve seen aa bit Hareton’s bittie o a chaumer. There’s nae anither airt tae lie doon in the hoose!’

I wis sae come-at, I flang ma tray an its contents on the grun; an syne dowpit masel at the stairs’-heid, hid ma face in ma hauns, an grat.

‘Ach! Ach!’ quo Joseph. ‘Weel dane, Miss Kirsty! weel dane, Miss Kirsty! Hoosaeiver, the maister’ll jist tummle ower thon brukken pots; an syne we’ll hear somethin; we’ll hear foo it’s tae be. Gweed-fur-nocht daftie! ye deserve tae murn frae noo tae Yule, haivin the braw gifties o God unner fit in yer gyte rages! Bit I’m mistaen gin ye shaw yer speerit lang. Will Heathcliff thole sic bonnie weys, think ye? I wish he can catch ye at thon plisky. I wish he may.’

An sae he gaed on scauldin tae his den aneth, takkin the caunle wi him; an I bedd in the derk. The whyle o thocht follaed this feel action gart me tae admit the need fur smorin ma pride an thrapplin ma rooze, an steerin masel tae meeve its effecks. An unexpeckit aid sune shawed in the makk o Throttler, fa I noo kent as a son o oor auld Skulker: it hid spent its whelphood at the Grange, an wis gien bi ma faither tae Mr. Hindley. I thocht it kent me: it powked its neb agin mine bi wey o hello, an syne hashed tae ett the parritch; whylst I groped frae step tae step, gaitherin the shards o earthenware, an dryin the spirks o milk frae the banister wi ma snifter dichter. Oor darg wis scarce ower fin I heard Earnshaw’s fit in the lobby; ma helper tucked in his tail, an pressed tae the waa; I creepit intae the nearest yett. The tyke’s tcyauve tae jink him wis unsuccessfu; as I heard bi a melee doonstairs, an a lang, peetifu yelpin. I’d better luck: he gaed on, entered his chaumer, an steek the yett. Richt efter Joseph cam up wi Hareton, tae pit him tae bed. I’d fand a bield in Hareton’s chaumer, an the auld chiel, on seein me, quo ‘There’s room fur baith ye an yer pride, noo, I’d think in the hoose. It’s teem; ye may hae it aa tae yersel, an him as aye makks a third, in sic ill company!’

Gledly did I takk advauntage o this tellin; an the meenit I flang masel intae a cheer, bi the lowe, I noddit, an sleepit. Ma sleep wis deep an swete, tho ower far ower sune. Mr. Heathcliff waukened me; he’d jist cam in, an demandit, in his luvin mainner, fit I wis daein thonner? I telt him the cause o my bidin up sae late—that he hid the key o oor chaumer in his pooch. The adjective *oor* gaed mortal hurt. He swore it wisnae, nor iver should be, mine; an he’d—bit I’ll nae repeat his spikk, nor tell o his ongaun weys: he’s sleekit an unrestin in sikkin tae win ma scunner! I whyles winner at him wi an smeddum that deidens ma fear: yet, I tell ye, a tiger or a pysonous snake couldnae cause fleg in me equal tae that which he waukens. He telt me o Kirsty’s sikkness, an blamed ma brither o causin it promisin that I’d be Edgar’s proxy in sufferin, till he could get haud o him.

I hate him—I’m dinged doon—I’ve bin a gype! Takk tent o nae spikkin ae braith o this tae ony ane at the Grange. I’ll expeck ye ilkie day—dinna disappynt me!

Isabella.

The Peacemakker **Chapter 14**

As sune as I’d read this letter I gaed tae the maister, an telt him that his sister hid arrived at the Heichts, an sent me a letter tellin o her sorra fur Mrs. Linton’s seekness, an her strang langin tae see him; wi a wish that he wid sen tae her, as early as possible, some merk o forgieness bi me.

‘Forgieness!’ quo Linton. ‘I hae naethin tae forgie her, Ellen. Ye micht caa at Whudderin Heichts this efterneen, gin ye like, an say that I’m nae *angeret*, bit I’m *wae* tae hae tint her; speecially as I can niver think she’ll be blythe. It’s oot o the question ma gaun tae see her, hoosaeiver: we’re aathegither split; an should she really wint tae obleege me, lat her perswuad the vratch she’s wad tae leave the kintra.’

‘An ye winna screive her a wee note, sir?’ I speired, priggin.

‘Na,’ he reponed. ‘It’s needless. Ma links wi Heathcliff’s faimily’ll be as sparin as his wi mine. It winna exist!’

Mr. Edgar’s cauldness upset me unca; an aa the wey frae the Grange I raxxed ma harns foo tae pit mair hairt intae fit he said, fin I repeatit it; an foo tae saften his refusal o even a fyew lines tae console Isabella. I dauresay she’d bin on the luik oot fur me frae mornin: I saw her luikin ben the lattice as I cam up the gairden cassie, an I noddit tae her; bit she drew back, as if feart o bein seen. I gaed in wioot chappin. There niver wis sic a dreich, dowie scene as the formerly cheerie hoose shawed! I maun confess, that gin I’d bin in the young leddy’s place, I wid, at least, hae swypt the hairth, an dichtit the brods wi a cloot. Bit she already tuik on the owerbearin speerit o negleck that encercled her. Her bonnie face wis peely wally an dweeble; her hair wis hudderie: a puckle locks hingin dweebly doon, an a puckle careless-like furled roon her heid. Likely she hidnae touched her frock since yestreen. Hindley wisnae thonner. Mr. Heathcliff sat at a brod, turnin ower some papers in his pooch-buik; bit he raise fin I cam in, speired at me foo I wis, rael frienly, an offered me a cheer. He wis the anely thing there that luikit decent; an I thocht he niver luikit better. Sae muckle hid maitters cheenged their positions, that he wid o a certainty hae strukk a fremmit incamer as a born an bred laird; an his wife as a throwither slorrach. She cam forrit keen tae greet me, an held oot ae haun tae takk the expeckit letter. I shuik ma heid. She widnae unnerstaun the hint, bit follaed me tae a sideboord, far I gaed tae pit ma bunnet, an priggit me in a fusper tae gie her direckly fit I’d brocht. Heathcliff jeloused the meanin o her meevements, an quo ‘Gin ye hae got onythin fur Isabella (as nae doot ye hae, Nelly), gie it tae her. Ye neednae makk a secret o’t : we hae nae secrets atween us.’

‘Och, I hae naethin,’ I reponed, thinkin it best tae spikk the truith at aince. ‘Ma maister badd me tell his sister that she maunna expeck either a letter or a veesit frae him eenoo. He sens his luve, ma’am, an his wishes fur yer blytheness, an his pardon fur the wae ye hae caused; bit he thinks that efter this time his hoosehauld an the hoosehauld here should cut ties, as naethin could cam o keepin it up.’

Mrs. Heathcliff’s lip trimmlit slichtly, an she gaed back tae her seat in the windae. Her husband tuik his staun on the hairthstane, nearhaun me, an stertit tae pit questions aboot Kirsty. I telt him as muckle as I thocht richt o her seekness, an he won frae me, bi back speirin , maist o the facks conneckit wi its soorce. I blamed her, as she deserved, fur bringin it aa on hersel, an eyndit bi hopin that he wid follae Mr. Linton’s example an jink future interficherin wi his faimily, fur gweed or ill.

‘Mrs. Linton is noo jist recoverin,’ quo I; ‘she’ll niver be like she wis, bit her life is spared; an gin ye really hae a regaird fur her, ye’ll jink crossin her wey again: na, ye’ll meeve ooto this kintra aathegither; an that ye michtna regret it, I’ll tell ye Kirsty Linton is as different noo frae yer auld frien Kirsty Earnshaw, as thon young leddy is different frae me. Her luik is cheenged greatly, her natur much mair sae; an the body fa is nott, o need, tae be her fier, will anely keep up his affection hereaifter bi the myndin o fit she aince wis, bi ordnar humanity, an a sense o duty!’

‘Thon’s rael possible,’ remairked Heathcliff, forcin himsel tae luik calm: ‘rael possible that yer maister should hae naethin bit ordnar humanity an a sense o duty tae faa back on. Bit dae ye think that I’ll leave Kirsty tae his *duty* an *humanity*? an can ye compare ma feelins fur Kirsty tae his? Afore ye leave this hoose, I maun hae a promise frae ye that ye’ll get me an interview wi her: agree, or refuse, I *will* see her! Fit dae ye say?’

‘I say, Mr. Heathcliff,’ I reponed, ‘ye mauna: ye niver shall, throwe me. Anither encoonter atween ye an the maister wid kill her aathegether.’

‘Wi yer help that micht be avoyded,’ he gaed on; ‘an should there be danger o sic a tryst—should he be the cause o addin a single tribble mair tae her life—weel, I think I’ll be justifeed in gaun tae extremes! I wish ye hid sincerity eneuch tae tell me gin Kirsty wid suffer sair frae his loss: the fear that she wid hauds me back. An there ye see the split atween oor feelins: hid he bin in ma place, an I in his, tho I hatit him wi a hatred that soored ma life tae gall, I niver wid hae raised a haun agin him. Ye micht luik dumfounert gin ye ilke! I niver wid hae banished him frae her society as lang as she socht his. The meenit her regaird stoppit, I wid hae torn his hairt oot, an drunk his bluid! Bit, till then—gin ye dinna believe me, ye dinna ken me—till then, I wid hae deed bi inches afore I touched a single hair o his heid!’

‘An yet,’ I brukk in, ‘ye hae nae scruples in connachin aa hopes o her perfeck recovery, bi breengin intae her myndin noo, fin she’s near forgot ye, an drawin her intae a new stooshie o tribble an wae.’

‘Ye jeloouse she’s near forgotten me?’ he speired. ‘Och, Nelly! Ye ken she hisnae! Ye ken as weel as I dae, that fur ilkie thocht she spens on Linton she spens a thoosan on me! At a maist dowie whyle o ma life, I’d a notion o the kind: it hauntit me on ma return tae the neebourhood last simmer; bit anely her ain assurance could makk me admit the awfu idea again. An syne, Linton wid be naethin, nur Hindley, nur aa the dreams that iver I dreamt. Twa wirds wid takk in ma future—*daith* an *hell*: life, efter lossin her, wid be hell. Yet I wis a gype tae fancy fur a meenit that she valued Edgar Linton’s luve mair than mine. Gin he lued wi aa the pouers o his shilpit bein, he couldnae lue as much in echty years as I could in a day. An Kirsty his a hairt as deep as I hae: the sea could be as ready held in thon shelt-troch as her hale hairt be taen ower bi him. Fyaach! He’s scarce a degree dearer tae her than her tyke, or her shelt. It isnae in him tae be lued like me: foo can she lue in him fit he disna hae?’

‘Kirsty an Edgar are as fond o each ither as ony twa fowk can be,’ cried Isabella, wi sudden smeddum. ‘Naebody his a richt tae spikk in thon mainner, an I winna hear ma brither ill spukken o in seelence!’

‘Yer brither is byordnar fond o ye as weel, it he nae?’ spakk Heathcliff, scornfu. ‘He turns ye adrift on the warld wi bumbazin speed.’

‘He disnae ken fit I thole,’ she reponed. ‘I didnae tell him thon.’

‘Ye hae bin tellin him somethin, syne: ye hae screived, hae ye?’

‘Tae sae that I wis mairried, I did screive—ye saw the note.’

‘An naethin since?’

‘Na.’

‘Ma young leddy is luikin sadly the waur fur her cheenge o condition,’ I remairked. ‘Somebody’s lue cams short in her case, obviously; fas, I micht jelouse; bit, mebbe, I shouldnae say.’

‘I jelouse it wis her ain,’ quo Heathcliff. ‘She turns intae an orra jaaad! She’s scunnert o ettlin tae please me unca early. Ye’d hardly think it, bit the verra mornin o oor waddin she wis greetin tae gae hame. Hoosaiver, she’ll suit this hoose sae much the better fur nae bein ower genteel, an I’ll takk tent care she disnae affront me bi stravaigin ootbye.’

‘Weel, sir,’ quo I, ‘I hope ye’ll conseeder that Mrs. Heathcliff is eesed tae be luiked efter an wyted on; an that she’s bin brocht up like an anely dother, fa aabody wis ready tae serve. Ye maun let her hae a maidie tae keep things tidy aboot her, an ye maun treat her kindly. Fitever be yer thochts o Mr. Edgar, ye canna doot that she his a stammach fur strang ties, or she widnae hae tint the deinties, an comforts, an friens o her former hame, tae fix freely, in sic a wudness as this, wi ye.’

‘She left them unner a delusion,’ he reponed; ‘picturin in me a hero o romaunce, an expeckin unleemited pleisurs frae ma genteel luve. I can scarce regaird her in the licht o a rational craitur, sae thrawnly his she gaen on formin a fey notion o ma natur an actin on the fause beliefs she held. Bit, at last, I think she sterts tae ken me: I dinna see the glekit smiles an smirks that irritatit me at first; an the menseless inability o kennin that I wis in earnest fin I gae her ma thochts o her infatuation an hersel. It wis a mervellous effort o insicht tae discover that I didnae lue her. I thocht, at ae time, nae lessons could teach her thon! An yet it is puirly larnt; fur this mornin she annoonced, as a bittick o unca kennin, that I’d actually succeeded in makkin her hate me! A richt tycauve o Hercules, I tell ye! Gin it be true, I hae rizzon tae be thankfu. Can I trust yer spikk, Isabella? Are ye siccar ye hate me? Gin I lat ye alane fur hauf a day, winna ye cam soughin an wheedlin tae me again? I dauresay she wid raither I’d seemed aa douceness afore ye: it skaiths her pride tae hae the truith shawn. Bit I dinna care fa kens that the luve wis aa on ae side: an I niver telt her a lee aboot it. She canna accuse me o shawin ae bittie o deceitful saftness. The first thing she saw me dae, on camin ooto the Grange, wis tae hing up her wee tyke; an fin she priggit fur it, the first wirds I spakk wir a wish that I’d the hingin o ilkie bein belangin tae her, cept ane: nae doot she tuik thon exception fur hersel. Bit nae coorseness scunneret her: I jelouse she his a taste fur it, gin anely her preecious sel wir safe frae skaith! Noo, wis it nae the heicht o daftness—o rael gypitness, fur that peetifu, slavish, smaa-mindit aiblich tae dream that I could lue her? Tell yer maister, Nelly, that I niver, in aa ma life, met wi sic a coorin thing as she is. She even affronts the nemme o Linton; an I’ve whyles renaged, frae pure wint o invention, in ma experiments on fit she could thole, an still creep shamefu peengin back! Bit tell him, as weel, tae set his britherly an joodgmental hairt at ease: that I keep cannily inbye the leemits o the law. I hae avoyded, up tae this time, giein her the slichtest richt tae claim a separation; an, fit’s mair, she’d thank naebody fur dividin us. Gin she wintit tae gae, she micht: the scunner o her presence ootweys the pleisur tae be gotten frae tormentin her!’

‘Mr. Heathcliff,’ quo I, ‘this is the spikk o a daftie; yer wife, maist likely, is certain ye are gyte; an, fur thon rizzon, she’s tholed wi ye up tae noo: bit noo that ye say she micht gae, she’ll dootless takk ye up on the offer. Ye’re nae sae enthralled, ma’am, are ye, as tae bide wi him o yer ain accord?’

‘Takk tent, Ellen!’ reponed Isabella, her een skinklin ruefu; there wis nae misdootin bi their luik the full success o her pairtner’s tcyauve tae makk himsel detestit. ‘Dinna pit faith in a single wird he spikks. He’s a leein deil! a monster, an nae a human bein! I’ve bin telt I micht leave him afore; an I’ve tried, bit I daurna repeat it! Anely, Ellen, promise ye’ll nae spikk a wird o his infamous blethers tae ma brither or Kirsty. Fitiver he micht makk on, he wints tae gar Edgar feel wae: he sez he’s mairried me on purpose tae win pouer ower him; an he winna gain it—I’ll dee first! I jist hope, I pray, that he micht forget his deevilish cannieness an kill me! The single pleisur I can think is tae dee, or tae see him deid!’

‘There—thon’ll dae fur eenoo!’ quo Heathcliff. ‘Gin ye are socht in a coort o law, ye’ll mynd her wirds, Nelly! An takk a gweed luik at thon face: she’s near the pynt that wid suit me. Na; ye’re nae fit tae be yer ain guairdian, Isabella, noo, an I, bein yer legal protector, maun haud ye in ma keepin, hoosaever distastefu the duty micht be. Gae upstairs; I hae somethin tae say tae Ellen Dean in private. Thon’s nae the wey: upstairs, I tell ye! Foo, this is the road upstairs, wumman!’

He grippit, an haived her frae the chaumer; an returned mummlin ‘I hae nae peety! I hae nae peety! The mair the wirms wummle, the mair I wint tae haimmer oot intimmers! It’s a moral teethin; an I grind wi mair virr in time tae the increase o pain.’

‘Dae ye unnerstaun fit the wird peety means?’ I speired, hashin tae refit ma bunnet. ‘Did ye iver finn a touch o it in yer life?’

‘Pit thon doon!’ he brukk in, seein ma intent tae depairt. ‘Ye’re nae gaun yet. Cam here noo, Nelly: I maun either perswad or compel ye tae aid me in seein Kirsty, an thon wioot devaul. I sweir that I mean nae herm: I dinna wint tae cause ony stooshie, or tae irritate or insult Mr. Linton; I anely wint tae hear frae hersel foo she is, an foo she’s bin ill; an tae speir gin onythin that I could dae wid be o eese tae her. Last nicht I wis in the Grange gairden sax oors, an I’ll return there the nicht; an ilkie nicht I’ll haunt the placie, an ilkie day, till I finn a chaunce o gaun in. Gin Edgar Linton meets me, I winna haud back frae caain him doon, an gie him eneuch tae insure his quaet whylst I bide. Gin his servants cwanter me, I’ll threaten them aff wi these pistols. Bit wid it nae be better tae prevent ma bein in contack wi them, or their maister? An ye could dae it sae easy. I’d warn ye fin I cam, an syne ye micht lat me in unseen, as sune as she wis alane, an watch till I depairted, yer conscience richt calm: ye wid be hinnerin mischief.’

I argyed agin actin traitor in ma maister’s hoose: an, mairower, I urged the coorseness an selfishness o him wrackin Mrs. Linton’s calm fur his pleisur. ‘The maist ordnar happenin stertles her unca,’ quo I. ‘She’s aa nerves, an she couldnae thole the begeck, I’m siccar. Dinna persist, sir! or else I’ll be obleeged tae tell ma maister o yer pliskies; an he’ll takk meisurs tae secure his hoose an its inmates frae ony sic illegal ongauns!’

‘In thon case I’ll takk meisures tae secure ye, wumman!’ quo Heathcliff; ‘ye winna leave Whudderin Heichts till the morn’s mornin. It’s a daft story tae say that Kirsty couldnae thole tae see me; an as tae bumbazin her, I dinna wint it: ye maun ready her—speir her gin I can cam. Ye say she niver spikks ma nemme, an that I’m niver mentioned tae her. Tae fa should she mention me gin I’m a forbidden topic in the hoose? She thinks ye’re aa spies fur her man. Och, I’ve nae doot she’s in hell amang ye! I jelouse bi her seelence, as much as onythin, fit she finns. Ye say she is aften restless, an worriet-like: is thon a pruif o peace? Ye spikk o her harns bein unsattled. Foo the deil could it be itherwise in her frichtfu alaneness? An thon peely wally, nochtie craitur takkin tent o her frae *duty* an *humanity*! Frae *peety* an *charity*! He micht as weel plant an aik in a flooer-pot, an expeck it tae thrive, as think he can restore her tae virr in the yird o his shalla cares? Lat’s sattle it at aince: will ye bide here, an am I tae fecht ma wey tae Kirsty ower Linton an his fitman? Or will ye be ma frien, as ye hae bin afore, an dae fit I speir? Decide! because there is nae rizzon fur ma wytin anither meenit, gin ye persist in yer thrawn ill-natur!’

Weel, Mr. Lockwood, I argyed an complained, an doonricht refused him fifty times; bit in the lang run he forced me tae an agree. I agreed tae cairry a letter frae him tae ma mistress; an should she say aye, I promised tae lat him ken fin Linton wis awa: I widnae be thonner, an ma fella-servants should be equally oot o the wey. Wis it richt or wrang? I fear it wis wrang, tho it wis necessar. I thocht I held aff anither cairry on bi ma agreein; an I thocht, as weel, it micht makk a favourable crisis in Kirsty’s seekness: an syne I myndit Mr. Edgar’s wersh rebuke o me clypin; an I ettled tae smeeth awa aa worry on the subjeck, bi thinkin, aften, that thon betrayal o trust, gin it merited sae sair a nemme, should be the hinmaist. Hoosaeiver, ma traivel hameward wis dowier than ma traivel thonner; an mony misgieins I hid, afore I could lat masel pit the letter intae Mrs. Linton’s haun.

Bit here’s Kenneth; I’ll gae doon, an tell him foo much better ye are. Ma tale is *waesome*, as we say, an will serve tae whyle away anither mornin.

Dowie, an dreich! I refleckit as the gweed wumman gaed doon to lat in the doctor: an nae exactly o the kind that I should hae chusen tae amuse me. Bit niver mind! I’ll extrack halesome medicines frae Mrs. Dean’s wersh herbs; an first, lat me takk tent o the feyness that bides in Kitty Heathcliff’s skinklin een. I should be in an unca state gin I surrendered ma hairt tae thon young body, an the dother turned oot a secunt copy o the mither.

**The Hinmaist Tryst Chapter 15**

Anither wikk ower—an I’m sae mony days nearer health, an spring! I hae noo heard aa ma neebour’s history, at different whyles, as the hoosekeeper could gie up time frae mair important dargs. I’ll gae on in her ain wirds, anely a bittie shorter. She is, on the hale, a verra gweed seannachie, an I dinna think I could better her style.

In the evenin, she telt me, the evenin o ma veesit tae the Heichts, I kent, as weel as if I saw him, that Mr. Heathcliff wis aboot the place; an I didnae gae oot, because I still cairried his letter in ma pooch, an didnae wint tae be threatened or teased ony mair. I’d decidit nae tae gie it till ma maister gaed somewey, as I couldnae jelouse foo its receipt wid affeck Kirsty. The upshot wis, that it didnae reach her afore the lapse o three days. The fowerth wis Sabbath, an I brocht her intae her chaumer efter the faimily wir gane tae kirk. There wis a manservant left tae keep the hoose wi me, an we aywis steekit the yetts durin the oors o service; bit thon time the weather wis sae hett an pleisunt that I set them wide ajee, an, tae feenish the darg, as I kent fa wid be camin, I telt ma fier that the mistress langed fur a puckle oranges, an he maun rin ower tae the clachan an get a fyew, tae be pyed fur neist day. He depairtit, an I gaed upstairs.

Mrs. Linton sat in a lowse fite dress, wi a licht plaid ower her shouders, in the neuk o the open windae, as ordnar. Her thick, lang hair hid bin pairtly cuttit at the stert o her sikkness, an noo she wore it simple caimbed in its natural curls ower her broo an nape. Her luik wis cheenged, as I’d telt Heathcliff; bit fin she wis calm, there seemed uneirdly bonnieness in the cheenge. The flash o her een hid bin turned intae a dwaumy an dowie saftness; they nae langer gaed the idea o luikin at the objecks aroon her: they seemed aywis tae keek ayont, an hyne ayont—ye wid hae said ooto this warld. Syne, the fiteness o her face—its shilpit luik haein vanished as she pit on flesh—an the fey luik frae her mental state, tho painfu suggestin o its cause, addit tae the touchin interest that she waukened; an—speecially tae me, I ken, an tae onybody fa saw her, I jelouse —pit the hems on pruifs o recovery, an merked her as ane wi an ill weird.

A buik lay spreid on the sill afore her, an the licht win flichtered its leaves whyles. I think Linton hid pit it thonner: fur she niver ettled tae divert hersel wi readin, or ony ither darg, an he wid spen mony oors tcyauvin tae win her thochts tae some subjeck which aince amused her. She kent his aim, an in her better moods tholed his darg peacefu, anely shawin their eeselessness bi noo an syne haudin back a weariet maen, an stoppin him at last wi the dowiest o smiles an kisses. At ither whyles, she wid turn huffily awa, an hap her face in her haus, or even haive him aff angeret; an syne he cannily lat her alane, fur he wis siccar o daein nae gweed.

Gimmerton kirk bells wir still ringin; an the fu, swete flow o the burn in the howe cam doucely on the lug. It was a braw substitute fur the yet tint mummle o the simmer leaf, that drooned thon music aboot the Grange fin the trees wir in leaf. At Whudderin Heichts it aywis soondit on quaet days follaein a muckle thaw or a sizzon o steidy rain. An o Whudderin Heichts Kirsty wis thinkin as she lippened: that is, gin she thocht or lippened at aa; bit she hid the dwaumy, hyne aff luik I spakk o afore, that shawed nae kennin o eirdly ferlies either bi ee or lug.

‘There’s a letter fur ye, Mrs. Linton,’ quo I, saftly pittin it in ae haun that rested on her knee. ‘Ye maun read it straicht aff, because it wints a repon. Shall I brakk the seal?’ Aye,’ she reponed, wioot cheengin the direction o her een. I opened it—it wis verra short. ‘Noo,’ I gaed on, ‘read it.’ She drew awa her haun an lat it faa. I pit it back intae her lap, an stude wytin till it should please her tae luik doon; bit that meevement wis sae lang pit aff that at last I quo ‘Maun I read it, ma’am? It’s frae Mr. Heathcliff.’

There wis a stert an a tribbled glent o myndin, an a warssle tae arreenge her ideas. She heistit the letter, an seemed tae read it; an fin she cam tae the signature she soughed: yet still I fand she hadnae gaithered its import, fur, upon ma wintin tae hear her repon, she anely pyntit tae the nemme, an luikit at me wi dowie an winnerin glegness.

‘Weel, he wints tae see ye,’ quo I, jelousin her need o an interpreter. ‘He’s in the gairden bi this time, an wints tae ken fit repon I shall bring.’

As I spakk, I saw a muckle tyke lyin on the sunny girse aneth raise its lugs as if aboot tae bowf, an syne smeethin them back, annoonce, bi a wag o the tail, that somebody cam near fa it didnae conseeder fremmit. Mrs. Linton booed forrit, an lippened braithless. The meenit efter a step crossed the haa; the open hoose wis ower temptin fur Heathcliff tae resist waukin in: maist likely he jeloused that I micht jink ma promise, an sae resolved tae trust tae his ain impidence. Wi raxxin eagerness Kirsty luikit tae the incam tae her chaumer. He didnae finn the richt chaumer direck: she gart me lat him in, bit he fand it oot afore I could reach the yett an in a stride or twa wis aside her an hid her in his aims.

He neither spakk nur lowsed his haud fur some five meenits, durin fan he gaed mair kisses than iver he gaed in his life afore, I dauresay: bit syne ma mistress hid kissed him first, an I plainly saw that he could scarce thole, fur doonricht agony, tae luik intae her face! The same thocht hid strukk him as me, frae the meenit he saw her, that there wis nae prospeck o recovery thonner—she wis fated, certain tae dee.

‘Och, Kirsty! Och, ma life! foo can I thole it?’ wis the first wirds he spakk in a tone that didnae sikk tae happ his wae. An noo he glowered at her sae keen that I thocht the verra virr o his luik wid bring tears intae his een; bit they bleezed wi pain: they didnae melt.

‘Fit noo?’ quo Kirsty, leanin back, an returnin his luik wi a new cloudit broo: her mood wis a vane fur ongaun cheengin caprices. ‘Ye an Edgar hae brukken ma hairt, Heathcliff! An ye baith cam tae murn the deed tae me, as gin *ye* wir the anes tae be peetied! I winna peety ye, nae I. Ye hae killed me—an thriven on it, I think. Foo strang ye are! Foo mony years dae ye mean tae live efter I’m gane?’

Heathcliff hid knelt on ae knee tae bosie her; he ettled tae rise, bit she grippit his hair, an held him doon.

‘I wish I could haud ye,’ she gaed on, wershly, ‘till we wir baith deid! I shouldnae care fit ye tholed. I care naethin fur yer sufferins. Foo shouldn’t ye suffer? I dae! Will ye forget me? Will ye be blythe fin I’m in the mools? Will ye say twinty years frae noo, “Thon’s the grave o Kirsty Earnshaw? I lued her lang syne, an wis sair made tae loss her; bit it’s bye. I’ve lued mony ithers since: ma bairns are dearer tae me than she wis; an, at daith, I winna rejoyce that I gyang tae her: I’ll be sorry that I maun leave them!” Will ye say thon, Heathcliff?’

‘Dinna torture me till I’m as wud as yersel,’ he maened, yarkin his heid free, an grindin his teeth.

The twa, tae a cweel onluiker, made a fey an fearfu pictur. Weel micht Kirsty think that heiven wid be a lan o exile tae her, unless wi her mortal body she cast awa her moral sel as weel. Her luik eenoo hid a wud coorseness in its fite chikk, an a bluidless lip an skinklin ee; an she keepit in her steekit fingers a daud o the locks she’d bin grippin. As tae her fier, finn raisin himsel wi ae haun, he’d taen her airm wi the ither; an sae eeseless wi his stock o saftness tae the wints o her condition, that on his lattin go I saw fower distinck merks left blae in the fite skin.

‘Are ye grippit bi a deevil,’ he speired, rochly, ‘tae spikk in thon mainner tae me fin ye are deein? Dae ye ken that aa thon wirds will be brunt in ma harns, an ettin deeper foraye efter ye hae left me? Ye ken ye lee tae say I hae killt ye: an, Kirsty, ye ken that I could as sune forget ye as ma life! Is it nae eneuch fur yer damned selfishness, that fin ye are at peace I’ll warssle in the lowes o hell?’

‘I winna be at peace,’ maened Kirsty, recaad tae a sense o pheesical dweebleness bi the violent, uncannie stounin o her hairt, that duntit veesible an audible unner this rowth o agitation. She spakk naethin farrer till the turn wis by; syne she gaed on, mair kindly—

‘I’m nae wintin ye greater skaith than I hae, Heathcliff. I anely wint us niver tae be pairtit: an gin a wird o mine misfit ye hereaifter, think I feel the same wae unnergrun, an fur ma ain sake, forgie me! Cam here an kneel doon again! Ye niver hermed me in yer life. Na, gin ye nurse anger, that’ll be waur tae mynd than ma wersh wirds! Will ye cam here again? Cam!’

Heathcliff gaed tae the back o her cheer, an booed ower, bit nae sae far as tae lat her see his face, that wis heich wi emotion. She booed roon tae luik at him; he widnae lat her: birlin roon, he wauked tae the hairth, far he stude, seelent, wi his back tae us. Mrs. Linton’s een follaed him suspicious: ilkie meevement waukened a new feelin in her. Efter a wyte an a lang luik, she spakk again; in wirds o misfittit disappyntment—

‘Och, ye see, Nelly, he widnae relent a meenit tae keep me ooto the grave. *Thon* is foo I’m lued! Weel, niver mind. Thon isnae  *my* Heathcliff. I’ll lue mine yet; an takk him wi me: he’s in ma sowel. An,’ addit she thochtfu, ‘the thing that misfits me maist is this brukken jyle, efter aa. I’m trauchelt o bein jyled here. I’m wearyin tae escape inno thon glorious warld, an tae be aywis thonner: nae seein it blae ben greetin, an langin fur it ben the waa o a sair hairt: bit raelly wi it, an in it. Nelly, ye think ye’re better an mair lucky than I; in full health an virr: ye’re sorry fur me—verra sune that will be cheenged. I’ll be sorry fur *ye.* I’ll be hyne ayont an abune ye aa. I *winner* he winna be nearhaun me!’ She gaed on tae hersel. ‘I thocht he wintit it. Heathcliff, ma jo! ye shouldnae be dour noo. Cam tae me, Heathcliff.’

In her virr she raise an supportit hersel on the airm o the cheer. At thon strang appeal he turned tae her, luikin aethegither desperate. His een, wide an weet, at last flashed fierce on her; his breist heaved wi wae. A meenit they held apairt, an syne foo they met I scarce saw, bit Kirsty lowped, an he catched her, an they wir steekt in a bosie frae which I thocht ma mistress wid niver be lowsed alive: in fack, tae ma een, she seemed direck senseless. He flang himsel intae the nearest seat, an on ma gaun faist tae see gin she’d feinted, he gnashed at me, an faemed like a wud tyke, an gaithered her tae him wi greedy jealousy. I didnae feel as gin I wis in the company o a craitur o ma ain species: it seemed that he widnae unnerstaun, tho I spakk tae him; sae I stude aff, an held ma wheesht, in dumfounerment.

A meevement o Kirsty’s relieved me a bittie syne: she pit up her haun tae grip his neck, an bring her chikk tae his as he held her; while he, in betimes, happin her wi frantic bosies, quo wudly—

‘Ye teach me noo foo coorse ye’ve bin—coorse an fause. *Foo* did ye despise me? *Foo* did ye betray yer ain hairt, Kirsty? I hae nae ae wird o comfort. Ye deserve this. Ye hae killt yersel. Aye, ye may kiss me, an greet; an wring oot ma kisses an greets: they’ll blicht ye—they’ll damn ye. Ye lued me—syne fit *richt* hid ye tae leave me? Fit richt—repon—fur the puir fancy ye felt fur Linton? Because wae an wrack, an daith, an naethin that God or Satan could pit on ye wid hae pairtit us, *ye*, o yer ain will, did it. I hinna brukken yer hairt—*ye*  hae brukken it; an in brakkin it, ye hae brukken mine. Sae much the waur fur me that I’m strang. Dae I wint tae live? Fit kind o leevin will it be fin ye—och, God! wid *ye* like tae live wi yer sowel in the mools?’

‘Lat me alane. Lat me alane,’ sabbit Kirsty. ‘Gin I’ve dane wrang, I’m deein fur it. It is eneuch! Ye left me as weel: bit I winna blame ye! I forgie ye. Forgie me!’

‘It’s hard tae forgie, an tae luik at thon een, an finn thon thin hauns,’ he reponed. ‘Kiss me again; an dinna lat me see yer een! I forgie fit ye hae dane tae me. I lue *ma* murderer—bit *yers*! Foo can I?’

They wir seelent-their faces hid agin each ither, an washed bi each ither’s greets. At least, I jelouse the greetin wis on baith sides; as it seemed Heathcliff *could* greet on a seerious tryst like this.

I grew verra uncomfy, betimes; fur the efterneen wore faist awa, the cheil fa I’d sent aff returned frae his eeran, an I could makk oot, bi the sheen o the western sun up the howe, a boorach growin ootbye Gimmerton kirk.

‘Service is ower,’ I telt him. ‘Ma maister’ll be here in hauf an oor.’

Heathcliff mummlit a bann, an grippit Kirsty closer: she niver meeved.

Afore lang I saw a puckle o the servants passin up the road tae the kitchie wing. Mr. Linton wisnae far ahin; he lowsed the yett himsel an daundered slawly up, likely enjoyin the bonnie efterneen that breathed as saft as simmer.

‘Noo he’s here,’ I telt them. ‘Fur heiven’s sake, hash on! Ye’ll nae meet ony body on the front stairs. Be faist; an bide amang the trees till he’s fairly in.’

‘I maun gae, Kirsty,’ quo Heathcliff, sikkin tae pu hisel frae his dearie’s airms. ‘Bit as I live, I’ll see ye again afore ye’re asleep. I winna traivel five yairds frae yer windae.’

‘Ye maunna gae!’ she reponed, haudin him as hard as her virr alloued. ‘Ye *winna*, I tell ye.

‘Fur ae oor,’ he prigged earnest.

‘Nae fur ae meenit,’ she reponed.

‘I *maun*—Linton’ll be up noo,’ gaed on the worriet veesitor.

He wid hae risen, an unsteekt her fingers bi the act—she grippit faist, pechin: there wis wud virr in her face.

‘Na!’ she skirled. ‘Och, dinna dinna gae. It’s the hinmaist time! Edgar winna hurt us. Heathcliff, I’ll dee! I’ll dee!’

‘Damn the gype! There he is,’ quo Heathcliff, sinkin back inno his seat. ‘Wheesht, ma dearie! Wheesht, wheesht, Kirsty! I’ll bide. Gin he shot me sae, I’d dee wi a blissin on ma lips.’

An there they wir faist again. I heard ma maister sclimmin the stairs—the cauld swyte ran frae ma broo. I wis horrifeed.

‘Are ye gaun tae lippen tae her styte?’ I speired, forcey. ‘She disnae ken fit he says. Will ye wrack her, because she hisnae the mense tae help hersel? Rise up! Ye could be free straicht aff. Thon’s the maist deevilish wirk that iver ye did. We’re aa dane fur—maister, mistress, an maidie.’

I wrung ma hauns, an skirled oot; an Mr. Linton hashed forrit at the soun. In the midst o ma steer, I wis unca gled tae see that Kirsty’s airms hid drappit free, an her heid hung doon.

‘She’s feintit, or deid,’ I thocht: ‘sae much the better. Far better that she be deid, than bein a wecht an a wae-makker tae aa aboot her.’

Edgar lowped tae his unsocht veeitor, fite wi begeck an roose. Fit he meant tae dae I canna tell; hoosaeiver, the ither stoppit aa ongauns, at aince, bi pittin the lifeless-luikin form in his airms.

‘Luik thonner!’ quo he. ‘Unless ye’re a deil, help her first—syne ye shall spikk tae me!’

He wauked intae the parlour, an sat doon. Mr. Linton socht me, an wi an unca tcyauve, an efter tryin mony ploys, we won her back tae consciousness; bit she wis aa dumfounert; she soughed, an maened, an kent naebody. Edgar, in his worry fur her, forgot her hatit frien. I didnae. I gaed, at the earliest chaunce, an socht him tae depairt; sayin Kirsty wis better, an he wid hear frae me in the mornin foo she passed the nicht.

‘I winna refuse tae gae ootbye,’ he reponed; ‘bit I’ll bide in the gairden: an, Nelly, mynd ye keep yer wird the morn. I’ll be unner thon larick-trees. Mynd! or I pye anither veesit, whether Linton be in or nae.’

He gied a faist luik throwe the hauf-ajee yett o the chaumer, an, makkin siccar that fit I telt him wis truith, quit the hoose o his unchauncy sel.

Life an Daith Chapter 16

Aboot twal o’clock thon nicht wis born the Kitty ye saw at Whudderin Heichts: a shargeret, sivven-months’ bairn; an twa oors efter the mither deed, haein niver recovered eneuch consciousness tae miss Heathcliff, or ken Edgar. The latter’s wae at his loss is a subjeck ower painfu tae be dwalt on; its efter-effecks shawed foo deep the sorra gaed. A great addition, in ma een, wis his bein left wioot an heir. I regretted that, as I luikit on the dweeble babby; an I mentally raged agin auld Linton fur (fit wis anely natural favour) securin his estate tae his ain dother, insteid o his son. An unwalcamed bairnie it wis, puir craitur! It micht hae grat ooto life, an naebody cared a hair durin thon first oors o life. We redeemed the negleck eftir; bit its stert wis as frienless as its eyn is like tae be.

Neist mornin—bricht an cheerie ootside—stole saftened in throwe the blinds o the seelent chaumer, an spreid the sofa an its occupant wi a saft, douce glow. Edgar Linton hid his heid laid on the pilla, an his een steekit. His young an fair luiks wir near as daithlike as thon o the corp aside him, an near as fixed: bit *his* wis the wheesht o foonert wae, an *hers* o perfeck peace. Her broo smeeth, her lids steekit, her lips weirin the luik o a smile; nae angel in heiven could be mair bonnie than she seemed. An I partook o the aybydan calm in which she lay: ma thochts wir niver in a halier frame than fin I luiked on thon untribbled pictur o Divine rest. I inwardly echoed the wirds she’d uttered a fyew oors afore: ‘Incomparable ayont an abune us aa! Whether still on the Eirde or noo in heiven, her speerit is at hame wi God!’

I dinna ken gin it be jist me, bit I’m seldom itherwise than blythe fin watchin in the chaumer o daith, gin nae frenzied or greetin murner share the darg wi me. I see a rest that neither the Eirde nor hell can brakk, an I feel the comfort o the eyness an shaddaless hereaifter—the Aybydan they hae entered—far life is bounless in its length, an luve in its sympathy, an blytheness in its fullness. I notit on thon occasion foo much selfishness there is even in a luve like Mr. Linton’s, fin he sae regretted Kirsty’s blissed release! Tae be siccar, ane micht hae dootit, efter the weyward an byordnar life she’d led, whether she meritit a haven o peace at the hinnereyn. Ye micht doot in sizzons o cauld thocht bit nae then, in the presence o her corp. It shawed its ain peace, that seemed a pledge o equal quaet tae its former tenant.

Dae ye believe sic fowk *are* blythe in the ither warld, sir? I’d gie muckle tae ken.

I didnae repon tae Mrs. Dean’s speirin that strukk me as somethin byordnar. She gaed on:

Retracin the life o Kirsty Linton, I fear we hae nae richt tae think she is; bit we’ll leave thon wi her Makker.

The maister luikit asleep, an I verra sune efter daybrakk raise tae quit the chaumer an creep oot tae the caller air. The servants thocht me gaen tae shakk aff the dwaum o ma lang watch; in fack, ma hale rizzon wis seein Mr. Heathcliff. Gin he’d bedd amang the laricks aa nicht, he wid hae heard naethin o the steer at the Grange; unless, mebbe he micht hear the gallop o the messenger gaun tae Gimmerton. Gin he’d cam nearer, he wid likely ken, frae the lichts flichterin back an fore, an the lowsin an steekin o the ooter yetts, that aa wisnae richt inbye. I langed, yet feared, tae finn him. I felt the awfu news maun be telt, an I langed tae get it ower; bit *foo* tae dae it I didnae ken. He wis thonner—at least, a fyew yairds farrer in the park; leant agin an auld ash-tree, his bunnet aff, an his hair weet wi the dyew that hid gaithered on the budded branches, an fell pitterin roon him. He’d bin staunin a lang time in thon airt, fur I saw a pair o blackies passin an repassin scarce three fit frae him, eident in biggin their nest, an regairdin his nearness nae mair than that o a daud o timmer. They flew aff at ma oncam, an he raised his een an spakk: ‘She’s deid!’ quo he ; ‘I’ve nae wyted fur ye tae larn thon. Pit yer snifterdichter awa—dinna snocher afore me. Damn ye aa! she wints nane o *yer* greetin!’

I wis greetin as muckle fur him as her: we dae whyles peety craiturs that hae nane o the feelin either fur thirsels or ithers. Fin I first luikit intae his face, I saw that he kent o her daith; an a daft thocht strukk me that his hairt wis quatened an he prayed, because his lips meeved an his een luiked doon on the grun.

‘Aye, she’s deid!’ I reponed, checkin ma sabs an dichtin ma chikks. ‘Gaen tae heiven, I hope; far we may aa jyne her, gin we takk due heed an leave oor coorse weys tae follae gweed!’

‘Did *she* takk heed, syne?’ speired Heathcliff, ettlin ae sneer. ‘Did she dee like a sanct? Cam, gie me a true accoont o her daith. Foo did—?’

He ettled tae spikk the nemme, bit couldnae dae it; an grippin his mou he held a seelent fecht wi his inbye agony, defyin, betimes, ma sympathy wi an unmeevin, fierce glower. ‘Foo did she dee?’ he speired, at last—fain, despite his hardihood, tae hae a support ahin him; fur, efter the tcyauve, he trimmlit, in spite o himsel, tae his verra finger-eyns.

‘Puir vratch!’ I thocht; ‘ye hae a hairt an nerves the same as ony ithers! Foo should ye warssle tae hap them? Yer pride canna blin God! Ye tempt him tae wring them, till he forces a maen o humiliation.’

‘Quaet as a lammie!’ I reponed, aloud. ‘She maened, an raxxed hersel, like a bairn revivin, an sinkin again tae sleep; an five meenits efter I felt ae wee pulse at her hairt, an naethin mair!’

‘An—did she iver spikk o me?’ he speired, dauchlin, as gin he dreidit the repon tae his speirin wid gie him details that he couldnae thole tae hear.

‘Her senses niver cam back: she kent naebody frae the time ye left her,’ quo I. ‘She lies wi a swete smile on her face; an her latest ideas wanneret back tae pleisunt early days. Her life eyndit in a douce dwaum—may she wauken as kindly in the neist warld!’

‘May she wauken in torment!’ he grat, wi frightfu virr, stampin his fit, an maenin in a sudden brakk oot o ungovernable roose. ‘Weel, she’s a leear tae the eyn! Far is she? Nae *thonner*—nae in heiven—nae deed—far? Och! ye said ye cared naethin fur ma hurts! An I pray ae prayer—I repeat it till ma tongue stiffens—Kirsty Earnshaw, may ye nae rest as lang as I’m leevin; ye said I killt ye—haunt me, syne! The murdert *dae* haunt their murderers, I think. I kent that ghaists *hae* wanneret on the Eirde. Be wi me aywis—takk ony makk—drive me wud! anely *dinna*  leave me in this abyss, far I canna finn ye! Och, God! It’s unspikkable I *canna* live wioot ma life! I *canna* live wioot ma sowel!’

He duntit his heid agin the knottit trunk; an, liftin up his een, yowled, nae like a cheil, bit like a sauvage breet bein goadit tae daith wi knives an spears. I saw a wheen skirps o bluid aboot the bark o the tree, an his haun an broo wir baith bluidy; likely the scene I saw wis a repeat o ithers actit durin the nicht. It hardly meeved ma hairt—it scunnered me: still, I felt laith tae quit him sae. Bit the meenit he recolleckit himself eneuch tae see me watchin, he thunnered an order fur me tae gae, an I obeyed. He wis ayont ma skill tae quaeten or calm!

Mrs. Linton’s beerial wis set tae takk place on the Friday follaein her daith; an till then her kist bedd open, an strewn wi flooers an scentit leaves, in the great drawin-chaumer. Linton spent his days an nichts thonner, a sleepless guairdian; an—a fack kent anely bi me—Heathcliff spent his nichts, at least, ootbye, equally sleepless. I didnae spikk wi him: still, I kent he socht tae enter, gin he could; an on the Tuesday, a bittie efter derk, fin ma maister, frae sheer fooner, hid bin gart tae retire a couple o oors, I gaed an lowsed ane o the windaes; meeved bi his thrawness tae gie him a chaunce o pittin on the dwinin image o his idol ae hinmaist fareweel. He didnae omit tae takk the chaunce, cannie an brief; ower cannie tae betray himsel bi the slichtest soun. Forbye, I shouldnae hae kent that he’d bin thonner, barrin the disarreengement o the linen aroon the corps’s face, an fur seein on the fleer a curl o licht hair, faistened wi a siller threid; that, on luikin, I saw hid bin taen frae a locket hung roon Kirsty’s neck. Heathcliff hid lowsed the trinket an cast oot its contents, replacin them wi a blaik lock o his ain. I twined the twa, an steekit them thegether.

Mr. Earnshaw wis, of coorse, socht tae cam tae the pittin o the remains o his sister tae the grave; he sent nae excuse, bit he niver cam; sae that, asides her husband, the murners wir aathegither jist tenants an servants. Isabella wisnae socht.

The placie o Kirsty’s mools, tae the bumbazement o the clachan fowk, wis neither in the kirk unner the carved monument o the Lintons, nur yet bi the mools o her ain kin, ootbye. It wis dug on a green brae in a neuk o the kirk-yaird, far the waa is sae laigh that heath an bilberry-plants hae sclimmed ower it frae the muir; an peat-mould near beeries it. Her man lies in the same airt noo; an they hae each a simple heidstane abune, an a plain grey block at their feet, tae merk the graves.

CHAPTER SIVVENTEEN

THE MAISTER O WHUDDERIN HICHTS

Yon Friday wis the last of oor fine days fer a month. In the evenin the wither broke: the win shiftit fae sooth tae nor’east, an brocht rain first, an then sleet an snaa. On the morn ye widna hae thocht that there hidd bin three wikks o simmer: the primroses an crocuses were smored aneth wintry drifts; the laverocks hidd gaen quaet, the young leaves o the early trees smitten an blaadit. An dreich, an caul, an dismal, thon morn did caa oot! Ma maister bade in his room; I taen ower the parlour a ma leen, makkin it intae a nursery: an there I wis, sittin wi the girnin dall o a bairn laid on ma knee; shoudin it back an forrit, an watchin, files muckle snaa flakes birled tee an biggit up the uncurtained windae, fan the door opent, an a body cam in, oot o breath an lachin! Ma birse wis muckle mair than ma begeck fer a minty. I thocht it een o the kitchie deems, an I skirlit ‘Haud yer weesht! Dinna shaw hoo blate ye are here; Fit widd Mr. Linton say if he heerd ye?’

‘Excuse me!’ reponit a vyce I kennt; ‘but I ken Edgar is awa tae bed, an I canna stap masel.’

Wi that the spikker cam forrit tae the fire, pechin and haudin her haun tae her side.

‘I hivv run the hale wey fae Wudderin Hichts!’ she cairriet on, aifter a pause; ‘except faar I wis fleein. I cwidna coont foo mony faas I’ve hidd. Ach, I’m sair aa ower! Dinna be afeart! I’ll tell ye fit’s gaun on as seen as I can gie it; ainly jist be guid eneuch tae step oot an caa fer the carriage tae takk me on tae Gimmerton, an garr a servant tae fess a feow claes fae ma wardrobe.’

The intruder wis Mrs. Heathcliff. Certes, she seemed in a richt sotter: her hair hidd faaen doon ower her drookit shooders, dreepin wi snaa an watter; she hidd on the quine’s frock she aye wore, mair suitin her age than faa she wis: a low frock wi short sleeves, an naethin on either heid or neck. The frock wis o licht silk, an clung tae her wi the weet, an her feet were happit jist bi shilpit slippers; aan on tap o this a deep scoor aneth ae lug, which only the caul stoppit fae bleedin sair, a fite face scrattit an bruised, an a frame hairdly able tae haud itsel up she wis that ferfochen; and ye micht funcy ma first fleg wisnae muckle pit aff fan I hidd time tae hae a nearer gaak at her.

‘Ma dear young lady,’ I skirlit, ‘I’ll gang nae wey, an hear naethin, till ye hiv teen aff ivvery article o yer claes, an pit on dry things; an shairly ye willnae gang tae Gimmerton the nicht, sae there is nae need tae caa fer the carriage.’

‘Indaid I will,’ she said; ‘on fit or ridin: yet I’ve nae objickshun tae dress masel doucely. An—ach, see fit wey it flows doon ma neck noo! The fire daes makk it stang.’

She insistit on ma cairryin oot fit she winted, afore she wid lat me touch her; an nae till aifter the coachman hidd been tellt tae get roadit, an a maid tellt tae pack up the claes she nott, did she lat me bin the wound an help tae cheynge her duds.

‘Noo, Ellen,’ she said, fan ma task wis feenished an she wis reistit in an easy-cheer bi the ingle, wi a cup o tae afore her, ‘ye sit doon wi me, an pit peer Kirsty’s babby awa: I dinna like tae see it! Ye maunna think I care naethin fer Kirsty, because I cairriet on sae blate fan I cam in: I’ve grat, an aa, shairly—aye, mair than onybody else his raison tae greet. We didna pairt friens, ye mine, an I winna forgie masel. But, for aa that, I wisnae gaan tae sympathise wi him—the coorse breet! Och, gie me the poker! This is the last thing o his I hiv aboot me:’ she slippit the gowd ring fae her third finger, an stottit it aff the fleer. ‘I’ll dird it!’ she cairriet on, duntin it wi bairnie spite, ‘an then it’ll be brunt!’ an she taen an drappit the bad eesed airticle amang the coals. ‘There! he will buy anither, if he gets his hauns on me again. He’d be weel able tae cam an sikk me oot, tae terment Edgar. Ah daurnae bide, lest that aydea shidd takk a haud in his ill-trickit heid! An forbye, Edgar hisnae bin kind, his he? An I winna cam luikin for his assistance; nor will I hae him brocht intae mair tribble. I hidd nae choice but tae sikk shelter here; though, if I hidnae fun oot he was oot o the wey, I’d hae bade in the kitchie an teen aff again tae onywey oot o the reach o ma damned —o thon divvil! Ach, he wis in sic a fury! If he hidd catched me! It’s a peety Earnshaw is nae his marra in strinth: Ah widnae hiv tae rin tull I’d seen him aa but feenished, hidd Hindley bin strang eneuch tae dee it!’

‘Weel dinna spikk sae faist, Miss!’ I brakkit in; ‘ye’ll runkle the hunky I hivv pit roon yer face, an makk the cut bleed again. Drink yer tae, an takk breath, an gie ower lachin: lachin is sadly oot o place aneth this reef, and in yer feerich!’

‘A trowth I canna conter,’ she replied. ‘List tae thon bairn! It’s aye girnin sair —send it oot o my hearin fer an ooer; I willnae bide ony langer.’

I rang the bell, an haunnit it ower tae a seervint’s care; an syne I spiered fit hidd taen her tae flee fae Whudderin Hichts in sic an antrin picher, an faar she meant tae gang, as she widnae bide wi us.

‘I maun, an I wint tae bide,’ answert she, ‘tae cheer Edgar an takk care o the babby, fer twa things, an because the Grange is ma richt hame. But I tell ye he widna lat me! Div ye think he cwid staun tae see me grow creashy an blithe—cwid staun tae think that we were tranquil, an nae set his myne on pooshenin oor comfort? Noo, I hivv the satisfaction o bein shair that he canna staun the sicht o me, tae the pint o its fair deevin him tae hae me within lug-shot or een sicht: I cin see, fan I cam near him, the muscles o his coontenance widd gang agley an turn tae a liuk o hatred; pairtly comin fae the fack he kens o the guid causes I hivv tae feel like that aboot him, an pairtly fae hatin me fae the start. It is strang eneuch tae makk me feel affa shair that he widnae chase me ower England, supposin I got clean awa; an therefore I maun get clean awa. I’ve got ower ma first wiss tae be killt bi him: I’d raither he’d kill himsel! He his smored ma luve richt weel, an sae I’m at ma ease. I can mine yet hoo I looed him; an can jist jalouse that I cwid still be looin him, gin—na, na! Even gin he hidd dotit on me, the divvilish nater wid hae shawn itsel somehoo. Kirsty hidd an affa twistit taste tae looe him sae dearly, kennin him sae weel. Monster! wid that he cwid be blottit oot o creation, an oot o ma memory!’

‘Weesht, weesht! He’s a human bein,’ I said. ‘Be mair unnerstaunin: there are waur chiels than he is yit!’

‘He’s nae a human bein,’ she reponit; ‘an he his nae claim on ma luuve. I gied him ma hert, an he taen an pinchit it tae deith, an flungit it back tae me. Fowk feel wi their herts, Ellen: an syne he his connached mine, I hinna pooer tae feel fer him: and I widnae, though he grummled fae this tae his deein day, an grat tears o bleed fer Kirsty! Na, indaid, indaid, I widna!’ An here Isabella begood tae greet; but, richt awa dashin the watter fae her lashes, she startit again. ‘Ye spiered, fit his driven me tae flicht at the hinner eyn? I hidd tae, because I hid succeedit in rousin his birse a pitch abune his nestiness. Puuin oot the nerves wi reid het pincers nott mair cweelness than a clour on the heid. He wis workit up eneuch nae tae mine the divvilish canniness he wis blawin o, an turnt tae murderous violence. I wis fair trickit tae deeve him: the sinse o pleeshur wakkit up ma feelins o keppin masel siccar, sae I fairly brakkit free. ‘Yestreen, ye ken, Mr. Earnshaw should hae been at the funeral. He kep himsel sober fer the purpose—weel nigh sober: nae gaun tae bed wud at six o’clock an gettin up bleezin at twal. Sae, he rose, in deidly low speerits, as fit fer the kirk as fer a dunce; and instead, he sat doon bi the firie an swalliet gin or brandy bi tumblerfus.

‘Heathcliff—I grue tae name him! his been an ootlin in the hoose fae last Sunday tull the day. Fither the angels hivv fed him, or his kin alow, I canna tell; but he hisnae suppit wi us fer near on a wikk. He hid jist cam hame at dawn, an gaen upstairs tae his chaumer; lockin himsel in—as if onybody dreamt o sikkin his company! There he his bade, prayin like a Methodist: only the deity he priggit wi is sinseless stoor and aiss; an God, fan he wis cried on, wis curiously mixit up wi his ain black faither! Aifter feenishin thon gweed wirds—an they laistit maistly tull he growit hairse an his vyce wis strunglet in his haase—he wid be aff again; ayewis stracht doon tae the Grange! I winner Edgar didnae sen fer a bobby, an gie him intae jyle! Fer me, grievit as I wis aboot Kirsty, it wisnae possible tae stap regardin this as a chunce tae get awaa fae ull traitmint

‘I pickit up speerits eneuch tae staun Joseph’s lang lectures withoot greetin, an tae meeve up an doon the hoose less wi the fit o a feart thief than afore. Ye widna think that I shud greet at onythin Joseph cwidd spikk; but he an Hareton are nesty friens. I’d raither sit wi Hindley, an list tae his affa claik, than wi the wee “maister” an his leal supporter, thon affa aul mannie! Fan Heathcliff is in, I aften hivv tae sikk the kitchie an their society, or stairve amang the damp teem chaumers; fan he isnae, as wis the case this wikk, I pit a table an cheer at ae neuk o the hoose fire, an nivver mind fit Mr. Earnshaw micht be daein; an he disnae interfere wi ma on-gyaans He is quaeter noo than he eesed tae be, gin naebody conters him: mair dour an disjaskit, an less blate. Joseph wid haud that thon’s a different chiel: that the Lord his touched his hert, an he is saved “so as bi fire.” I’m bumbazit tae fun signs o a guid cheynge: but it is naethin tae dee wi me.

‘Yestreen I sat in ma neuk readin some aul buiks till late on towards twal. It seemed sae dismal tae gang upstairs, wi the wild snaa blawin ootside, an ma thochts aye gaun back tae the kirk-yaird an the new-makkit mools! I daurt hairdly lift ma een fae the page afore me, that dowie scene richt awa widd takk its place. Hindley reistit anent, his heid leant on his haun; mebbe winnerin on the same subjick. He hidd feenished bousin at a pint alow wud, an hidd nedder steered nor spake durin twa or three ooers. There wis nae soun throu the hoose bit the girnin win, which shakkit the windaes ivvery noo an then, the faint spirkin o the coals, an the click o ma snuffers as noo an again I taen aff the lang wick o the caunnel. Hareton an Joseph were likely faist asleep in bed. It wis gey dowie: an files I read I souched, fer it seemit gin aa joy hidd gaen fae the warld, nivver tae cam back.

‘The waefu quaetness wis brakkit at linth bi the soun o the kitchie sneck: Heathcliff hidd cam back fae his watch seener than eesual; doon tae, I’ swarn, the suddent storm. Thon entrance wis faistened, an we heerd him camin roon tae get in bi the idder. I raise wi a luik on ma face I cwidna hod o fit I felt on ma lips, which garred ma companion, faa hidd bin gaakin towards the door, tae turn an gaak at me.

“I’ll kep him oot five minties,” he exclaimed. “Ye winna objick?”

“Na, ye may kep him oot the hale nicht fer me.”

‘Earnshaw hidd deen this ere his guest won tae the front; syne he cam an brocht his cheer tae the idder side o ma table, leanin ower it, an sikkin in my een thon same burnin hate that blintert fae his: as he baith luikit an felt like an assassin, he cwidna exackly fun thon; but he fun eneuch tae hertin him tae spikk.

“Ye, an I,” he said, “hivv ilky een a muckle debt tae hae oot wi the chiel oot yonder! Gin we were nedder o us cooards, we micht jine thegither tae cairry it oot. Are ye as saft as yer brither? Are ye weelin tae haud on tae the last, an nae eence ettle fer a repayment?”

“I’m founert fae tholin noo,” I reponit; “an I’d be gled o a retaliation that widna cam back on masel; but treechery an violence are spears pintit at baith eyns; they hurt those faa eese them waur than their enemies.”

“Treechery an violence are a fair return fer treechery an violence!” scraiched Hindley. “Mrs. Heathcliff, I’ll spier at ye tae dee naethin; but sit still an be dumb. Tell me noo, can ye? I’m shair ye widd hae as much pleeshur as I in witnessin the eyn o the vratch’s existence; he’ll be *yer* deith onless ye owerreach him; an he’ll be *ma* connachin. Damn the heelish villain! He chaps at the door as gin he were maister here aariddy! Promise tae haud yer tongue, an afore thon clock strikes—it wints three minties o een—ye’re a free wumman!”

‘He taen the leems which I tellt ye aboot in ma letter fae his breist, an wid hae turnt doon the caunnel. I yarked it awaa, hooivver, an taen haud o his airm.

“I’ll nae haud ma tongue!” I said; “ye maunna touch him. Lat the door bide shut, an be quaet!”

“Na! I’ve makkit up ma myn, and bi God I’ll dae it!”skwallached the desperate craitur. “I’ll dee ye a kindness in spite o yersel, and Hareton justice! And ye needna tribble yer heid tae screen me; Kirsty is awa. Naebody alive wid regret me, or hae a begeck, though I cut ma haase this meenit—an it’s time tae makk an eyn!”

‘I micht as weel hae focht wi a bear, or raisoned wi a lunatic. The ainly resource left me wis to run tae a windae an warn his intended victim o the fate which aweytit him.

“Ye’d better sikk shelter somewey else the nicht!” I skirled, in raither a delichtit tone. “Mr. Earnshaw his a myn tae sheet ye, gin ye cairry on ettlin tae cam in.”

“Ye’d better apen the door, ye—” he answert, caain me bi some funcy wird that I dinna wint tae repeat.

“I willna ficher in the maitter,” I retortit again. “Cam in an get shot, gin ye wint I’ve deen ma duty.”

‘Wi that I shut the windae an wint back tae ma neuk bi the fire; haein ower smaa a stock o hypocrisy tae makk on I hidd ony wirries fer the danger that threetent him. Earnshaw sweerit wudden at me: sayin that I looed the villain yit; an caain me aa kynes o names fer the peer speerit I shawed. An I, in ma secret hert (an conscience nivver flytit me), thocht fit a blessing it wid be fer *him* shidd Heathcliff pit him oot o misery; an fit a blessin for *me* shidd he sen Heathcliff tae his richt abode! As I sat haudin these thochts tae me, the windae ahin me wis couped on tae the fleer bi a wheek fae the latter body, an his blaik coontenance glowered throu. The stanchions steed ower close tae aloo his shooders tae follie, an I smiled, thinkin masel siccar. His hair an claes were fite wi snaa, and his sharp cannibal teeth, shawn up bi caul an birse, glistert throu the mirk.

“Isabella, lat me in, or I’ll makk ye repent!” he “girned,” as Joseph cries it.

“I canna dee murder,” I reponit. “Mr. Hindley stauns sentinel wi a gullie an loadit pistol.”

“Lat me in bi the kitchie door,” he said.

“Hindley will be there afore me,” I answert: “an that’s a peer luve o yours that canna staun a shooer o snaa! We were left at peace in oor beds as lang as the simmer meen shone, but the mintie a bluffert o winter cams, ye maun run fer shelter! Heathcliff, gin I were ye, I’d gang streek masel ower her mools an dee like a leal dug. The warld is shairly nae worth bidin in noo, is it? Ye hid fairly gied me the aydea that Kirsty wis the hale joy o yer life: I canna..

“He’s there, is he?” skirlit ma companion, breengin tae the gap. “gin I cin get ma airm oot I cin gie him a dird!”

‘I’m feart, Ellen, ye’ll pit me doon as affa ill-trickit; but ye dinna ken aa, sae dinna judge. I widna hae aided or abetted an attempt on even *his* life fer onythin. Wiss that he were deid, I maun; an sae I wis affa disappintit, an unnirvit bi terror fer the consequences o ma tauntin spiel, fan he flung himsel on Earnshaw’s weapon an raxed it fae his neive.

‘The charge explodit, and the gullie, in springin back, closed intae its ainer’s wrist. Heathcliff pooed it awa bi rochly, scoorin up the flesh as it passed on, an stappit it dreepin intae his pooch. Syne he taen a stane, dirdit doon the division atween twa windaes, an loupit in. His adversary hid faaen sinseless wi muckle pain an the flow o bleed, that poored oot fae an artery or a muckle vein. The rochian kickit an trumpled on him, an dirdit his heid ower an ower agin the flags, haudin me wi ae haun, meantime, tae stap me skirlin fer Joseph. Somehoo he wis haudin aff fae feenishin him aa thegither; but nae able tae draa breath, in the eyn he stoppit, an hauled the unmeevin body on tae the settle. There he tore aff the sleeve o Earnshaw’s cwyte, an bun up the wound wi affa rochness; spittin an sweerin durin the operation as ferselly as he had kickit afore. Bein at liberty, I lost nae time in sikkin the aul servant; fa, haein gaithert bi degrees fit I haistily tellt him, hurriet alow, pechin, as he wint doon the steps twa at eence.

“Fit is there tae dee, noo? Fit is there tae dee, noo?”

“There’s this tae dee,” thunnert Heathcliff, “that yer maister’s wud; an shidd he laist anither month, I’ll hae him tae an asylum. An hoo the divvil did ye cam tae faisten me oot, ye toothless hound? Dinna staun mutterin an mummlin there. Cam, I’m nae gaan tae luik aifter him. Wash thon stuff awa; an mind the spirks o your caunnel—it is mair than hauf brandy!”

“And sae ye’ve been murthering on him?” skraiched Joseph, liftin his hauns an een in horror. “If ivver I seed a sicht like this! May the Lord—”

‘Heathcliff gied him a push on tae his knees in the middle o the bleed, an flung a towel tae him; but instead o gaan tae dry it up, he jined his hauns an begood the guid wirds, which garred me lach at its antrin wirds. I wis in the condition o mind tae hae a begeck at naethin: in fack, I wis as wud as some ull-doers shaw themsels at the fitt o the gallas.

“Och, I forgot ye,” said the tyrant. “Ye’ll dae thon. Doon wi ye. An ye wirk wi him agin me, div ye, viper? There, thon is wirk fit fer ye!”

‘He shakkit me till ma teeth rattlit, an pitchit me aside Joseph, fa steedily feenisht his supplications, an syne raise, vowin he widd set aff fer the Grange richt awa. Mr. Linton wis a magistrate, an though he hidd fifty wives deid, he shidd speir intae this. He wis sae thrawn aboot deein thon, that Heathcliff thocht it better tae garr me tae tell fit hidd hoppent; staunin ower me, heavin wi ull-will, as I onweelinly tellt the story in answer tae his questions. It nott muckle wirk tae makk the aul mannie see that Heathcliff hiddnae stertit it; especially wi ma hairdly-vrung replies. Hooinivver, Mr. Earnshaw seen shawit him that he wis alive still; Joseph hurriet tae gie him a dose o speerits, an bi their succour his maister preesintly stertit tae meeve an cam roon. Heathcliff, kennin that his opponent didna ken aboot the traitmint he’d hidd files he wis oot o’t, he didna cairry on wi his affa conduck, but tellt him tae get tae bed. Tae ma joy, he left us, aifter giein this wyse coonsel, an Hindley streekit himsel on the hearthstane. I wint awa tae ma ain room, fair trickit that I hidd got awa sae easily. This mornin, fan I cam doon, aboot hauf an ooer afore noon, Mr. Earnshaw wis sittin bi the fire, deidly nae weel; his termenter, maist as gaunt an ugsome, leant agin the chimbley. Nedder wintit tae dine, an, hivvin wyted till aa wis caul on the table, I begood aa ma lane. Naethin hinnert me fae eating hertily, an I hidd a certain sinse o satisfackshun an bein abune them, as, noo an again, I cassen a luik towards ma quaet companions, an felt the comfort o a quaet conscience within me. Aifter I hidd deen, I taen the oneesual liberty o draain near the ingle, gaan roon Earnshaw’s seat, an kneeling in the neuk aside him.

‘Heathcliff didnae luik ma wey, and I gaakit up, an taen a lang luik at his features aamaist as bauldly as gin they hidd been turnt tae stane. His foreheid, that I eence thocht sae manly, an that I noo think sae divvilish, wis shadit wi a hivvy clood; his basilisk een were nearly pit oot bi sleeplessness, an greetin, mebbe, fer the lashes were weet syne: his lips withoot their coorse jamph, an sealit in a luik o affa sorra. Hidd it been anither, I widd hae happit ma face afore sic grief. In *his* case, I wis lichtsome; an, shamefu as it seems tae miscaa a fallen enemy, I cwidna miss this chunce o stickin in a dart: his waikness wis the ainly time fan I cwid taste the delicht o peyin wrang fer wrang.’

‘Fie, fie, Miss!’ I interruptit. ‘Ye micht suppose ye hidd nivver apent a Bible in yer life. If God afflict yer enemies, shairly that maun dee ye. It is baith mean an bigsy tae add yer pyne tae his!’

‘By ordinaar I’ll alloo that it widd be, Ellen,’ she cairriet on; ‘but fit meesery pit on Heathcliff cwid contint me, onless I hivv a haun in it? I’d raither he suffert less, gin I micht caase his sufferins an he micht *ken* that I wis the caase. Och, I owe him sae muckle. On ainly ae condition can I howp tae forgie him. It is, gin I may takk an ee fer an ee, a tooth fer a tooth; fer ivvery vrench o pyne gie back a vrench: takk him tae ma level. As he wis the first tae hairm, makk him the first tae sikk pardon; an syne—fit wey syne, Ellen, I micht show ye some douceness. But it isnae possible I can ivver be revengit, an sae I canna forgie him. Hindley wintit some watter, an I gied him a gless, an spiered him foo he wis.

“Nae as ull as I wiss,” he reponit. “But leavin oot ma airm, ivvery inch o me is as sair as if I hidd been fechtin wi an airmy o fairlies!”

“Aye, nae winner,” wis ma neist remark. “Kirsty eesed tae blaw that she steed atween ye an bodily hairm: she meant that ilka body widnae hurt ye fer fear o conterin her. It’s weel folk dinna *really* raise fae the mools, or, last nicht, she micht hae witnessed an affa sicht! Arenae ye bruised, an cut ower yer chist an shooders?”“I canna say,” he answert, “but fit div ye mean? Did he daur tae dird me fan I wis doon?”

“He trumplit on an kickit ye, and dirdit ye on the grun,” I fuspert. “An his mou wattert tae rive ye wi his teeth; because he’s ainly hauf chiel: nae sae muckle, an the rist divvil.”

‘Mr. Earnshaw luiked up, like me, tae the coontenance o oor mutual foe; fa, taen up wi his sorra, seemit insinsitive tae onythin aroon him: the langer he steed, the clairer his thochts shawit their blaikness throu his features.

“Och, gin God wid but gie me strinth tae strungel him in ma laist pyne, I’d gang tae heel wi joy,” grumphit the impatient chiel, warstlin tae raise, an faain back sair made, kennin he wisnae up fer the fecht.

“Na, it’s eneuch that he his murdered een o ye,” I observit alood. “At the Grange, ivvery een kens yer sister wid hae been livin noo hidd it nae been fer Mr. Heathcliff. Aifter aa, it is preferable tae be hatit than looed bi him. Fan I mine foo seely we were—foo seely Kirsty wis afore he cam—I’m fit tae curse the day.”

‘Maist likely, Heathcliff saa mair the trowth o fit wis said, than the speerit o the body faa said it. His attention wis haudit, I saa, fer his een drappit doon tears amang the ais, an he draait his breath in smorin souchs. I gaakit richt at him, an gied a scornfu lach. The cloodit windaes o heel blintert a meenit taewards me; the divvil which eesually luikit oot, fooivver, wis sae dimmed an drooned that I didnae fear tae chunce anither soun o scadden.

“Get up, an gang oot o ma sicht,” said the mourner.

‘I jaloused he uddert thon wirds, at least, though his vyce wis hairdly unnerstaunable.

“I beg yer pardon,” I reponit. “But I looed Kirsty an aa; an her brither notts luikin aifter, which, fer her sake, I will gie. Noo, that she’s deid, I see her in Hindley: Hindley his exackly her een, gin ye hidna seyit tae scoor them oot, an made them blaick an reid; an her—”

“Get up, ye feel vratch, afore I stump ye tae deith!” he skraiched, makkin a meevement that caased me to makk een an aa.

‘”But syne,” I cairriet on, haudin masel ready tae flee, gin puir Kirsty hidd trustit ye, an thocht the gowkit, ugsome, shamefu title o Mrs. Heathcliff, she widd seen hae luikit the same! *She* widnae hae tholed yer affa conduct quaetly: her detestation an scunner maun hae fun vyce.”

‘The back o the settle an Earnshaw’s person wis atween me an him; sae insteed o raxin tae me, he yarkit a dinner-knife fae the table an flung it at ma heid. It struck aneth ma ear, an stoppit the sintince I wis udderin; but, pooin it oot, I loupit tae the door an gied anither; which I howp wint a wee bittie deeper than fit he throwit. The last luik I catcht o him wis a wud breenge on his pairt, checkit bi his host haudin ticht tae him; an baith fell lockit thegither on the ingle. In my flicht throu the kitchie I tellt Joseph rin tae his maister; I knockit ower Hareton, fa wis hingin a litter o puppies fae a cheer-back in the doorwey; an, blessit as a sowell rinnin awaa fae purgatory, I boundit, louped, an flew doon the brae; syne, quittin its windins, shot stracht ower the muir, rowin ower banks, an pleiterin throu stanks: ettlin masel, in fack, taewards the beacon-licht o the Grange. An far raither wid I be pit tae bidin fer aye in the heelish bields than, aiven fer ae nicht, bide aneth the reef o Whudderin Hichts again.’

Isabella stoppit spikkin, an taen a drink o tae; syne she raise, an biddin me pit on her bonnet, an a muckle shaal I hidd brocht, an turnin a deef lug tae ma priggin fer her to bide anither ooer, she steppit on tae a cheer, bussed Edgar’s and Kirsty’s picters, bussed ma chick, an wint doon tae the carriage, wi Fanny, faa yelpit wud wi joy at haein back her mistress. She wis driven awa, nivvver tae cam back tae this beild: but letters wis scrievit aa the time atween her and ma maister fan things were mair settlit. I jaloused her new hame wis in the sooth, near London; there she hid a son born a feow months aifter she got awaa. He wis chirstened Linton, an, fae the first, she reportit him to be an ailin, girnin craitur.

Mr. Heathcliff, trystin wi me ae day in the village, askit faar she bade. I widnae tell. He remarkit that it didnae maitter, ainly she maun beware o comin tae her brither: she shidna be wi him, if he hidd tae kep her himsel. Though I wid gie nae information, he fun oot, through some o the ither sirvints, baith her faar she bade an that she’d hidd the bairn. Still, he didna bather her: fer which she maun thunk the fack that he cwidnae thole her, I’s warn. He aften spierit aboot the bairn, fan he saa me; an fan he heerd its name, smiled nestily, an observed: ‘They wiss me tae hate it an aa, div they?’

‘I dinna think they wiss ye tae ken onythin aboot it,’ I answert.

‘But I’ll hae it,’ he said, ‘fan I wint it. They may coont on thon!’

Fortnatly its mither deid afore the time cam; aboot thirteen eers aifter the deith o Kirsty, fan Linton wis twal, or a bittie mair.

On the day aifter Isabella’s unexpected veesit I hidd nae chunce o spikkin tae ma maister: he didnae wint ony claik, and wis fit fer spikkin aboot naethin. Fan I cwid get him tae list, I saa it pleased him that his sister hidd left her man; faa he hidd taen agin in sic a strang wey which the douceness o his naiter widd scarcely seem tae alloo. Sae deep an sinsitive wis his aversion, that he stoppit fae gaan onywey faar he wis likely tae see or hear o Heathcliff. Grief, an thon thegither, fairly cheyngit him intae a hermit: he gied up his office o magistrate, stoppit even gaan tae kirk, bade awaa fae the village at aa times, an spen his life nivver gaan oot o his park an grunns; ainly varied bi stravaigin aa his lane on the muirs, an veesits tae the mools o his wife, maistly at gloamin, or airly mornin afore idder wannerers were aboot. But he wis ower guid to be affa meesrable lang. *He* didnae pray fer Kirsty’s sowel tae haant him. Time brocht resignation, an a sorra doucer than common joy. He mindit her memory wi devotit, tender luve, an howp o gaan tae the better warld; faar he didnae doot she wis gaen.

An he hid airthly consolation an luves an aa. Fer a feow days, I said, he didnae seem tae pey ony heed tae the successor tae the departit: that cauldrife meltit as faist as snaa in April, an ere the wee thing cwid stammer a wird or steiter a step it haudit a despot’s sceptre in his hert. It wis caaed Kirsty; but he nivver caaed it the name in full, as he hid nivver caaed the first Kirsty short: mebbe because Heathcliff hidd a habit o deein at. The little een wis ayewis Kitty: tae him it wis in a wey different fae the mither, an yit conneckit wi her; an his luve cam fae its kin tae her, far mair than fae its bein his ain.

I eesed tae draa a comparison atween him an Hindley Earnshaw, an bumbaze masel seyin tae say fit wey their conduck wis sae contert in samen weys. They hidd baith bin fon husbands, an baith luuved their bairns; an I cwidna see foo they shidna baith hae taen the same road, fer guid or ull. But, I thocht in ma myn, Hindley, wi apparently the stranger heid, his shawn himsel sadly the waur an the fushionless man. Fan his ship founert, the captain gied up his post; an the crew, insteed o seyin tae makk her siccar, breenged intae a richt meneer, leavin nae howp fer their luckless vessel. Linton, on the ither haun, shawit the true courage o a leal an faithfu sowel: he trustit God; an God comfortit him. Een howpit, and the ither tint howp: they chose their ain weys, an were richteously doomed tae thole them. But ye’ll nae wint tae hear ma moralisin, Mr. Lockwood; ye’ll judge, as weel as I cin, aa thon things: at least, ye’ll think ye will, an that’s the samen. The eyn o Earnshaw wis fit micht hae been expectit; it follied faist on his sister’s: there were scarcely sax months atween them. We, at the Grange, nivver got a verra fu accoont o his state afore it; aa that I did leern wis noo an again gaan tae aid in makkin riddy fer the funeral. Mr. Kenneth cam to announce the event tae ma maister.

‘Weel, Nelly,’ said he, ridin intae the yaird ae mornin, ower early nae tae fleg me wi an instanter sinse o ull news, ‘it’s yers an ma turn tae gang intae mournin noo. Faa’s gien us the slip noo, div ye think?’

‘Faa?’ I asked in a picher.

‘Weel, guess!’ quo he, dismountin, an hingin his bridle on a heuk bi the door. ‘An nip up the eyn o yer apron: I’m shair ye’ll nott it.’

‘Nae Mr. Heathcliff, shairly?’ I skirlit.

‘Fit! wid ye hae tears fer him?’ said the doctor. ‘Na, Heathcliff’s a hairdy loon: he luiks bloomin the day. I’ve jist seen him. He’s fair pittin back on flesh syne he tynt his better hauf.’

‘Faa is it, syne, Mr. Kenneth?’ I repeatit impatiently.

‘Hindley Earnshaw! Yer aul frien Hindley,’ he reponit, ‘an ma wickit claik: though he’s bin ower wud fer me this lang filie. There! I said we shidd draa watter. But cheer up! He deid true tae his naiter: pished as a laird. Puir loon! I’m sorry, an aa. One canna help missin an aul frien: though he hidd the waurest joukerie-pokerie wi him that ivver man imaigint, an his deen me mony a rascally turn. He’s nocht but twinty-sivven, it seems; that’s yer ain age: faa wid hae thocht ye were born in ae eer?’

I widd say this begeck wis mair tae me than the begeck o Mrs. Linton’s deith: aul conneckshuns dauchlit roon ma hert; I sat doon in the porch an grat as fer a ma ain kin, wissin Mr. Kenneth tae get anither seervint tae takk him tae the maister. I cwidna hinner masel fae thochts on the question ‘Hidd he hidd fair play?’ Fitivver I deed, thon aydea wid bather me: it wis sae tiresomely tae the pint that I wis set on spierin leave tae gang tae Wudderin Hichts, an hep in the laist duties tae the deid. Mr. Linton wis affa sair made tae say I cwid gang, but I fair priggit fer the frienless wey in which he lay; an I said ma aul maister an foster-brither hidd a claim on ma seervices as strang as his ain. Forbye, I minded him that the bairn Hareton wis his wife’s nephew, an, wi nae nearer kin, he maun ack as its guardian; an he ocht tae and maun spier foo the property wis left, an luik ower the buzness o his brither-in-law. He wis unfit fer luikin aifter sic maitters syne, but he bid me spakk tae his lawyer; an at linth lat me gang. His lawyer hidd bin Earnshaw’s an aa: I cried in by the village, an spierit him tae cam wi me. He shakkit his heid, an gied advyce that Heathcliff shidd be lat alane; affirmin, gin the trowth were kennt, Hareton wid be fun little else than a beggar.

‘His faither deid in debt,’ he said; ‘the hale property is mortgaged, an the sole chunce fer the naiteral heir is tae gie him an opportunity o creatin some interest in the creditor’s hert, that he may wint tae deal lichtly taewards him.’

Fan I won tae the Hichts, I explained that I hidd cam tae see aathin cairriet on doucely; an Joseph, faa luikit richt sorrafae, wis plaised at ma preesince. Mr. Heathcliff said he didnae see that I wis nott; but I micht bide an sort aathin oot fer the funeral, if I wintit.

‘Richtly,’ he remarked, ‘thon feel’s body shidd he beeriet at the cross-roads, withoot ceremony o ony kyne. I hoppent tae leave him ten meenits yestreen aifterneen, an in thon interval he sneckit the twa doors o the hoose agin me, an he his spen the nicht in bousin himsel tae death deeleeberately! We did brakk in this mornin, fer we heerd him sportin like a horse; an there he wis, laid ower the settle: flayin an scalpin widnae hae wakkened him. I sent fer Kenneth, an he cam; but nae till the craiter hid cheynged intae carrion: he wis baith deid an caul, an stark; an sae you’ll alloo it wis eeseless makkin mair steer aboot him!’

The aul seervint confirmit this statement, but mummlit:

‘I’d raither he’d gaan himsel fer the doctor! I shidd hae taen tent o the maister better nor him—and he wisnae deid fan I left, naethin o the sort!’

I insistit on the funeral bein respeckable. Mr. Heathcliff said I micht hae my ain wey there an aa: ainly, he wintit me tae mine that the siller fer the hale jing bang cam oot o his pooch. He wint aboot in a coorse wey, nae carin ava, shawin nedder joy nor sorra: gin onythin, it shawit a pleeshure at a bittie o sair wirk weel deen. I saa eence, indaid, summin like delicht in the wey he luikit: it wis jist fan the fowk were cairryin the coffin fae the hoose. He hidd the hypocrisy tae ack as a mourner: an afore folliein wi Hareton, he liftit the peer bairn on tae the table an mummlit, wi unco gusto, ‘Noo, ma bonny lad, ye are *mine*! An we’ll see if ae tree winna grow as crookit as anither, wi the same win tae connach it!’ The unsuspectin thing wis fair trickit at this speech: he played wi Heathcliff’s whiskers, an strokit his chick; but I jalousit its meanin, an observit tartly, ‘Thon loon maun gang back wi me tae Thrushcross Grange, sir. There is naethin in the warld less yours than he is!’

‘Daes Linton say so?’ he demandit.

‘Of coorse—he his tellt me to takk him,’ I reponit.

‘Weel,’ said the scooneral, ‘we’ll nae faa oot aboot the subjick noo: but I hivv a funcy tae try ma haun at rearin a young een; sae tell yer maister that I maun gie the place o this wi ma ain, gin he seyit tae takk it. I’m nae gaun tae lat Hareton gang withoot a fecht; but I’ll be richt shair tae makk the ither cam! Mine tae tell him.’

This hint wis eneuch tae bin oor hauns. I repeatit it fan I wint back; an Edgar Linton, nae muckle interestit at the stert, spikkit nae mair o interficherin. I’m nae aware that he cwid hae deen it tae ony purpose, hidd he bin ivver sae weellin.

The guest wis noo the maister o Whudderin Hichts: he haudit firm possession, an preeved tae the attorney—faa, in his turn, preeved it tae Mr. Linton—that Earnshaw hidd mortgaged ivvery yaird o laan he ained fer siller tae cairry on his gamin; and he, Heathcliff, wis the mortgagee. In thon wey Hareton, faa shidd noo be the first gentleman in the neeborhood, wis taen doon tae a state o complete dependence on his faither’s waur enemy; an bides in his ain hoose as a seervint, nae allooed ony wages at aa: nae able tae richt himsel, because o his frienlessness, an nae kennin that he his bin wranged.

CHAPTER ACHTEEN

THE TRAIVELLER FINS OOT

The twal eers, wint on Mrs. Dean, follyin thon ugsome period were the maist seely o ma life: ma waut tribbles in their passage cam fae oor wee quinie’s nochtie ullnesses, which she hidd tae gang throu in common wi aa bairns, weel aff an peer. Fer the laave, aifter the first sax month, she growit like tae a larick, an cwid traivel an spikk an aa, in her ain wey, afore the hidder flooered a second time ower Mrs. Linton’s banes. She wis the maist takkin thing that ivver brocht sunshine intae a caul hoose: fair bonny in the face, wi the Earnshaws’ braw dark een, but the Lintons’ fair skin an smaa features, an yalla curlin hair. Her speerit wis heich, though nae roch, an timpert bi a hert sinsitive an lichtsome taen tae the farrest in fit she looed. Thon wey o haen strang likins mindit me o her mither: still she didnae takk aifter her: fer she cwid be saft an douce as a doo, an she hidd a douce voice an thochtfu luik: her birse wis nivvver feerious, but she hidd fauts tae conter her gifts. Fainin tae be chikky wis een; an a heidstrang weell, that connached bairns aye hivv, fither they be guid timpert or girny. Gin a seervint chunced tae vex her, it wis ayewis ‘I will tell faither!’ An gin he tellt her aff , even bi a luik, you wid hae thocht it a hert-brakkin maitter: I dinna believe he ivver did spikk a harsh wird tae her. He taen her eddication aa on himsel, an makkit it an ameesemint. Fortunately, ceeriosity an a quick myn makkit her a skeely scholar: she taen it aa in faist an ettlin, an wis a creedit tae his teachin.

Tull she won tae the age o thirteen she hidd nae eence bin ayont the range o the park bi hersel. Files Mr. Linton wid takk her wi him a mile or sae ootside; but he trustit her tae nae idder body. Gimmerton wis jist a name in her lugs; the kirk, the ainly biggin she hidd gaan near or wint intae, excep her ain hame. Whudderin Hichts an Mr. Heathcliff didnae exist fer her: she wis a richt recluse; an, appairintly, richt weel contintit. Files, indaid, luikin oot at the kintra fae her nursery windae, she wid observe—

‘Ellen, foo lang will it be afore I can stravaig tae the tap o yon hills? I winner fit lies on the idder side—is’t the sea?’

‘Na, na, Miss Kitty,’ I wid repone; ‘it is mair hills, jist like yon.’

‘And fit are yon gowden rocks like fan ye staun aneth them?’ she eence spiered.

The steep wey doon fae Penistone Crags by-ordinaar draait her; aye fan the settin sun shone on it an the topmaist hichts, an the hale swipe o kintra aside it lay in shadda. I explainit that they were bare hellocks o stane, wi hairdly eneuch muck in their clefts tae gie mait tae a stuntit tree.

‘An fit wey are they bricht sae lang aifter it is gloamin here?’ she wint on.

‘Because they are muckle mair heicher up than we are,’ quo I; ‘ye cwidnae clumb them, they are ower heich an steep. In winter the frost is ayewis there afore it cams tae us; an deep intae simmer I hivv fun snaa aneth thon blaick holla on the nor-east side!’

‘Oh, ye hivv bin on them!’ she skirlit fu o glee. ‘ I can gang, an aa, fan I am a wumman. His faither bin, Ellen?’

‘Faither wid tell ye, Miss,’ I answert, histily, ‘that they arenae worth the tribble o veesitin. The muirs, far ye daunner wi him, are bonnier; an Thrushcross Park is the brawest bield in the warld.’

‘But I ken the park, and I dinna ken yon,’ she mummelt tae hersel. ‘An I shidd delicht tae luik roon me fae the broo o thon heich pint: ma wee pony Minny will takk me ae time.’

Een o the maids spikkin aboot the Fairy Cave, fair turnit her heid wi an ettlin tae cairry oot this projick: she termentit Mr. Linton aboot it; an he promist she shidd hae the traivel fan she got auler. But Miss Kitty markit her age bi months, an, ‘Noo, am I aul eneuch tae gang tae Penistone Crags?’ wis the question aye in her mooth. The road thither wun close bi Wudderin Hichts. Edgar hidd nae the hert tae pass it; sae she wis aye giein the answer, ‘Nae yit, luve: nae yit.’

I said Mrs. Heathcliff livit abune a dizzen eers aifter quittin her man. Her faimly werenae strang in body: she an Edgar baith lackit the sonsy glow o guid health that ye will bi ordinaar meet in these pairts. Fit her laist ullness wis, I am nae shair: I’s warn, they deid o the same thing, a kyne o fever, slow fan it begood, but nae curable, an faist consumin life tae the close. She scrievit tae her brither o the probable eyn o a fower-months’ ullness aneth which she hidd sufferit, an entreatit him tae cam tae her, gin he cwid; fer she hidd muckle tae sort oot, an she wintit tae bid him fareweel, an gie Linton siccar-like intae his hauns. Her howp wis that Linton micht be left wi him, as he hidd bin wi her: his faither, she wid fain goy hersel, hidd nae ettlin tae takk on the darg o luikin aifter him or eddication. Ma maister hesitatit nae a meenit in giein in tae fit she spierit: sair made as he wis tae leave hame at eesual calls, he flew tae answer this een; pittin Kitty intae ma care, in his absence, tellin me ower an ower that she maunna traivel oot o the park, aiven wi me he didnae coont on her gaan aa her lane.

He wis awa three wikks. The first day or twa ma charge reistit in a neuk o the library, ower dowie fer edder readin or playin: in thon quaet state she caased me nae tribble; but it wis follied bi weeriet girnin ; an bein ower eident, an syne ower aul, tae rin up an doon ameesin her, I fun a wey bi which she micht entertain hersel. I eesed tae sen her on her traivels roon the gruns—noo on fit, an noo on a pony; spilin her wi bi listin tae aa her rale an funciet advintures fan she cam back.

The simmer shone in fu prime; an she taen sic a taste fer yon stravaigin aa her lane that she aften contrivit tae bide oot fae brakkfaist tull tae; an syne the evenins were spennit in recoontin her fancifu tales. I wisnae feart o her brakkin boons; because the yetts were aye lockit, an I thocht she wid scarcely gang oot aa her lane, gin they hidd steed wide tae the waa. Onlickily, ma confidence wint agley. Kitty cam tae me, ae mornin, at acht o’clock, an said she wis the day an Arabian merchant, gaan tae gang ower the Desert wi his caravan; and I maun gie her plenty mait for hersel an beasts: a horse, an three camels, makkit on by a muckle hoond an a puckle o pinters. I gaithert thegither a guid store o fine pieces, an pit them in a basket on ae side o the saddle; an she loupit up as gay as a fairy, sheltert bi her wide-brimmit hat an gauze veil fae the July sun, an trottit aff wi a lichtsome lach, mockin ma careful coonsel nae tae gallop, an cam back airly. The wee besom nivver turnit up at tae. Ae traiveller, the hoond, bein an aul dug an fon o its aise, cam back; but nedder Kitty, nor the pony, nor the twa pinters cwid be seen in ony airt: I sen oot fowk doon yon wey, an thon wey, an at laist wint kneipin aff tae fun her masel. There wis an orra man wirkin at a fince roon a plantation, on the marches o the gruns. I speired o him gin he hidd seen oor young lassie.

‘I saa her at morn,’ he reponit: ‘she wid hae me tae cut her a hazel switch, an syne she loupit her Galloway ower the hedge yonder, faar it is laigh, an galloped oot o sicht.’

Ye may guess foo I felt at heerin this news. It cam tae me richt awaa she maun hae stertit fer Penistone Crags. ‘Fit will becam o her?’ I skraiched, shivvin throu a gap which the chiel wis repairin, an makkin straacht tae the heich-road. I kneipit on as gin fer a wager, mile aifter mile, tull a turn brocht me in view o the Hichts; but nae Kitty cwid I fun, hine awa or in-bye. The Crags lie aboot a mile an a hauf ayont Mr. Heathcliff’s bield, an thon is fower fae the Grange, sae I begood tae fear nicht widd faa ere I cwid win tae them. ‘An fit gin she shidd hae skitit in clumberin amang them,’ I thocht, ‘an bin killt, or brakkit some o her banes?’ Ma fricht wis truly painfu; an, at first, it gied me delichtfu relief tae observe, in hurryin bi the fairmhoose, Charlie, the coorsest o the pinters, lyin aneth a windae, wi swalled heid an bleedin lug. I opent the yett an rinnit tae the door, chappin sair tae get in. A wumman faa I kennt, an faa eesed tae bide at Gimmerton, answert: she hidd bin seervint there since the deith o Mr. Earnshaw.

‘Ach,’ said she, ‘ye are cam a-sikkin yer wee mistress! Dinna be frichtened. She’s here siccar: but I’m gled it isnae the maister.’

‘He is nae at hame syne, is he?’ I peched, fair braithless wi faist wakkin an fricht.

‘Na, na,’ she reponit: ‘baith he an Joseph are aff, an I think they winna cam back this ooer or mair. Step in and rist ye a bittie.’

I wint in, an saa ma stray lamb reistit on the ingle, rockin hersel in a wee chair that hidd bin her mither’s fan a bairn. Her hat wis hingit agin the waa, an she seemit richt at hame, lachin an newsin, in the best speerits imaiginible, tae Hareton—noo a muckle, strang loon o achteen—faa gaakit at her wi muckle ceeriosity an begeck: unnerstaunin gey little o aa the remarks an questions which her tongue nivver divauled poorin oot.

‘Verra weel, Miss!’ I skraiched, happin ma joy aneth a ragin coontenance. ‘This is yer last ride, tull yer faither cams back. I’ll nae trust ye ower the doorcheek again, ye ill-trickit limmer!’

‘Aha, Ellen!’ she skirlit, fair seely, loupin up an rinnin tae my side. ‘I will hae a bonny story tae tell the nicht; an sae ye’ve fun me oot. Hae you ivver bin here in yer life afore?’

‘Pit that hat on, an hame at eence,’ said I. ‘I’m affa grieved at ye, Miss Kitty: ye’ve deen muckle wrang! It’s nae eese poutin an greetin: that winna makk up fer the tribble I’ve hidd, scoorin the cintra aifter ye. Tae think foo Mr. Linton tellt me tae kep ye in; an ye gaan aff like at! It shaws ye are a sleekit wee rod, an naebody will pit faith in ye ony mair.’

‘Fit hivv I deen?’ grat she, richt awaa checkit. ‘Faither didnae tell me naethin: he’ll nae gie me a ragin, Ellen—he’s nivver ill-naitert, like ye!’

‘Cam, cam!’ I skirlit. ‘I’ll tie the riband. Noo, lat us hae nae sulkin. Och, fer shame! Ye thirteen eers aul, an sic a babbie!’

This ootburst wis caasit bi her cowpin the hat fae her heid, an gaan back tae the chimbley oot o ma reach.

‘Na,’ said the seervint, ‘dinna be ull on the bonny lass, Mrs. Dean. We makkit her stap: she’d fain hae ridden forrit, feart ye shidd be onaisy. Hareton offert tae gang wi her, and I thocht he shidd: it’s a roch road ower the hills.’

Hareton, durin the spikkin, steed wi his hauns in his pooches, ower gaaky tae spikk; though he luikit gin he didnae think muckle tae ma breengin in.

‘Foo lang am I tae weyt?’ I wint on, peyin nae heed tae the wumman’s interficherin. ‘It will be dark in ten meenits. Faar is the pony, Miss Kitty? An faar is Phoenix? I will be awaa withoot ye, unless ye be swack; sae please yersel.’

‘The pony is in the yaird,’ she replied, ‘an Phoenix is shut in there. He’s bitten—an sae is Charlie. I wis gaun tae tell ye aa aboot it; but ye are ill-naitert, an dinna deesirve tae heer.’

I pickit up her hat, an cam in aboot tae pit it back on; but seein that the fowk o the hoose taen her pairt, she begood caperin roon the room; an on ma rinnin aifter, rinnit like a moose ower an aneth an ahin the furniture, makkin it gypit fer me tae follie. Hareton an the wumman lached, an she jined them, an waxed mair impidint still; till I skirled, fair kittlet up ‘Weel, Miss Kirsty, gin ye were aware faa’s hoose this is ye’d be gled eneuch tae win oot.’

‘It’s *yer* faither’s, isn’t it?’ said she, turnin tae Hareton.

‘Na,’ he replied, luikin doon, an blushin blate like.

He cwidna staun a steedy luik fae her een, though they were jist his ain.

‘Faa’s syne—yer maister’s?’ she spierit.

He wint a darker reid, wi an antrin feelin, mummlit an oath, an turnit awa.

‘Faa is his maister?’ wint on the fashious quine, spikkin tae me. ‘He spikkit aboot “oor hoose”, an “oor fowk”. I thocht he hidd bin the ainer’s sin. An he nivver said Miss: he shidd hae deen, shiddnae he, gin he’s a seervint?’

Hareton growit blaick as a thunner-cloud at this bairnie-like spiel. Withoot a wird I gied ma questioner a shakk, an at laist got her roadit.

‘Noo, gang fer ma horse,’ she said, spikkin tae her unkennt kinsman as she widd een o the halflins at the Grange. ‘An ye may cam wi me. I wint tae see faar the goblin-hunter raises in the stank, an tae hear aboot the *fairishes*, as ye caa them: but makk haste! Fit’s the maitter? Fess ma horse, I say.’

‘I’ll see thee damned afore I be *thy* seervint!’ grumphit the lad.

‘Ye’ll see me *fit*!’ spierit Kitty in surprise.

‘Damned—ye impident carlin!’ he reponit.

‘There, Miss Kitty! ye see you hivv got intae fine company,’ I buttit in. ‘Douce wirds tae be eesed tae a young leddy! Dinna begood tae fecht wi him. Cam, lat us sikk fer Minny oorsels, an be awaa.’

‘But, Ellen,’ girned she, luikin fixit in begeck, ‘foo daur he spikk sae tae me? Maunna he be garred tae dee as I spier o him? Ye orra craitur, I will tell faither fit ye said. Noo, syne!’

Hareton didnae appear tae feel this threet; sae the tears sprang intae her een wi tirment. ‘Ye fess the pony,’ she skirlit, turnin tae the wumman, ‘an lat ma dug gang this meenit!’

‘Saftly, Miss,’ answert she addressit: ‘ye’ll tynt naethin bi being ceevil. Though Mr. Hareton, there, be nae the maister’s sin, he’s yer cousin: an I wis nivver hired tae seerve ye.’

‘*He* ma cousin!’ skraichit Kitty, wi a scornfu lach.

‘Aye, indaid,’ reponit her repreever.

‘Och, Ellen! dinna lat them say sic things,’ she wint on in muckle tribble. ‘Faither is gaen tae fess ma cousin fae London: my cousin is a gentleman’s sin. That ma—’ she stoppit, an grat ootricht; fair kittlit at the aydea o bein kin wi sic a feel.

‘Weesht! Weesht!’ I fuspert; ‘fowk can hae mony cousins an o aa kynes, Miss Kitty, withoot bein ony the waur fer it; ainly they nottna be friens, gin they be ugsome an ull-mainnert.’

‘He’s nae—he’s nae ma cousin, Ellen!’ she wint on, gaitherin fresh grief fae refleckshun, an flingin hersel intae ma airms tae hod awaa fae the thocht.

I wis much vexit at her an the seervint fer lattin sic news oot; haein nae doot o Linton camin seen, tellt bi the former, bein reportit tae Mr. Heathcliff; an feelin as shair that Kitty’s first thocht on her faither’s return widd be tae sikk tae fun oot aboot fit the latter tellt her aboot roch-bred kindred. Hareton, haein got ower his scunner at bein taen fer a seervint, seemit meeved bi her feerich; an, haein fessed the pony roon tae the door, he taen, tae suit her, a bonny crookit-leggit terrier whelp fae the kennel, an pittin it intae her haun, bid her weesht! fer he meant nocht. Stappin fer a mintie in her greetin, she gied him a liuk o awe an horror, syne baalit aiven mair.

I cwid scarcely stap fae smilin at this ull-weel tae the puir fella; faa wis a weel-makkit, swaak loon, guid-liukin in features, an stoot an sonsy, but weerin claes fer wirkin on the fairm an mollachin amang the muirs aifter ribbits an game. Still, I thocht I cwid fun in his phizog a myn ainin better kwaalities than his faither ivver hidd. Guid things tynt amang a wilderness o wydes, tae be shair, faas foggagy far ower-tappit their negleckit growth; forbye, naewithstaunnin, preef o a guid yird, that micht yield thravin craps aneth idder an doucer circumstances. Mr. Heathcliff, I believe, hidd nae traitit him physically ull; thanks tae his fearless naiter, which offrit nae timptation tae coorse traitmint: he wisnae the bauch-hertit kyne that wid hae lent itsel tae bein bad-eesed, in Heathcliff’s oppeenion. He appearit tae hae binnit his ull-weel on makkin him a breet: he wis nivver taucht tae read or scrieve; nivver tellt aff fer ony ull habit which didnae deeve his keeper; nivver led ae step taewards guidness, or guardit bi ae instruckshun agin vice. An fae fit I heerd, Joseph contributit muckle tae his gaan doonhill, bi a narra-myndit fontness which steerit him tae fraise an pet him, as a loon, because he wis the heid o the aul faimly. An as he hidd bin in the habit o faain oot wi Kirsty Earnshaw an Heathcliff, fan bairns, o pittin the maister past his patience, an garrin him tae sikk solace in drink bi fit he termit their ‘affa weys’, sae if noo he laid the hale birn o Hareton’s fauts on the shooders o the een that taen his property. Gin the loon sweerit, he widnae correck him: nor fooivver ull he ackit. It gied Joseph saitisfackshun, appairently, tae watch him gang the waur linths: he allooed that the loon wis connached: that his sowel wis tynt tae perdition; but syne he thocht that Heathcliff maun answer fer it. Hareton’s bleed wid be nott at his hauns; an there lay muckle easedom in that thocht. Joseph hidd pit intae him a proodness o name, an o his faimly; he wid, hidd he daured, hivv brocht hate atween him an the preesint ainer o the Hichts: but his dreid o thon ainer wis near haun superstition; an he kep his feelins aboot him tae mummelin quietly tae himsel. I dinna makk on tae ken at aa the wey they were livin in thon days at Whudderin Hichts: I ainly spikk fae claik; fer I saa little. The villagers widd say Mr. Heathcliff wis *grippy*, an a coorse hard landlord tae his tenants; but the hoose, inside, hidd gaen back tae its ancient aspect o easedom bein noo luikit aifter by a wumman, an the affa scenes in Hindley’s time werenae noo enackit within its waas. The maister wis ower gloomy tae sikk frienship wi ony fowk, guid or ull; an he is yit.

This, fooivver, is nae getting on wi ma story. Miss Kitty turnt awa the peace-offerin o the terrier, an priggit fer her ain dugs, Charlie an Phoenix. They cam hirplin an hingin their heids; an we set oot fer hame, sadly oot o sorts, ivvery een o us. I cwidna wrassle fae ma wee quine foo she hidd spennit the day; excep that, as I jaloused, the goal o her pilgrimage wis Penistone Crags; an she arrivit wi’oot adventure tae the yett o the fairm-hoose, fan Hareton happent tae cam oot, attendit bi some dugs, faa attackit her train. They hidd a smart battle, afore their owners cwid pit them apairt: that formit an introduction. Kitty tellt Hareton faa she wis, an faar she wis gaun; an spierit him tae show her the wey: in the hinner eyn, beguilin him tae gang wi her. He opent the mysteries o the Fairy Cave, an twinty idder antrin bields. But, bein in disgrace, I wisnae gien a description o the interestin objicks she saa. I cwid gaither, fooivver, that her guide hidd bin a favourite till she hurtit his feelins bi cryin him as a seervint; an Heathcliff’s hoosekeeper hurt hers bi caain him her cousin. Then the wirds he hidd hauden tae her ranklit in her hert; she faa wis ayewis ‘luve’, an ‘darlin’, an ‘quine’, an ‘angel’, wi ivverybody at the Grange, tae be insultit sae shockinly bi an ootlin! She didnae unnerstaun it; an hard wirk I hidd tae makk her promise that she widnae tell her faither. I explainit fit wey he objeckit tae the hale hoosehold at the Hichts, an foo sorry he wid be tae fun she hidd bin there; but I threepit maist on the fack, that gin she gied awa that I didnae cairry oot fit he said, he wid mebbe be sae ragin that I shidd hae tae gang awaa; an Kitty cwidna thole that prospeck: she gied her wird, an kep it fer ma sake. Aifter aa, she wis a guid quinie.

Chapter Nineteen

A PEELIE-WALLIE BAIRN

A letter, edgit wi blaik, annooncit the day o ma maister’s return. Isabella wis deid; an he scrievit tae bid me get murnins fer his dother, an sort oot a chaumer, an idder accommodations, fer his youthfu nephew. Kitty rinnit wud wi joy at the aydea o welcomin her faither back; an she spilet hersel maist seely luikin forrit tae the coontless meerits o her ‘real’ cousin. The evenin o their expeckit arrival cam. Syne airly mornin she hidd bin eident gaan aboot her ain smaa affairs; an noo riggit in her new blaik frock—puir thing! her aunt’s deith didna caase her ony rale wae—she garred me, bi deevin aa the time, tae stravaig wi her doon throu the gruns tae tryst wi them.

‘Linton is jist sax months younger than I am,’ she newsed, as we daunnert leeshurly ower the swalls an hollas o mossy girse aneth the shadda o the trees. ‘Foo delichtfu it will be tae hae him fer a playfella! Aunt Isabella sint faither a bonny lock o his hair; it wis lichter than mine—mair flaxen, an near as fine. I hivv it tentily preservit in a wee gless box; an I’ve aften thocht foo lichtsome it wid be tae see its ainer. Och! I am seely—an faither, dear, dear faither! Cam, Ellen, lat us rin! cam, rin.’

She ran, an cam back and ran again, mony times afore ma sober fitsteps won tae the yett, an syne she seatit hersel on the grassy bank aside the path, an tried tae weyt patiently; but that wisnae possible: she cwidna be steell a meenit.

‘Foo lang they are!’ she skirlit. ‘Ach, I see, some stour on the road—they are camin! Na! Fan will they be here? Canna we nae gang a little wey—hauf a mile, Ellen, near jist hauf a mile? Div say aye: tae thon bourach o birks at the turn!’

I didnae gie in. In the hinner eyn her suspense wis eynit: the traivellin carriage rowed intae sicht. Miss Kitty skraiched an raxit oot her airms as seen as she catcht her faither’s phizog luikin fae the windae. He steppit doon, near as feerich as hersel; an a lang time wint by afore they hidd a thocht tae spare fer ony but themsels. Files they gied each idder busses an bosies I teetit in tae see aifter Linton. He wis asleep in a neuk, happit in a warm, fur-linit cloak, as gin it hidd bin winter. A fushionless quinie-like loon, fa micht hae bin taen fer ma maister’s younger brither, sae strang wis the resemblance: but there wis a pae-wae girniness aboot him that Edgar Linton nivver hid. The latter saa me luikin; an haein shakkit hauns, tellt me tae sneck the door, an nae tae bather him; fer the traivellin hid founert him. Kitty wid fain hae taen ae keek, but her faither tellt her tae cam, an they stravaiged thegither up the park, files I kneipit on afore tae makk the seervint riddy.

‘Noo, ma dearie,’ said Mr. Linton, spikkin tae his dother, as they stappit at the boddim o the front steps: ‘yer cousin is nae sae strang or sae blythe as ye are, an he has tynt his mither, mine, a gey short time syne; therefore, dinna expeck him tae play an rin aboot wi ye richt awaa. And dinna deeve him muckle bi spikkin: lat him be quaet this evenin, at least, will ye?’

‘Aye, aye, faither,’ answert Kitty: ‘but I dae wint tae see him; and he hisnae eence luikit oot.’

The carriage stappit; an the sleeper bein wakkened, wis liftit tae the grun bi his uncle.

‘This is yer cousin Kitty, Linton,’ he said, pittin their wee hauns thegither. ‘She’s fon o ye aaready; an mind ye dinna grieve her bi greetin the nicht. Try tae be lichtsome noo; the traivellin is at an eyn, an ye hivv naethin tae dee but rest an amuse yersel as ye please.’

‘Lat me gang tae bed, syne,’ answert the loon, haudin back fae Kitty’s salute; an he pit his fingers tae brush awa the tears that were stertin.

‘Cam, cam, there’s a guid bairn,’ I fuspert, shawin him in. ‘Ye’ll makk her greet an aa—see foo waefu she is fer ye!’

I didna ken fither it wis dool fer him, but his cousin pit on as dowie a coontenance as himsel, an wint back tae her faither. Aa three wint in, an climmit tae the library, faar tae wis laid oot. I wint tae takk aff Linton’s cap an mantle, an pit him on a cheer bi the table; but he wis nae seener seatit than he begood tae greet aa ower again. Ma maister spiered fit wis the maitter.

‘I canna sit on a cheer,’ grat the loon.

‘Gang tae the sofa, syne, an Ellen will fess ye some tae,’ answert his uncle patiently.

He hidd bin gey tried, durin the journey, I felt shair, bi his girnin paewae charge. Linton slowly draggit himsel aff, an lay doon. Kitty cairriet a fitsteel an her caup tae his side. At first she sat quaet; but that cwidna ging on: she hidd resolvit tae makk a pet o her wee cousin, as she wid hae him tae be; an she begood sklaffin his curls, an bussin his chick, an offerin him tae in her sasser, like a babbie. This suitit him, fer he wisnae muckle better: he dried his een, an lichtened intae a wee bit smile.

‘Och, he’ll dee verra weel,’ said the maister tae me, aifter watchin them a meenit. ‘Verra weel, gin we can kep him, Ellen. The frienship o a bairn o his ain age will pit new speerit intae him seen, an bi wissin fer strinth he’ll gain it.’

‘Aye, gin we cwid kep him!’ I thocht tae masel; an sair misgieins cam ower me that there wisnae muckle howp o thon. An syne, I thocht, foo ivver will thon shargar bide at Wudderin Hichts? Atween his faither an Hareton, fit playmates an instruckors they’ll be. Oor doots were preesently decidit—even airlier than I expeckit. I hidd jist taen the bairns up e stairs, aifter tae wis feenished, an seen Linton asleep—he widnae lat me leave him till thon wis the case—I hidd cam doon, an wis staunin bi the table in the hall, lichtin a bedroom caunnel fer Mr. Edgar, fan a maid steppit oot o the kitchen an tellt me that Mr. Heathcliff’s seervint Joseph wis at the door, an wintit tae spikk wi the maister.

‘I will spier at him fit he wints first,’ I said, in muckle oonaisiness. ‘A verra oonlikely oor tae be tribblin fowk, an fan they hivv jist cam back fae a lang traivel. I dinna think the maister cin see him.’

Joseph hidd wakkit throu the kitchie as I wis spikkin yon wirds, an noo preesintit himsel in the hall. He wis weerin his Sunday claes, wi his maist sel-richteous an dourest face, an, haudin his hat in ae haun, an his stick in the idder, he wint tae dicht his sheen on the mat.

‘Guid-evenin, Joseph,’ I said, cauldly. ‘Fit buzness fesses ye here the nicht?’

‘It’s Maister Linton I maun spikk tae,’ he answert, waggin me scaddenly aside.

‘Mr. Linton is gaun tae bed; oonless ye hiv summin partickler tae say, I’m shair he winna hear it noo,’ I wint on. ‘Ye hidd better sit doon in there, an gie yer message tae me.’

‘Fit een is his chaumer?’ wint on the chiel, luikin at aa the sneckit doors.

I saa he wisnae gaun tae list tae me, sae gey oonweelinly I wint up tae the library, an annooncit the oonexpeckit veesiter, sayin that he shid be pit awaa tull the neist day. Mr. Linton hidd nae time tae tell me tae dee sae, fer Joseph climmit richt at ma heels, an, shivvin intae the chaumer, plantit himsel at the far side o the table, wi his twa nieves clappit on the heid o his stick, an begood in a heich tone, gin he wis expeckin conterin—

‘Hathecliff his sint me fer his loon, and I maunna gang back withoot him.’

Edgar Linton wis quaet a meenit; a luik o muckle dool owercassen his phizog: he wid hae peetied the bairn fer himsel; but, mindin Isabella’s howps an fears, an worriet wisses fer her sin, an her giein o him tae his care, he grievit sairly at the thocht o giein him up, an rakit in his hert foo it micht be avoidit. Nae plan offert itsel: shawin ony ettlin tae haud on tae him wid hivv makkit the claimant waur: there wis naethin left but tae gie him up. Fooivver, he wisnae gaun tae wakken him fae his sleep.

‘Tell Mr. Heathcliff,’ he reponit cweely, ‘that his sin will cam tae Whudderin Hichts the morn. He is in bed, an ower wabbit tae gang the distance noo. Ye may tell him an aa that the mither o Linton wintit him to bide aneth ma guardianship; an gin noo his health is gey shakky.’

‘Na!’ said Joseph, gien a dunt wi his prop on the fleer, an pittin on an commannin air. ‘Na! thon means nocht. Hathecliff takks nae accoont o the mither, nor ye; but he’ll hae his sin; an I maun takk him—sae noo ye ken!’

‘Ye winna the nicht!’ answert Linton pittin his fit doon. ‘Awa doon e stairs the noo, an tell yer maister fit I hivv said. Ellen, show him doon. Awa ye gang—’

An, holpin the feerious aul mannie wi a wag o the airm, he rid the room o him an sneckit the door.

‘Verra weel!’ skwalliched Joseph, as he slowly wint awa. ‘The morn, he’ll cam himsel, an pit *him* oot, if ye daur!’

CHAPTER TWINTY

FAITHER AN SIN

Tae hinner the mischunce o this threet bein cairriet oot, Mr. Linton hidd me takk the loon hame airly, on Kitty’s pony; an, said he ‘As we will noo hivv nae pooer ower his weird, guid or ill, ye maun spikk naethin o faar he is gane tae ma dother: she canna hae onythin tae dee wi him fae noo on, an it is better fer her tae bide nae kennin foo near haun he micht be; lest she shid be ristless, an ettlin tae veesit the Hichts. Jist tell her his faither sint fer him aa o a sudden, an he his bin obleegit tae flit fae us.’

Linton wis gey sweir tae be taen fae his bed at five o’clock, an dammert tae be tellt that he maun get roadit fer further traivellin; but I saftened aff the maitter bi statin that he wis gaan tae spen some time wi his faither, Mr. Heathcliff, faa wintit tae see him affa muckle, he didnae like tae pit aff the pleesur till he shid get ower his late traivel.

‘Ma faither!’ he skirled, in antrin begeck. ‘Mither nivver tellt me I hidd a faither. Faar daes he bide? I’d raither bide wi uncle.’

‘He bides a wee bittie fae the Grange,’ I reponit; ‘jist ayont thon hills: nae hine awaa, but ye may daunner ower here fan ye get herty. An ye shid be glaid tae gang hame, an tae see him. Ye maun try tae looe him, as ye did yer mither, and syne he will looe ye.’

‘But fit wey hivv I nae heerd o him afore?’ spiered Linton. ‘Fit wey didnae mither an he bide thegither, as idder fowk dee?’

‘He hidd wirk tae kep him in the north,’ I answert, ‘an it wis better fer yer mither’s health tae bide in the sooth.’

‘And fit wey didnae mither spikk tae me aboot him?’ deevit the bairn. ‘She aften spikkit o uncle, an I learnt tae looe him lang syne. Foo am I tae looe faither? I dinna ken him.’

‘Och, aa bairns looe their parents,’ I said. ‘Yer mither, mebbe, thocht ye wid wint tae be wi him gin she spikkit aboot him aften tae ye. Lat us haud gaan. An airly ride on sic a bonny mornim is rarer bi far than an ooer’s mair sleep.’

‘Is *she* tae gang wi us,’ he demandit, ‘the wee quine I saa yestreen?’

‘Nae noo,’ reponit I.

‘Is Uncle?’ he wint on.

‘Na, I will be gaan there wi ye,’ I said.

Linton drappit back on his pilla an fell intae a dwaum.

‘I winna gang wioot uncle,’ he girned at linth: ‘I canna tell faar ye mean tae takk me.’

I seyti tae get him tae see foo ill-trickit it wis tae hing back fae trystin wi his faither; aye he thrawnly stappit ony progress taewards pittin on his claes, an I hidd tae caa fer my maister’s holp in coaxin him oot o bed. The puir thing wis in the eyn got aff, wi a pucklie hauf lees that he shidna be lang awaa: that Mr. Edgar an Kitty wid veesit him, an idder promises, jist as ill-foondit, which I makkit up an repeatit noo an again aa the wey. The halesome hidder-scentit air, the bricht sunshine, an the douce canter o Minny, relievit his doul aifter a filie. He begood tae pit questions aboot his new hame, an faa bade there, wi muckle mair interest an blitheness.

‘Is Whudderin Hichts as lichtsome a bield as Thrushcross Grange?’ he spiered, turnin tae takk a last luik intae the glen, faar a licht mist climmit an formit a fleecy clood on the skirts o the blue.

‘It isnae sae beeried in trees,’ I reponit, ‘an it is nae quite sae boukit, but ye cin see the kintra sae bonny aa roon; an the air is sonsier fer ye—caller an drier. Ye will, mebbe, think the biggin aul an mirk at first; though it is a respeckable hoose: the neist best in the neeborhood. An ye will hivv sic gran stravaigin on the muirs. Hareton Earnshaw—that is, Miss Kitty’s idder cousin, an sae yours in a wey—will show ye aa the doucest spots; an ye cin fess a buik in braw widder, an makk a green holla yer study; an, noo and then, yer uncle may jyne ye in a daunner: he daes, aften, spaad oot on the hills.’

‘And fit is ma faither like?’ he spiered. ‘Is he as young an guid-luikin as uncle?’

‘He’s as young,’ said I; ‘but he his blaik hair an een, an luiks dourer; an he is heicher an bigger aa thegither. He’ll nae seem tae ye sae douce an couthie at first, mebbe, because it is nae his wey: still, mind ye, be fair-spikkin an ceevil wi him; an naiterally he’ll be fonner o ye than ony uncle, fer ye are his ain.’

‘Blaik hair an een!’ musit Linton. ‘I canna funcy him. Syne I am nae like him, am I?’

‘Nae muckle,’ I answert: nae a bittie, I thocht, luikin wi regreet on the fite complexion an sma-boukit frame o ma companion, an his muckle dwaumin een—his mither’s een, save that, oonless a drumly ull timper kinnlit them a meenit, they hidd faint the bit o her blinterin speerit.

‘Foo unco that he shid nivver cam tae see mither an me!’ he mummelt. ‘His he ivver seen me? If he his, I maun hae bin a babbie. I mine naethin aboot him!’

‘Why, Maister Linton,’ said I, ‘three hunner miles is a lang wey; an ten eers seem gey unco in linth tae a grown-up body comparit wi fit they dee tae ye. It is probable Mr. Heathcliff thocht tae gang fae simmer tae simmer, but nivver fun the richt chunce; an noo it is ower late. Dinna tribble him wi questions on the subjeck: it will baather him, fer nae guid.’

The loon wis weel intae his ain thochts fer the lave o the ride, tull we haltit afore the fairmhoose gairden-yett. I watchit tae catch fit he thocht in his coontenance. He gaakit lang at the cairvit front an laigh-brooed windaes, the trauchelt grozart-busses an crookit firs, and syne shakkit his heid: he didna think muckle tae the ootside o his new hame. But he hidd sinse tae pit aff girnin: there micht be summin better within. Afore he dismountit, I wint an opent the door. It wis half-past sax; the faimily hidd jist feenished brakkfaist: the seervint wis clearin and dichtin the table. Joseph steed bi his maister’s cheer tellin some tale aboot a hirplin horse; an Hareton wis gettin roadit fer the hey park.

‘Aye aye, Nelly!’ said Mr. Heathcliff, fan he saa me. ‘I wis feart I shid hae tae cam doon an fess ma property masel. Ye’ve brocht it, hivv ye? Lat us see fit we cin makk o it.’

He got up an spangit tae the door: Hareton an Joseph follied gypin in keeriosity. Peer Linton rinnit a frichtened ee ower the phizogs o the three.

‘Shairly,’ said Joseph aifter a sairious inspeckshun, ‘he’s swappit wi’ ye, Maister, an’ yon’s his lass!’

Heathcliff, hivvin gypit at his sin till he wis in a shakkin feerich, udderit a scornfu lach.

‘God! fit a beauty! fit a bonny, delichtfu thing!’ he skraiched. ‘Hivnae they brocht it up on snails an soor milk, Nelly? Och, damn ma sowel! but thon’s waur than I expeckit—an the divvil kens I wisnae howpfu!’

I bid the shakkin an dumfoonert bairn get doon, an gang in. He didnae richt unnerstaun the meanin o fit his faither’s spikkit, or fither it were intendit fer him: indaid, he wisnae yet shair that the dour, jamphin ootlin wis his faither. But he haudit tae me wi growin fricht; an on Mr. Heathcliff’s takkin a seat an biddin him ‘cam forrit’, he hid his face on ma shooder an grat.

‘Tut, tut!’ said Heathcliff, raxin oot a haun an haulin him rochly atween his knees, and syne haudin up his heid bi the chin. ‘Neen o that nonsinse! We’re nae gaun tae hairm ye, Linton—isnae that yer name? Ye’re maistly yer mither’s bairn! Faar is *ma* share in ye, girnin chucken?’

He taen aff the loon’s cap an pushed back his thick flaxen curls, felt his skinny airms an his smaa fingers; durin which examination Linton devault greetin, an liftit his muckle blue een tae inspeck the inspeckter.

‘Div ye ken me?’ spierit Heathcliff, hivvin saitisfiet himsel that the limbs were aa equally frail an shilpit.

‘Na,’ said Linton, nae unnerstaunin, wi a luik o fricht.

‘Ye’ve heerd o me, I daursay?’

‘Na,’ he reponit again.

‘Na! Fit a shame o yer mither, nivver tae wakken yer sin’s respeck fer me! Ye are ma sin, syne, I’ll tell ye; an yer mother wis an ill-trickit limmer tae leave ye nae kennin o the kyne o faither ye hidd. Noo, dinna stert, an colour up! Though it is summin tae see ye hivvnae fite bleed. Be a guid loon; an I’ll dee fer ye. Nelly, gin ye be ferfochen ye may sit doon; if nae, get hame again. I’s warn ye’ll report fit ye list an see tae the naebody at the Grange; an this thing winna be settlit files ye scutter aboot it.’

‘Weel,’ quo I, ‘I howp ye’ll be kyn tae the loon, Mr. Heathcliff, or ye’ll nae keep him lang; an he’s aa ye hivv akin in the wide warld, that you will ivver ken—mine.’

‘I’ll be *verra* kyn tae him, ye needna fear,’ he said, lachin. ‘Ainly naebody else maun be kyne tae him: I’m jealous o takkin aa his affection. An, tae stert ma kyness, Joseph, bring the loon a bittie braikfaist. Hareton, ye ill-gettit craitur, aff ye gang tae your wirk. Aye, Nell,’ he addit, fan they hidd gaun oot, ‘ma sin will inheerit yer bield, an I shidna wiss him tae dee or I wis shair o bein his successor. Forbye, he’s *mine*, an I wint the triumph o seein *ma* faimly fairly laird o their estates; ma bairn hirin their bairns tae howk oot their faithers’ laans fer pey. Thon is the ainly thocht which cin makk me thole the whelp: I canna thole him for himsel, an canna staun him fer the memories he fesses back! But thon thocht is eneuch: he’s as siccar wi me, an will be luikit aifter as carefu as yer maister looks aifter his ain. I hivv a chaumer up e stairs, riggit oot fer him in braw style; I’ve engagit a tutor, an aa, tae cam three times a wikk, fae twinty mile awaa, tae larn him fit he wints tae larn. I’ve tellt Hareton tae dee fit he says: an in fack I’ve arrangit aathin wi a view tae makk siccar the tap-kwaalitie an the gentleman in him, abune his associates. I dee regret, fooivver, that he sae little deseerves the tribble: gin I wintit ony blessin in the warld, it wis tae fun him a wirthy objick o pride; an I’m sairly disappintit wi the peely wally, girnin vratch!’

Files he wis spikkin, Joseph cam back haudin a basin o milk-porridge, an pit it afore Linton: faa steerit roon the hamely mess wi a scunnert luik, an affirmit he cwidna ate it. I saa the aul man-seervint shared lairgely in his maister’s jamphin o the bairn; though he maun kep thon sintimint in his hert, because Heathcliff plainly meant his underlins tae haud him in honour.

‘Canna ate it?’ repeatit he, keekin in Linton’s face, an saftenin his vyce tae a fusper, fer fear o bein owerheerd. ‘But Maister Hareton nivver ate nocht else, fan he wis a wee bairn; an fit wis guid eneuch fer him’s guid eneuch fer ye, I raither think!’

‘I *winna* eat it!’ answert Linton, girnily. ‘Takk it awaa.’

Pit oot, Joseph ruggit up the mait, an brocht it tae us.

‘Is there onythin wrang wi th’ victuals?’ he spierit, shivvin the tray aneth Heathcliff’s neb.

‘Fit shid be wrang wi them?’ he said.

‘Ach!’ answert Joseph, ‘yon bonny cheil says he canna ate ’em. But I’se warn it’s richt! His mither wis jist sae—we wis near ower clarty tae sow t’ corn fer makking her breid.’

‘Dinna spikk o his mither tae me,’ said the maister, ragin. ‘Get him summin that he cin ate, that’s aa. Fit is his eesual mait, Nelly?’

I suggestit biled milk or tae; an the hoosekeeper wis gien instruckshuns tae makk some. Cam, I reflectit, his faither’s selfitness may pit intae his comfort. He his taen in his shilpit naiter, an they widd nott tae look aifter him weel. I’ll console Mr. Edgar bi lattin him ken aboot the cheynge Heathcliff’s humour his taen. Hivvin nae excuse fer bidin langer, I slippit oot, files Linton wis teen up wi haudin aff the advances o a frienly sheep-dug. But he wis ower watchfu tae be swickit: as I caaed tee the door, I heerd a cry, an the wirds skirlit again an again—

‘Dinna leave me! I’ll nae bide here! I’ll nae bide here!’

Syne the sneck wis liftit an fell: they didnae alloo him tae cam oot. I mountit Minny, an urgit her tae a trot; an sae ma brief guardianship eynit.

CHAPTER EEN AN TWINTY

YOUNG EENS IN LUUVE

We hidd sad wirk wi wee Kitty thon day: she raise in heich speerits, ettlin tae jyne her cousin, an sic feerious greetin an skwallichin follied the news o his gaan awaa that Edgar himsel hidd tae calm her doon, bi giein his wird he shid cam back seen: he addit, fooivver, ‘gin I cin get him’; an there were nae howps o thon. Yon promise brocht little peace fer her; but time wis mair pooerfu; an though files noo an again she spiered o her faither fan Linton widd cam back, afore she did set een on him again his features hidd grown sae waik in her memory that she didnae ken him.

Fan I chunced tae encoonter the hoosekeeper o Whudderin Hichts, in peyin buzness veesits tae Gimmerton, I eesed tae spier foo the young maister wis farin; fer he bade near as hodden awaa as Kitty hersel, an wis nivver tae be seen. I cwid gaither fae her that he wis aye peely-wally, an wis an aff-takkin inmate. She said Mr. Heathcliff seemit tae dislike him ivver langer an waur, though he taen some tribble tae hod it: he hidd taen an ull-wull tae the soun o his vyce, an cwidna dee at aa wi his reistin in the same room wi him mony meenits thegither. They nivver hairdly spikkit: Linton leernt his lessons an spennit his evenins in a wee chaumer they caaed the parlour: or else bade in bed aa day: fer he was aye gettin hoasts, an cauls, an aches, an pains o ilky kine.

‘And I nivver kennt sic a fearty craitur,’ addit the wumman; ‘nor een sae carefu o hissel. He *will* gang on, gin I leave the windae apen a bittie late in the evenin. Och! it’s killin, a souch o nicht air! An he maun hae a firie in the mids o simmer; an Joseph’s bacca-pipe is pooshen; an he maun ayewis hae gulshick an funcies, an ayewis milk, milk fer ivver—heedin nocht foo the lave o us are haird pusht in winter; and there he’ll sit, happit in his furred cloak in his cheer bi the ingle, wi some toast an watter or idder slop on the hob tae sip at; an gin Hareton, fer peety, cams tae ameese him—Hareton isnae ill-naitered, though he’s roch—they’re shair tae pairt, een sweirin an the idder greetin. I believe the maister widd delicht in Earnshaw’s giein him a lickin, gin he werenae his sin; an I’m shair he widd be fit tae pit him oot o doors, gin he kennt hauf the nursin he gies himsel. But syne he winna gang intae danger o timptation: he nivver gangs intae the parlour, an shid Linton shaw thon weys in the hoose faar he is, he sens him up e stairs direckly.’

I jaloused, fae yon accoont, that udder lack o couthieness hidd makkit young Heathcliff selfit an ugsome, gin he werenae sae fae the stert; an ma interest in him, syne, wore awaa: though aye I wis meevit wi a sinse o sorra at his weird, an a wiss that he hidd bin left wi us. Mr. Edgar ettlit me tae sikk the claik: he thocht muckle aboot him, I funcy, an widd hae rin some risk tae see him; an he tellt me eence tae spier the hoosekeeper fither he ivver cam intae the village? She said he hidd ainly bin twice, on horseback, wi his faither; an baith times he makkit on tae be fair founert fer three or fower days aifterwards. Thon hoosekeeper left, gin I mine richtly, twa eers aifter he cam; an anidder, faa I didnae ken, follied her; she bides there aye.

Time wore on at the Grange in the lichtsome wey it eesed tae afore tull Miss Kitty wun tae sixteen. On the anniversary o her birth we nivver shawit ony signs o seeliness, because it wis an aa the anniversary o ma late mistress’s deith. Her faither aye spent thon day aa his lane in the library; an dannert, at gloamin, as far as Gimmerton kirkyaird, faar he widd aften bide ayont midnicht. Therefore Kitty hidd tae makk her ain ameesement. This twintieth o March wis a bonny spring day, an fan her faither hidd retirit, ma young leddy cam doon dressit fer gaun oot, an said she spierit tae hae a danner on the edge o the muir wi me: Mr. Linton hidd alooed her, gin we wint jist a short wey an were back within the ooer.

‘Sae makk haste, Ellen!’ she skirlit. ‘I kenn faar I wint tae gang; faar a colony o muir-game are bidin: I wint tae see fither they hivv makkit their nests yit.’

‘Thon maun be hine up,’ I answert; ‘they dinna breed on the edge o the muir.’

‘Na, it’s nae,’ she said. ‘I’ve gaan verra near wi faither.’

I pit on ma bonnet an breengit oot, thinkin naethin mair o the maitter. She kneipit on afore me, an returnit tae ma side, an wis aff again like a young greyhound; an, at first, I fun routh o enterteenment in listin tae the laverocks singin hine awaa an near haun, an takkin pleeshure in the swate, warm sunshine; an watchin her, ma pet an ma delicht, wi her gowden ringlets fleein lowse ahin, an her bricht chick, as saft and halesome in its bloom as a wild rose, an her een shinin wi cloodless pleeshure. She wis a seely craitur, an an angel, in thon days. It’s a peety she cwidna be contint.

‘Weel,’ said I, ‘faar are yer muir-game, Miss Kitty? We shid be at them: the Grange park-fence is a gryte wey aff noo.’

‘Och, a bittie farrer—jist a wee bittie farrer, Ellen,’ wis aye her answer. ‘Climb tae thon hillock, pass thon bank, an bi the time ye win tae the idder side I will hae heistit the burds.’

But there were sae mony hillocks an banks tae climm an gang bi, that, in the hinner eyn, I begood tae be wabbit, an tellt her we maun stap, an gang back ower oor steps. I skwalliched tae her, as she hidd ootstrippit me a lang wey; she edder didnae hear or didnae takk tent, fer she still loupit on, an garred me tae follie. In the eyn, she divit intae a holla; an afore I cam in sicht o her again, she wis twa mile narrer Whudderin Hichts than her ain hame; an I saa a puckle o fowk nab her, een o whom I felt shair wis Mr. Heathcliff himsel.

Kitty hidd bin nabbit in the fack o plunderin, or, at least, huntin oot the nests o the grouse. The Hichts were Heathcliff’s laan, and he wis tellin aff the poacher.

‘I’ve nedder taen ony nor fun ony,’ she said, as I tyaavit tae them, haudin oot her hauns tae back up fit she said. ‘I didna mean tae takk them; but faither tellt me there were boorachs o them up here, an I wintit tae see the eggs.’

Heathcliff luikit at me wi an ull-meanin smile, shawin he wis acquant wi the pairty, an, syne, his ull-wull tae it, an spierit faa ‘faither’ wis?

‘Mr. Linton o Thrushcross Grange,’ she reponit. ‘I thocht ye didnae ken me, or ye widnae hiv spikkit in thon wey.’

‘Ye jalouse faither is weel thocht o and respeckit, then?’ he said, in a jamphin wey.

‘An fit are ye?’ spiered Kitty, gaakin keeriously on the spikker. ‘Thon chiel I hiv seen afore. Is he yer sin?’

She pintit tae Hareton, the idder body, faa hidd pit on naethin but mair bouk an strinth bi the addition o twa eers tae his age: he seemit as gallus an roch as ivver.

‘Miss Kitty,’ I interruptit, ‘it will be three ooers insteed o een that we are oot, noo. We maun gang back.’

‘Na, thon man is nae ma sin,’ answert Heathcliff, pittin me aside. ‘But I hiv een, an ye hiv seen him afore an aa; an, though yer nurse is in a hurry, I think baith ye an she wid be the better fer a wee rist. Will ye jist turn this nab o heath, an danner intae ma hoose? Ye’ll win hame airlier fer the aise; an ye will hae a couthie weelcom.’

I fuspert tae Kitty that she maunna, on ony accoont, gang alang wi thon: it wis richt oot o the question.

‘Fit wey?’ she spiered, oot lood. ‘I’m founert fae rinnin, an the grun is weet: I canna sit here. Lat us gang, Ellen. Forbye, he says I hiv seen his sin. He’s wrang, I think; but I jalouse faar he bides: at the fairmhoose I veesitit in camin fae Penistone Crags. Dinna ye?’

‘I div. Cam, Nelly, haud yer tongue—it will be a treat fer her tae veesit us. Hareton, gang forrit wi the quine. Ye will daunner wi me, Nelly.’

‘Na, she’s nae gaun tae ony sic place,’ I skirlit, warslin tae get ma airm awaa, which he hid nabbit: but she wis narr at the door-stanes aareedy, skelpin roon the broo as faist as she cwid. Her appintit companion didnae makk on tae gang wi her: he taen aff by the road-side, an vainisht.

‘Mr. Heathcliff, it’s verra wrang,’ I wint on: ‘ye ken ye mean nae guid. An there she’ll see Linton, an aa will be tellt as seen as ivver we gang hame; an I will be ma wyte.’

‘I wint her tae see Linton,’ he answert; ‘he’s luikin better these feow days; it’s nae aften he’s fit tae be seen. An we’ll seen get roon her to keep the veesit saicret: faar is the hairm o it?’

‘The hairm o it is, that her faither wid hate me gin he fun oot I allooed her tae gang intae yer hoose; an I am shair ye hiv an ull design in hairtenin her tae dee sae,’ I reponit.

‘Ma raisin is as guid as it cwid be. I’ll tell ye the hale jing bang,’ he said. ‘That the twa cousins may faa in luve, an get marriet. I’m ackin apen-haunit tae yer maister: his young besom his nae expecktashuns, an shid she gang alang wi ma wisses she’ll be luikit aifter at eence as jynt successor wi Linton.’

‘Gin Linton deid,’ I answert, ‘an his life is fair chuncy, Kitty widd be the heir.’

‘Na, she widna,’ he said. ‘There is nae clause in the will tae makk thon siccar: his property wid gang tae me; but, tae stap ony stramash, I wint their union, an am resolvit tae bring it aboot.’

‘And I’m resolvit she will nivver gang near yer hoose wi me again,’ I returnit, as we won tae the yett, faar Miss Kitty weytit oor comin.

Heathcliff tellt me tae be quaet; an, gaan afore us up the path, wis quick tae apen the door. Ma young leddy gied him a feow liuks, gin she cwidna exackly makk up her mine fit tae think o him; but noo he smilit fan he met her ee, an saftened his vyce in spikkin tae her; an I wis gyte eneuch tae imaigine the memory o her mither micht disairm him fae wissin her hairm. Linton steed on the ingle. He hidd bin oot stravaigin in the parks, fer his cap wis on, an he wis caain tae Joseph tae fess him dry sheen. He hidd grown tall o his age, jist wintin a feow months o saxteen. His features were bonny yit, an his ee an compleckshun brichter than I mindit them, though wi jist a bittie lowe borried fae the halesome air an couthy sun.

‘Noo, faa is thon?’ spierit Mr. Heathcliff, turnin tae Kitty. ‘Cin ye tell?’

‘Yer sin?’ she said, hivvin dootfully luikit ower, first een and syne the idder.

‘Aye aye,’ answert he: ‘but is this the ainly time ye hiv seen him? Think! Ach! you hiv a short memory. Linton, div ye nae mine yer cousin, that ye eesed tae terment us sae wi wintin tae see?’

‘Fit, Linton!’ skirled Kitty, kinnlin intae joyfu mazement at the name. ‘Is thon wee Linton? He’s heicher than I am! Are ye Linton?’

The loon steppit forrit, an said it wis: she bussed him feeriously, an they gaakit wi wunner at the cheynge time hidd vrocht in the luik o ilka. Kitty hidd won tae her fu hicht; her figure wis baith sonsy an jimp, souple as steel, an her hale luik glowin wi guid health an speerits. Linton luikit an meevit aboot gin he wis in a dwaum, an his ootward luik wis affa sma-boukit; but there wis a grace in his weys that makkit licht o yon defecks, an makkit him nae ill-faurt. Aifter excheyngin mony marks o fonness wi him, his cousin wint tae Mr. Heathcliff, faa lytert bi the door, dividin his attention atween the objecks inside an yon that lay withoot: makkin on, that is, tae takk tent o the latter, an railly notin jist the former.

‘And ye are my uncle, syne!’ she cried, raxin up tae salute him. ‘I thocht I likit ye, though ye were ill-naitert at first. Fit wey div ye nae veesit at the Grange wi Linton? Tae bide aa yon eers sic narr neebors, an nivver see us, is unco: fit hiv ye deen sae far?’

‘I veesited it aince or twice ower aften afore ye were born,’ he answert. ‘There—damn it! Gin ye hiv ony busses tae spare, gie them tae Linton: they are thrown awaa on me.’

‘Ill-trickit Ellen!’ skirlit Kitty, fleein tae attack me neist wi her fraachtie dawtin. ‘Ill-trickit Ellen! tae try tae hinner me fae gaan in. But I’ll takk this stravaig ivvery mornin fae noo on: may I, uncle? an sometimes fess Faither. Winna ye be gled tae see us?’

‘O coorse,’ reponit the uncle, jist haudin back a mudgeon, that cam fae nae bein able tae staun the sicht o baith the proposit veesitors. ‘But jist a meenit,’ he wint on, turnin tae the young leddy. ‘Noo I think on’t, I’d better tell ye. Mr. Linton his a gee agin me: we fell oot at ae time o oor lives, wi unchristian feeriousness; an, gin ye spikk o camin here tae him, he’ll pit a veto on yer veesits aa thegither. Therefore, ye maunna spikk o it, onless ye be haiveless o seein yer cousin hereaifter: ye may cam, gin ye will, but ye maunna spikk o it.’

‘Fit wey did you fecht?’ spiered Kitty, affa dowie.

‘He thocht me ower peer tae wad his sister,’ answert Heathcliff, ‘an wis grievit that I got her: his pride wis hurtit, an he’ll nivver forgie it.’

‘That’s wrang!’ said the young leddy: ‘ae time I’ll tell him sae. But Linton an I hiv nae share in yer faain oot. I’ll nae cam here, then; he will cam tae the Grange.’

‘It will be ower far fer me,’ mummelt her cousin: ‘tae stravaig fower mile wid connach me. Na, cam here, Miss Kitty, noo an then: nae ivvery mornin, but eence or twice a wikk.’

The faither gied his sin a luik o soor scadden.

‘I am feart, Nelly, I will tynt ma wirk,’ he mummelt tae me. ‘Miss Kitty, as the feel caas her, will fun oot his wirth, an sen him tae the divvil. Noo, gin it hidd bin Hareton! Div ye ken that, twinty times a day, I covet Hareton, wi aa his rochness? I’d hiv looed the loon hidd he bin some idder body. But I think he’s siccar fae *her* luve. I’ll pit him agin thon shilpit craitur, onless it meeves faister. We hiv wirkit oot it winna last tull it is achteen. Och, confun the shargar! He’s as teen up wi dryin his feet, he nivver luiks at her—Linton!’

‘Aye, faither,’ answert the loon.

‘Hivv ye naethin tae shaw yer cousin onywey aboot, nae even a ribbit or a weasel’s nest? Takk her intae the gairden, afore ye cheynge yer sheen; an intae the byre tae see yer horse.’

‘Wid ye nae raither sit here?’ spiered Linton, spikkin tae Kitty in a wey which shawit he wisnae wintin tae traivel again.

‘I dinna ken,’ she reponit, cassin a longin luik tae the door, an shairly ettlin tae be up an aboot.

He kep his seat, an haudit narrer tae the ingle. Heathcliff raise, an wint intae the kitchie, an fae thence tae the yaird, caain oot fer Hareton. Hareton reponit, an in a meenit the twa cam back in. The halflin hidd bin washin himsel, as was visible bi the reid on his chicks an his weet hair.

‘Och, I’ll ask *ye*, uncle,’ skirlit Miss Kitty, minin the hoosekeeper’s wirds. ‘Thon is nae ma cousin, is he?’

‘Aye,’ he, replied, ‘yer mither’s nephew. Dinna ye like him!’

Kitty hidd an unco luik.

‘Is he nae a braw loon?’ he wint on.

The unceevil wee heuk steed on tippytaes, an fuspert a sintince in Heathcliff’s lug. He lached; Hareton darkent: I cwid see he wis verra thin-skinnt tae suspeckit slichts, an hidd clairly a dim aydea o his peer kwaality. But his maister or guardian chasit the froon bi skirlin:

‘Ye’ll be the maist likit amang us, Hareton! She says ye are a— Fit wis it? Weel, summin affa fraisie. Here! ye gang wi her roon the fairm. An ack like a laird, mine! Dinna eese ony ull wirds; an dinna gaak fan the young leddy is nae luikin at ye, an be riddy tae hod yer phizog fan she is; an, fan ye spikk, say yer wirds slowly, an keep yer hauns oot o yer pooches. Be aff, an enteertain her as douce as ye cin.’

He watchit the couple dannerin past the windae. Earnshaw hidd his coontenance turnt awa fae his companion. He seemit tae be takkin in the weel-kennt kintraside wi an ootlin’s an an artist’s interaist. Kitty taen a sleekit keek at him, shawin a bittie o respeck. She syne turnt her tent tae sikkin oot objicks o ameesement fer hersel, an skitit blithely on, liltin a tune tae staun in fer the lack o newsin.

‘I hae bint his tongue,’ quo Heathcliff. ‘He’ll nae ettle ae syllable aa the time! Nelly, ye mine me at his age—na, a bittie younger. Did I ivver luik sae feel: sae “gaumless”, as Joseph caas it?’

‘Waur,’ I replied, ‘because mair dour wi it.’

‘I hae a pleeshure in him,’ he wint on, spikkin his thochts alood. ‘He his satisfied ma expecktashuns. If he were a born feel I shid nae enjoy it hauf sae muckle. But he’s nae feel; an I cin unnerstaun aa his feelins, hivvin felt them masel. I ken fit he tholes noo, fer instance, exackly: it is jist a stert o fit he will thole, though. An he’ll nivver be able tae grow oot o the comedoon o orraness an ignorance. I hiv got him faister than his scoonrel o a faither haudit me, an laigher; fer he takks a pride in bein a breet. I hiv taucht him tae jamph at aathin extra-animal as feel an feckless. Dinna ye think Hindley widd be prood o his sin, if he cwid see him? maist as prood as I am o mine. But there’s this odds; een is gowd pit tae the eese o pavin-stanes, an the idder is tin polishit to ape a seervice o siller. *Mine* his naethin wirthy aboot it; yet I will hae the merit o makkin it gang as far as sic peer stuff cin gang. *His* hidd first-rate kwaalities, an they are tynt: makkit waur than unavailin. *I* hiv naethin tae regreet; *he* widd hae mair than ony but I are aware o. An the best o it is, Hareton is affa fon o me! Ye’ll ain that I hiv ootmatchit Hindley there. Gin the deid villain cwid raise fae his mools tae fecht me fer his bairn’s wrangs, I shid hae the fun o seein the said bairn fecht him back again, fair kittlit up that he shid daur tae faa oot wi the ae frien he his in the warld!’

Heathcliff gied a divvilish lach at the aydea. I made nae reply, because I saa that he expeckit neen. Meantime, oor young companion, fa sat ower far awaa fae us tae list fit wis said, begood to shaw oonaisiness, maist likely repentin that he hidd tynt haein Kitty wi him because he wis feart he micht be wabbit. His faither taen tent o the ristless luiks wannerin tae the windae, an the haun waikly raxin taewards his bunnet.

‘Get up, ye fushionless loon!’ he skirlit, pittin on hertiness.

‘Awaa aifter them! they are jist at the neuk, bi the staun o hives.’

Linton gaithert his virr, an left the ingle-neuk. The windae wis apen, an, as he steppit oot, I heerd Kitty spierin o her unfrienly attennant fit wis that scrievit ower the door? Hareton gypit up, an scrattit his heid like a richt feel.

‘It’s some damnable scrievin,’ he answert. ‘I canna read it.’

‘Canna read it?’ skirlit Kitty; ‘I cin read it: it’s English. But I wint tae ken fit wey it is there.’

Linton lachit: the first luik o mirth he hidd shawn. He disna ken his letters’

‘Is he aa as he shid be?’ spierit Miss Kitty, sairiously; ‘or is he nae aa there: nae richt? I hiv spiered him twice noo, an ilky time he luikit sae glaikit I think he disnae unnerstaun me. I cin hairdly unnerstaun *him*, I’m shair!’

Linton repeatit his lach, an luikit at Hareton tauntinly; faa certes didnae seem to be unnerstaunin at the meenit.

‘There’s naethin the maitter but sweirty; is there, Earnshaw?’ he said. ‘Ma cousin funcies ye are a gype. That’s fit ye get fer jamphin at “buik-larnin”, as ye widd say. Hiv ye taen tent, Kitty, his frichtfu Yorkshire wey o spikkin?’

‘Fit wey, faar the divvil is the eese o it?’ grumphit Hareton, mair redd in answerin his daily companion. He wis aboot tae gang farrer, but the twa young eens brakkit intae a lood fit o lachter: ma flichty quine bein delichted tae fun that she micht turn his unco spikkin tae maitter o ameesement.

‘Faar is the eese o the divvil in thon sintince?’ snichert Linton. ‘Faither tellt ye nae to spikk ony ull wirds, an ye canna apen yer mou withoot een. Dee sey tae ack like a laird, noo dee!’

‘Gin ye werenae mair a lassie than a laddie, I’d knock ye doon this meenit, I widd; pitifu lath o a craitur!’ retortit the ragin breet, retreatin, files his face brunt wi a mixter-maxter o rage an affront! fer he wis awaar o bein insultit, an affrontit foo tae resint it.

Mr. Heathcliff hivvin owerheerd the craic, as weel as I, smilit fan he saa him gang; but richt aifterwards cassen a luik o ootstaunin loathin on the aff-haun pair, faa bade claikin in the door-wey: the loon finnin croose eneuch files takkin ower haun Hareton’s fauts an fecklessness, an relatin anecdotes o his on-gyaans; an the quine relishin his chikky an spitefu sayins, withoot thinkin o the ill-naiter they shawit. I begood nae tae like, mair than tae think couthily o Linton, an to lat aff his faither a bittie fer haudin him chaip.

We bade tull aifterneen: I cwidna takk Miss Kitty awaa seener; but happily ma maister hiddnae quittit his chaumer, an didnae ken aboot oor lang absence. As we stravaigit hame, I widd fain hae enlichtened ma charge on the naiters o the fowk we hidd quittit: but she got it intae her heid that I hidd taen a gee agin them.

‘Aha!’ she skirlit, ‘ye takk faither’s side, Ellen: ye takk ae side I ken; or else ye wouldnae hivv swickit me sae mony eers intae the notion that Linton bade a lang wey fae here. I’m bi-ordinaar angry; nocht bit I’m sae plaised I canna shaw it! But you maun haud yer tongue aboot ma uncle; he’s *ma* uncle, mine; an I’ll gie faither a ragin fer faain oot wi him.’

An sae she did rin on, till I lat gang seyin tae makk her see her mistakk. She didnae spikk o the veesit thon nicht, because she didnae see Mr. Linton. Neist day it aa cam oot, sadly tae my sorra; an still I wisnae aathegither sorry: I thocht the birn o direckin an warnin widd be better deen bi him nor me. But he wis ower bauch-hertit in giein saitisfacktory raisons fer his wiss that she shid bide awaa fae the hoosehold o the Hichts, an Kitty likit guid raisons fer ivvery chaick that hinnert her pettit weell.

‘Pa!’ she skirlit, aifter the mornin’s greetins, ‘cin ye jalouse faa I saa yestreen, in my stravaig on the muirs. Ach, Pa, ye stertit! ye’ve nae deen richt, hiv ye, noo? I saa—but list, an ye will heer foo I fun ye oot; an Ellen, faa his jynit wi ye, an yit makkit on tae peety me sae, fan I kept howpin, an wis aye disappintit aboot Linton’s camin back!’

She gied a faithfu accoont o her traivels an fit hoppent; an ma maister, though he cassen mair than een reproachfu luik at me, said naethin tull she hidd feenisht. Syne he draait her tae him, an spiered gin she kennt fit wey he hidd hoddit Linton’s near neeborhood fae her? Cwid she think it wis tae nae alloo her a pleesure that she micht hairmlessly enjoy?

‘It wis because ye dinna like Mr. Heathcliff,’ she answert.

‘Syne ye believe I care mair fer ma ain feelins than yours, Kitty?’ he said. ‘Na, it wisnae because I didnae like Mr. Heathcliff, but because Mr. Heathcliff disnae like me; an is a maist divvelish chiel, delichtin tae wrang an connach ilky een he canna thole, gin they gie him the slichtest chunce. I kennt that ye cwidnae be acquant wi yer cousin withoot bein brocht intae contack wi him; an I kennt he widnae thole ye on ma accoont; sae fer yer ain guid, an naethin else, I makkit sikkar that ye shidna see Linton again. I meant tae makk it clair ae time as ye growit auler, an I’m affa sorra I pit it aff.’

‘But Mr. Heathcliff wis fair frienly, Pa,’ observit Kitty, nae at aa shair; ‘an *he* didnae objeck tae oor seein ilka idder: he said I micht cam tae his hoose fan I wintit; jist I maunna tell ye, because ye hidd faaen oot wi him, an widd nae forgie him fer mairryin Aunt Isabella. An ye winna. *It is yer wyte*: he is weellin to lat us be friens, at least; Linton an I; an ye are nae.’

Ma maister, seein that she widdnae takk his wird fer her uncle-in-law’s ull wull, gied a hasty sketch o his conduck tae Isabella, an the wey in which Whudderin Hichts becam his property. He cwidna thole tae spikk lang aboot the subjick; fer though he spakk little o it, he aye hidd the same ugsome feelins o nae bein able tae thole his aul enemy that hidd taen haud in his hert ivver since Mrs. Linton’s deith. ‘She micht hae bin livin yet, gin it hiddnae bin fer him!’ wis aye his dour thochts; an, in his een, Heathcliff seemit a murderer. Miss Kitty—faa didnae ken o ony ull deeds excep her ain smaa acts o brakkin the rules, oonjoostice, an rampaage, araisin fae het timper an thochtlessness, an repentit o on the day they were deen—taen a begeck at the blaikness o speerit that cwid brood on an ettlin fer revinge fer eers, an gang on wi its plans wi faint the bit o regreet. She appearit sae affa mazed bi an shockit at this new view o human naiter—left oot fae aa her studies an aa her aydeas tull noo—that Mr. Edgar thocht it wisnae nott tae gang on wi the subjeck. He jist addit—

‘Ye will ken seen eneuch, dearie, fit wey I wint ye tae bide awaa fae his hoose an faimly; noo gang back tae yer aul deeins an ameesements, an think nae mair aboot them.’

Kitty bussed her faither, an sat doon quaetly tae her lessons fer a pucklie oors, as she aye did; syne she wint wi him intae the gruns, an the hale day wint bi as usual: but in the evenin, fan she hidd gaun tae her chaumer, an I wint tae holp her tae takk her claes aff, I fun her greetin, on her knees bi the bedside.

‘Och, fit’s this aboot, gypit bairn!’ I skirled. ‘Gin ye hidd ony real sorra ye’d be affrontit tae waste a tear on this wee mishanter. Ye nivver hidd ae shadda o gryte sorra, Miss Kitty. Jalouse, fer a meenit, that maister an I were deid, an ye were aa yer lane in the warld: foo widd ye feel, syne pit side bi side fit is gaan on the noo wi sic an hairdship as thon, and be thankfu fer the friens ye hiv, insteed o sikkin mair.’

‘I’m nae greetin fer masel, Ellen,’ she answert, ‘it’s fer him. He expeckit tae see me again the morn, and there he’ll be sae disappintit: an he’ll weyt fer me, and I winna cam!’

‘Nonsinse!’ said I, ‘div ye imaigine he his thocht as muckle o ye as ye hiv o him? Hisnae he Hareton fer a companion? Nae een in a hundred widd greet at tyntin kin they hidd jist seen twice, fer twa aifterneens. Linton will jalouse foo it is, an tribble himsel nae farrer aboot ye.’

‘But may I nae scrieve a note tae tell him fit wey I canna cam?’ she spiered, raisin tae her feet. ‘An jist send thon buiks I said I widd len him? His buiks are nae as guid as mine, an he wintit tae hiv them sae muckle, fan I tellt him foo intairistin they were. May I nae, Ellen?’

‘Na, indaid! na, indaid!’ quo I without a doot. ‘syne he widd scrieve tae ye, an there’d nivver be an eyn o it. Na, Miss Kitty, the frienship maun be drappit aa thegither: sae Pa expecks, an I will makk siccar that it is deen.’

‘But foo cin ae wee note—?’ she begood, wi a priggin coontenance.

‘Be quaet!’ I interruptit. ‘We’ll nae begood wi yer wee notes. Get intae bed.’

She threw at me an affa ill-trickit luik, sae ill-trickit that I widdnae buss her guid-nicht at first: I happit her up, an caaed her door tee, in gryte displaisure; but, repintin hauf-wey, I wint back in saftly, an lo! there wis Miss staunin at the table wi a bittie o blank paper afore her an a pencil in her haun, which she sleekitly slippit oot o sicht fan I cam in.

‘Ye’ll get naebody tae takk thon, Kitty,’ I said, ‘gin ye scrieve it; an richt noo I will pit oot yer caunnel.’

I set the extinguisher on the flame, receivin as I did sae a sklaffert on ma haun an a snippy ‘Ill-naitert thing!’ I syne quittit her again, an she draait the bolt in een o her waur, maist girny humours. The letter wis feenished an forwardit tae faar it wis gaan bi a milk-fesser faa cam fae the village; but that I didnae fun oot tull some time aifterwards. Wikks passit on, an Kitty recoverit her timper; though she growit affa fon o makkin aff tae neuks bi hersel an aften, gin I cam near her instanter files readin, she widd stert an boo ower the buik, clairly ettlin tae hod it; an I cwid see edges o lowse paper stickin oot ayont the leaves. She hidd a jink an aa o camin doon airly in the mornin an mollachin aboot the kitchie, gin she were expeckin summin camin; an she hidd a wee draaer in a cabinet in the library, which she widd hing ower fer oors, an faa’s ky she bein affa carefu tae takk awaa fan she left it.

Ae day, as she inspeckit yon draaer, I taen note that the plaik an trinkets which eesed tae form its contints were cheyngit intae bitties o faldit paper. Ma keeriosity an doots were raisit; I makkit up ma myn tae takk a keek at her antrin treeshurs; sae, at nicht, as seen as she an ma maister were siccar up e stairs, I rakit, an nae bather fun amang ma hoose kys een that widd fit the sneck. Hivvin apent, I teemit the hale shebang intae ma apron, an taen them wi me tae luik at in ma ain chaumer. Though I cwidna but jalouse, it wis a richt begeck tae fun that they were a kirn o correspondence—daily maist, it maun hae bin—fae Linton Heathcliff: answers tae documents forrardit bi her. The airlier datit were affrontit an nae lang; bittie bi bittie, fooivver, they growit langer intae muckle luve-letters, gypit, as the age o the scriever makkit naiteral, yit wi touches here and there which I thocht were borriet fae a mair skeely source. Ilky o them strikkit me as antrin mixters o hert-sair luuve an dreichness; stertin in strang feelin, an eynin in the fraisy, wirdy style that a scholar loon micht eese tae a funciet, ghaist o a sweethert. Fither they satisfied Kitty I dinna ken; but they appearit affa wirthless trock tae me. Aifter turnin ower as mony as I thocht proper, I bun them in a hunky an pit them aside, sneckin the teem draaer.

Folliein her habit, ma young leddy cam doon airly, an veesitit the kitchen: I watchit her gang tae the door, on the camin in o a pertickler wee loon; an, files the dairymaid fullit his can, she pit summin intae his jaiket pooch, an yarkit summin oot. I wint roon bi the gairden, an weytit fer the messenger; fa focht braively tae defen his trust, an we scalit the milk atween us; but I succeedit in takkin oot the epistle; an, threetenin sairious ootcams gin he didna gang hame richt awaa, I bade aneth the waa an perusit Miss Kitty’s luvvin composition. It wis mair haimal an mair weel-expressit than her cousin’s: gey bonny an gey feel. I shakkit ma heid, an thinkin sair wint intae the hoose. The day bein weet, she cwidna ameese hersel wi stravaigin aboot the park; sae, at the eyn o her mornin skweelwirk, she resortit tae the solace o the draaer. Her faither sat readin at the table; an I, deeleeberately, hidd socht a bittie o wirk in some unrippit fringes o the windae-curtain, keppin ma ee steedily fixit on her deeins. Nivver did ony burd fleein back tae a plundert nest, which it hidd left brimfu o chowpin gorblins, lat oot sic affa cries o doul, in its sorrafu cries an flisterins, than she bi ae ‘Och!’ an the cheynge that blaadit her eence seely coontenance. Mr. Linton luiked up.

‘Fit is the maitter, luve? Hiv ye hurtit yersel?’ he said.

His tone an luik lat her ken that *he* hidnae been the een that fun the hoard.

‘Na, Pa!’ she pechit. ‘Ellen! Ellen! cam upstairs—I’m seek!’

I did fit I wis tellt, an wint oot wi her.

‘Och, Ellen! ye hiv got them,’ she begood stracht awa, drappin on her knees, fan we were aa wir lane. ‘Och, gie them tae me, an I’ll nivver, nivver dee sae again! Dinna tell Pa. Ye hivnae tellt Pa, Ellen? say ye hivnae? I’ve bin affa ill-trickit, but I winna dee it ony mair!’

Wi a graif seveerity in ma mainner I tellt her tae staun up.

‘Sae,’ I skirlit, ‘Miss Kitty, ye are fair hine on, it seems: ye may weel be affrontit o them! A fine kirn o trock ye study in yer leesur ooers, tae be shair: ach, it’s guid eneuch tae be printit! An fit div ye jalouse the maister will think fan I pit it afore him? I hivna shawn it yet, but ye needna imaigine I will kep yer gypit saicrits. Fer shame! an ye maun hae led the wey in scrievin sic nonsinse: he widd nae hiv thocht o stertin, I’m shair.’

‘I didna! I didna!’ grat Kitty, fit tae brakk her hert. ‘I didna eence think o luvvin him tull—’

‘*Luvvin*!’ skirlit I, as jamph as I cwid spikk the wird. ‘*Luvvin*! Did onybody ivver heer the like! I micht jist as weel spikk o luvvin the miller faa cams eence a eer to buy oor corn. bonny luvvin, indaid! an baith times thegither ye hiv seen Linton hairdly fower ooers in yer life! Noo here is the bairny trock. I’m gaun wi it tae the library; an we’ll see fit yer faither says tae sic *luvvin*.’

She loupit at her beluvvit epistles, but I haudit them abune ma heid; an syne she poored oot farrer entraities sair made that I wid brunt them—dee onythin raither than shaw them. An bein fair fain tae lach as rage—fer I thocht it aa a quine’s proodness—I at linth relintit a bittie, an spiered ‘Gin I gree tae brunt them, will ye gie yer wird nedder tae sen nor receive a letter again, nor a buik (fer I cin see ye hiv sennit him buiks), nor locks o hair, nor rings, nor plaiks?’

‘We dinna sen plaiks,’ skirlit Kitty, her pride owercamin her affront.

‘Nor onythin at aa, syne, ma leddy?’ I said. ‘Oonless ye will, here I gang.’

‘I gie ma wird, Ellen!’ she scraiched, takkin haud o ma dress. ‘Och, pit them in the lowe, dee, dee!’

But fan I wint tae open a place wi the poker the secrifeece wis ower painfu tae be tholit. She eernistly priggit that I widd spare her een or twa.

‘Een or twa, Ellen, tae kep fer Linton’s sake!’

I unknottit the hunky an begood tae drap them in fae an angle, an the flame curlit up the chimbley.

‘I will hae een, ye coorse vratch!’ she skwalliched, dartin her haun intae the lowe, an draain forth a puckle hauf-brunt bitties, at the expinse o her fingers.

‘Verra weel—an I will hae a puckle tae shaw tae Pa!’ I answert, shakkin back the lave intae the bunnle, an turnin anew tae the door.

She teemit her blaikened pieces intae the lowe, an waggit tae me tae feenish the bruntin. It wis deen; I steered up the aiss, an beeriet them aneth a shuffelfae o coals; an she wioot a myowt, an sair hertit, retirit tae her chaumer. I wint doon tae tell ma maister that the young leddy’s qualm o seekness wis maist awaa, but I judgit it best fer her to lie doon a filie. She wouldnae dine; but she cam doon at tae, pae-wae, an reid aboot the een, an bi-ordinaar quaet in ootward luiks. Neist mornin I answert the letter bi a slip o paper, inscrievit, ‘Master Heathcliff is requestit tae sen nae mair notes tae Miss Linton, as she will nae receive them.’ An, fae then on, the wee loon cam wi teem pooches.

CHAPTER TWINTY AN TWA

A BIDDIN FAE HEATHCLIFF

Simmer caaed on tae an eyn, an airly autumn: it wis past Michaelmas, but the hairst wis late thon eer, an a feow o oor parks were steel tae be reddit. Mr. Linton an his dother widd aften danner oot amang the reapers; at the cairryin o the laist shaifs they bade tull gloamin, an the evenin hoppenin tae be caul an dreich, ma maister catcht a bad caul, that settlit thrawnly on his lichts, an kep him indoors throu the hale o the winter, near withoot a brak.

Peer Kitty, frichtened fae her wee bit romance, hidd bin mair dowie an disjaskit syne giein it up; an her faither insistit on her nae readin sae muckle, an takkin mair exercise. She hidd his companionship nae langer; I thocht it ma duty to makk up fer it, as muckle as I cwid, wi mine: an eeseless staun-in; fer I cwid jist spare twa or three ooers, fae ma daily darg, tae follie her fitsteps, an syne ma society wis clairly nae as guid as his.

On an aifterneen in Jocktober, or the beginnin o November—a caller wattery aifterneen, fan the girse an paths were reeshlin wi dump, widdert leaves, an the caul blae lift wis hauf hidden bi cloods—mirky grey streamers, faist climmin fae the wast, an bodin an onding o rain—I requestit ma young leddy nae tae gang fer a stravaig, because I wis shair o shooers. She widnae gie in; an I oonweellinly pit on a clyok, an taen ma umbrella tae gang wi her on a danner tae the boddim o the park: a formal waak which she maistly taen gin she wis laigh-speeritit—an that she aye wis fan Mr. Edgar hidd bin waur than ordinairy, a thing nivver kennt fae his ain wirds, but jalousit baith bi her and me fae his growin quaetness an the dowieness o his coontenance. She wint sorrafu on: there wis nae rinnin or loupin noo, though the thin win micht weel hae temptit her tae rin. An aften, fae the side o ma ee, I cwid sinse her raisin a haun, an sweypin summin aff her chikk. I gypit roon fer a wey o distrackin her thochts. On ae side o the road wis a heich, roch bank, faar hazels an shargar oaks, wi their reets hauf oot o the grun, haudit on tae a shoogly hame: the yird wis ower lowse fer the latter; an strang wins hidd blawn some near sideyweys. In simmer Miss Kitty delichtit tae climm alang yon trunks, an sit in the branches, swingin twinty feet abune the grun; an I, glaid tae see her swakkness an her licht, bairn’s hert, aye thocht it richt tae rage ivvery time I catcht her at sic a hicht, but sae that she kennt it wisnae nott tae cam doon. Fae denner tull tae she widd lie in her win-showdit crib, deein naethin excep singin aul sangs—ma nursery lore—tae hersel, or gaakin at the burds, jynt tenants, feed an tyce their young eens tae flee: or nestlin wi closed lids, hauf thinkin, hauf dwaumin, seelier than wirds cin udder.

‘Luik, Miss!’ quo I, pintin tae a neuk aneth the reets o ae twinit tree. ‘Winter isnae here yit. There’s a wee flooer ower there, the last bud fae the hunners o bluebells that cloodit yon girse steps in July wi a lilac haar. Will ye climm up, an pyke it tae shaw tae Pa?’ Kitty gaakit a lang time at the flooer aa its lane, shakkin in its yirdit lythe, an reponit, in the hinner eyn— ‘Na, I’ll nae touch it: but it luiks affa dowie, daes it nae, Ellen?’

‘Aye,’ I observit, ‘aboot as stervit an peely-wally as ye, yer chicks are bleedless; lat us takk haud o hauns an rin. You’re sae doon-hertit, I daursay I will kep tee wi ye.’

‘Na,’ she repeatit, an cairriet on dannerin slow, stappin noo an again tae poor ower a bittie o moss, or a tuft o fitened girse, or a fungus raxin its bricht orange amang the hellocks o broon foliage; an, ivvery sae aften, her haun wis liftit tae her face turnt awaa.

‘Kitty, fit wey are ye greetin, luuve?’ I spiered, camin up an pittin ma airm ower her shooder. ‘You maunna greet because Pa his a caul; be thankfu it is naethin waur.’

Noo she didna stap her tears ony mair; her braith wis smorit bi sobs.

‘Och, it *will* be summin waur,’ she said. ‘An fit will I dee fan Pa an ye leave me, an I am aa ma lane? I canna but mine yer wirds, Ellen; they are ayewis in ma lug. Foo life will be cheynged, foo dreich the warld will be, fan Pa an ye are deid.’

‘Neen cin tell fither ye winna dee afore us,’ I reponit. ‘It’s wrang to luik fer ull. We’ll howp there are eers an eers tae cam afore ony o us gang: maister is young, an I am strang, an hairdly forty-five. Ma mither lived tull achty, a couthy wumman tae the eyn. An jalouse Mr. Linton an I were sparit tull he saa saxty, that widd be mair eers than ye hiv coontit, Miss. An widd it nae be glaikit tae mourn a mishanter abune twinty years aforehaun?’

‘But Aunt Isabella wis younger nor Pa,’ she remarkit, gaakin up wi baach howp tae sikk farrer easedom.

‘Aunt Isabella hidd nae ye an me tae look aifter her,’ I replied. ‘She wisnae as seely as Maister: she hidnae as muckle tae live fer. Aa ye nott dee, is tae weyt weel on yer faither, an cheer him bi lattin him see ye lichtsome; an sey nae tae gie him wirry on ony subjeck: mine thon, Kitty! I’ll nae hodd it but ye micht kill him gin ye were wud an hallyrackit, an hauden on tae a glaikit, fancifu affeckshun fer the sin o a body faa widd be glaid tae hiv him in his mools; an alloo him tae fun oot that ye frettit ower bein kep apairt he thocht it as weel tae makk.’

‘I fret aboot naethin in the warld excep Pa’s seekness,’ answert ma companion. ‘I care fer naethin fan compairit wi Pa. An I’ll nivver—nivver—och, nivver, files I hae ma sinses, dee an ack or spikk a wird tae vex him. I luve him mair than masel, Ellen; an I ken it bi this: I say ma guid wirds ivvery nicht that I may live aifter him; because I widd raither be doon-hertit than that he shid be: that preeves I luve him mair than masel.’

‘Guid wirds,’ quo I. ‘But deeds maun preeve it an aa; an aifter he is weel, mine ye dinna forgie voos ye’ve makkit in the ooer o fricht.’

As we newsed, we cam tee tull a door that apent on the road; an ma young leddy, lichtenin intae sunshine again, climmit up an reestit hersel on the tap o the waa, raxin ower tae gaither a pucklie hips that flooerit scarlet on the tapmaist branches o the wild-rose trees shaddain the heichwey side: the laigher fruit hidd gaen, but jist burds cwid win tae the upper, excep fae faar Kitty wis noo. In raxin to puu them, her hat fell aff; an as the door wis sneckit, she said she wis gaan tae breenge doon tae win it back. I tellt her tae be carefu lest she faa doon, an swackly she wint oot o sicht. But climmin back up wis nae sic an aisy maitter: the stanes were smeeth an naitly cementit, an the rose-busses an trachelin brummle cwidna hep her tae climm back up again. I, like a feel, didna mine thon, tull I heerd her lachin an skirlin ‘Ellen! ye’ll hae tae fess the ky, or else I maun rin roon tae the porter’s lodge. I canna clim the waa on this side!’

‘Bide faar ye are,’ I answert; ‘I hiv ma bourach o kyes in ma pooch: mebbe I cin ettle tae open it; gin I canna, I’ll gang.’

Kitty ameesit hersel wi duncin tee an fae afore the door, files I tried aa the muckle kys een aifter the idder. I hidd pit in the last een, an fun that neen widd dee; sae, tellin her again that I wintit her tae bide there, I wis aboot tae kneip on hame as faist as I cwid, fan an approachin soun stappit me. It wis the trot o a horse; Kitty’s dunce stoppit an aa.

‘Faa is yon?’ I fuspert.

‘Ellen, I wish ye cwid apen the door,’ fuspert back ma companion, worriet.

‘Ho, Miss Linton!’ skraiched a deep vyce (the rider’s), ‘I’m glaid tae tryst wi ye. Dinna be in sic a hurry tae gang in, for I hiv an accoont tae spier fer an fun.’

‘I winna spikk tae ye, Mr. Heathcliff,’ answert Kitty. ‘Pa says ye are a wickit chiel, an ye canna thole baith him an me; an Ellen says that an aa.’

‘Thon his naethin tae dee wi it,’ said Heathcliff. (He it wis.) ‘I dinna hate ma sin, Ise warn; an it is aboot him that I sikk yer tent. Aye; ye hiv caase tae gang reid. Twa or three months syne, were ye nae in the habit o scrievin tae Linton? makkin luve in play? Ye were the auler; an nae sae sinsitiv, as it turns oot. I hiv yer letters, an gin ye gie me ony impidence I’ll sen them tae yer faither. I jalouse ye growit ferfochen o the ameesement an drappit it, didnae ye? Weel, ye drappit Linton wi it intae a Slough o Despond. He wis sairious: in luuve, shairly. As true as I live, he’s deein fer ye; brakkin his hert at yer fykieness: nae leeterally, but railey. Though Hareton his taen the raise o him fer sax weeks, an I hiv eesed mair sairious meesurs, an ettlit tae frichten him oot o his gypit weys, he gets waur daily; an he’ll be aneth the sod afore simmer, oonless ye fess him back

‘Foo cin you spoot sic affa lees tae the peer bairn?’ I skirlit fae the inside. ‘Fer hivvens sake ride on! Foo cin ye deleebrately makk up sic affa lees? Miss Kitty, I’ll dunt the sneck aff wi a stane: ye winna believe thon vile havers. Ye can feel in yersel it isnae richt that a body shid dee fer luuve o an ootlin.’

‘I didna ken there were fowk listin,’ mummelt the fun-oot vratch. ‘Wirthy Mrs. Dean, I like ye, but I dinna like yer sleekit weys,’ he addit aloud. ‘Foo cwid ye lee sae affa as tae affirm I cwidnae thole the “peer bairn” an makk up bogeyman stories tae frichten her fae my door-stanes? Kirsty Linton (the verra name warms me), ma bonny lass, I will be fae hame aa this wikk; gang an see gin I hinna spikkit trowth: dee, there’s a dearie! Just picter yer faither in ma bield, an Linton in yers; syne think foo ye widd vailye yer haiveless luvver gin he widnae steer a step tae aise ye, fan yer faither himsel priggit wi him; an dinna, fae pure gypery, faa intae the same wyte. I sweir, on ma deeleeverince, he’s gaun tae his mools, an neen but ye cin makk him siccar!’

The sneck gied wey an I cam oot.

‘I sweir Linton is deein,’ repeatit Heathcliff, luikin richt at me. ‘An sorra an disappintmint are hastenin his deith. Nelly, if ye winna lat her gang, ye cin traivel ower yersel. But I willnae cam back tull this time neist wikk; an I think yer maister himself widd scarcely objeck tae her veesitin her cousin.’

‘Cam in,’ said I, takkin Kitty bi the airm an garrin her tae cam back; fer she scuttert, luikin wi wirriet een the features o the spikker, ower dour tae shaw his inward leein.

He birsed his horse tee, an, binnin doon, observit ‘Miss Kitty, I’ll ain tae ye that I hivnae muckle patience wi Linton; an Hareton an Joseph hae less. I’ll ain that he’s wi a roch set. He pines fer kyn-hertidness, as weel as luuve; an a douce wird fae ye widd be his best feesick. Dinna pey ony heed o Mrs. Dean’s coorse waarnins; but be couthie, an sey tae see him. He dwaums o ye day an nicht, an canna be tellt that ye dinna hae an ull-wull fer him, syne ye nedder scrieve nor veesit.’

I caaed tee the door, an rowed a stane ta hep the lowsit sneck in haudin it; an pittin up ma umbrella, I puued ma charge aneth it: fer the rain begood tae ding throu the souchin branches o the trees, an waarnit us nae tae scutter aboot. Oor hurry stappit ony wirds on the encoonter wi Heathcliff, as we kneipit hame; but I jaloused in masel that Kitty’s hert wis cloodit noo in dairkness sair. Her features were sae dowie, they didna seem hers: she fairly thocht fit she hidd heerd as ivvery wird wis the trowth.

The maister hidd gaun tae rist afore we cam in. Kitty tiptaed tae his chaumer tae spier foo he wis; he hidd faaen asleep. She cam back, an spierit me tae reist wi her in the library. We taen oor tae thegither; an aifterwards she lay doon on the rug, an tellt me nae tae spikk, for she wis founert. I got a buik, an made on tae read. As seen as she thocht me taen up in fit I wis daein, she begood eence mair her quaet greetin: it appearit, if noo, fit she likit deein. I lat her enjoy it a filie; syne I objeckit: makkin fun o an a feel o aa fit Mr. Heathcliff’s spake aboot his sin, gin I were shair she widd gree. Ach! I wisnae skeely eneuch tae conter the effeck his accoont hidd makkit: it wis jist fit he intennit.

‘You cwid be richt, Ellen,’ she answert; ‘but I will nivver feel at aise tull I ken. An I maun tell Linton it isnae ma wyte that I dinna scrieve, an makk him unnerstaun that I willnae cheynge.’

Fit eese were ragin an argie-bargie agin her gypit sakeless? We pairtit that nicht—nae seely wi ilky idder; but neist day hidd me on the road tae Whudderin Heichts, bi the side o ma wilfu young mistress’s pony. I cwidna staun tae see her sorra: tae see her pae-wae, disjaskit coontenance, an hivvy een: an I gied in, in the faint howp that Linton himsel micht preeve, bi the wey he greetit us, foo sic a smaa pairt o the tale wis foonit on fack.

## CHAPTER TWINTY-THREE

THE JOUKERIE-PAWKERIE O LINTON

The weet nicht hidd shawn in a mirky mornin—hauf freest, hauf a smirr o rain—an new-makkit burns wint ower oor path—camin fae the uplaans. Ma feet were sipin throu; I wis ill-naitert an doon-hertit; exackly the humour suitit fer makkin the maist o nesty things. We wint intae the fairm-hoose bi the kitchie wey, tae fun oot fither Mr. Heathcliff wis really nae there: because I pit slicht faith in his ain wirds.

Joseph seemit reistin in a kyne o happy laan aa his lane, aside a roarin lowe; a coort o ale on the table narr him, brisslin wi muckle bitties o toastit breid; an his blaik, cutty pipe in his mou. Kitty rinnit tae the ingle tae warm hersel. I spiered gin the maister wis in? Ma question bade sae lang unanswert, that I thocht the aul billie hidd grown deef, an repeatit it looder.

‘Na!’ he grumphit, or raither skwalliched throu his neb. ‘Na! ye maun gang back faar ye cam fae.’

‘Joseph!’ skirled a girny vyce, at the same time as me, fae the inner chaumer. Foo aften am I tae cry ye? There are ainly a feow reid eizels noo. Joseph! cam this meenit.’

Strang puffs, an a thrawn glower intae the grate, declarit he hidd nae lug fer this priggin. The hoosekeeper an Hareton werenae tae be seen; een gaen on an eeran, an the idder at his wirk, mair like. We kennt Linton’s tones, an wint throu.

‘Och, I howp ye’ll dee in a laft, stervit tae deith!’ said the loon, mistakkin oor approach fer that o his negleckfu attinnant.

Fan he saa his error, he stappit: his cousin fleeit tae him.

‘Is that ye, Miss Linton?’ he said, raisin his heid fae the airm o the greyt cheer, in which he reistit. ‘Na—dinna buss me: it takks ma breath. Michty me! Pa said ye widd veesit,’ wint on he, aifter recoverin a wee bit fae Kitty’s bosie; files she steed by luikin affa sorra. ‘Will ye caa the door tee, gin ye please? ye left it apen; an thon—thon *ugsome* craiturs winna cairry coals tae the inglelowe. It’s affa caul!’

I steerit up the eizel, an fessed a scuttlefu masel. The seek loon girned o bein clairtit wi aiss; but he hidd an affa hoast, an luikit fivverish an nae weel, sae I didnae say onthin aboot his danner.

‘Weel, Linton,’ mummlit Kitty, fan his runkled broo aised, ‘are ye glaid tae see me? Cin I dee ye ony guid?’

‘Fit wey didna ye cam afore?’ he spiered. ‘Ye shid hae cam, insteed o scrievin. It wabbit me affa scrievin thon lang letters. I’d far raither hae newsed tae ye. Noo, I cin neither thole tae spikk, nor onythin else. I winner faar Zillah is! Will ye’ (luikin at me) ‘gang intae the kitchie an see?’

I wis gied nae thunks fer ma idder seervice; an nae bein weelin tae rin tae an frae at his behest, I reponed: ‘Naebody is oot there but Joseph.’

‘I hae a drouth,’ quo he girnin an turnin awa. ‘Zillah is aye takkin hersel aff tae Gimmerton syne Pa wint: it’s meesrable! An I’m garred tae cam doon here—they resolvit nivver tae heer me up e stairs.’

‘Daes yer father takk tent tae ye, Maister Heathcliff?’I spiered, perceivin Kitty tae be stappit in her freenly weys.

‘Tent? He makks *them* a takk mair ten at laist,’ he skirled. ‘The vratches! Div ye ken, Miss Linton, thon breet Hareton lachs at me! I canna thole him! indaid, I canna thole them aa: they are ugsome craiturs.’

Kitty begood rakin fer some watter; she lichtit on a joog in the dresser, fillit a tummler, an brocht it. He priggit her tae pit in a speenfae o wine fae a bottle on the table; an hivvin swallied a wee suppie, appearit mair ristit, an said she wis verra kyne.

‘An are ye glaid tae see me?’ spiered she again an plaised tae fun the smaa beginnins o a smile.

‘Aye, I am. It’s summin new tae heer a vyce like yers!’ he reponit. ‘But I *hiv* bin vext, because ye widnae cam. An Pa sweirit it wis doon tae me: he caaed me a pitifu, shufflin, wirthless thing; an said ye cwidna thole me; an gin he hidd bin me, he widd be mair the maister o the Grange than yer faither bi this time. But ye dinna jamph me, div ye, Miss?’

‘I wish you widd say Kirsty, or Kitty,’ interruptit ma young leddy. ‘Jamph at ye? Na! Neist tae Pa an Ellen, I luvv ye mair than onybody livin. I din luvv Mr. Heathcliff, though; an I daurna cam here fan he cams back: will he bide awaa mony days?’

‘Nae mony,’ answert Linton; ‘but he gangs on tae the muirs aften, syne the sheetin season begood; an ye micht spen an ooer or twa wi me fan he’s awaa. Say ye will. I think I shidnae be girny wi ye: ye’d nae steer me up, an ye’d ayewis be riddy tae hep me, widd ye nae?’

‘Aye,’ said Kitty, sclaffin his lang saft hair: ‘gin I cwid ainly get Pa’s consint, I’d spen hauf ma time wi ye. Bonny Linton! I wish ye were ma brither.’

‘An syne ye widd like me as weel as yer faither?’ observit he, mair blithesome. ‘But Pa says ye widd luvv me mair than him an aa the warld, gin ye were ma wife; sae I’d raither ye were that.’

‘Na, I shid nivver luvv onybody mair nor Pa,’ she reponit graifly. ‘An fowk canna thole their wives, files; but nae their sistren an breethers: an gin ye were the latter, ye widd bide wi us, an Pa widd be as fon o ye as he is o me.’

Linton deniet that fowk ivver hatit their wives; but Kitty wis shair that they did, and, in her clivverness, pintit tae his ain faither’s nae tholin her aunt. I seyit to stap her thochtless tongue. I cwidna dee it tull aathin she kennt wis oot. Maister Heathcliff, muckle kittlit, sayin fit she spikkit wis fause.

‘Pa tellt me; an Pa disnae tell lees,’ she answert impidently.

‘*Ma* Pa his nae time fer yers!’ skirled Linton. ‘He caas him a sleekit feel.’

‘Yers is a wickit chiel,’ retortit Kitty; ‘an ye are affa ill-trickit tae daur tae repeat fit he says. He maun be wickit tae hiv makkit Aunt Isabella leave him as she deed.’

‘She didna leave him,’ said the loon; ‘ye winna conter me.’

‘She deed,’ skirlit ma young leddy.

‘Well, I’ll tell *ye* summin!’ said Linton. ‘Yer mither cwidna thole yer faither: noo then.’

‘Ach!’ skirled Kitty, ower feerious tae gang on.

‘An she luvved mine,’ quo he.

‘Ye wee leear! I hate ye noo!’ she peched, an her face growit reid wi wudden.

‘She deed! she deed!’ sang Linton, sinkin intae his cheer, an leanin back his heid tae hae a lach at foo kittlit up the idder een wis, faa steed ahin.

‘Weesht, Maister Heathcliff!’ I said; ‘that’s yer faither’s tale, an aa, I jalouse.’

‘It isnae: ye haud yer tongue!’ he answert. ‘She deed, she deed, Kitty! she deed, she deed!’

Kitty, aside hersel, gied the cheer a veelent shiv, an garred him tae faa agin ae airm. He wis richt awaa ruggit bi a smorin hoast that seen eynit his triumph. It laisted sae lang that it frichtent aiven me. As tae his cousin, she grat wi aa her micht, takkin a richt begeck at the hairm she hidd deen: though she said naethin. I haudit him tull the fit wun itsel oot. Syne he shivvit me awaa, an pit his heid doon seelently. Kitty quaetit her greetin an aa, taen a seat anent, an luikit sairiously intae the ingle.

‘Foo div ye feel noo, Maister Heathcliff?’ I spiered, aifter weytin ten meenits.

‘I wiss *she* felt as I dae,’ he reponit: ‘nesty, coorse thing! Hareton nivver touches me: he nivver clourit me in his life. An I wis better the day: an there—’ his voice deid in a girn.

‘*I* didnae clour ye!’ mummlit Kitty, chawin her lip tae stap anither ootbirst o greetin.

He souched an girned like een unner gryte sufferin, an kep it up fer a corter o an ooer; deeleeberatly tae feech his cousin, for fanivver he catcht ony greetin fae her he pit even mair pyne an sorra intae fit he said.

‘I’m sorra I hurtit ye, Linton,’ she said syne, rackit ayont fit she cwid thole. ‘But *I* cwidna bin hurtit bi thon wee shiv, an I hidd nae aydea that ye cwid, edder: yer nae muckle, are ye, Linton? Dinna lat me gang hame thinkin I’ve deen ye hairm. Answer! Spikk tae me.’

‘I canna spikk tae ye,’ he fuspert; ‘ye’ve hurtit me sae that I will lie wakkened aa nicht cowkin wi this hoast. Gin ye hidd it ye’d ken fit it wis; but *ye’ll* be faist asleep files I’m in pyne, an naebody narr me. I winner foo ye widd like tae spen thon fearfu nichts!’ An he begood tae baal oot lood, fer verra peety o himsel.

‘Syne ye are eesed tae spennin dreidfu nichts,’ I said, ‘it winna be Miss faa spiles yer aise: ye’d be the same hidd she nivver cam. Hooivver, she willnae bather ye again; an mebbe ye’ll get quaeter fan we gang awaa.’

‘Maun I gang?’ spiered Kitty doulfu, bennin ower him. ‘Div ye wint me tae gang, Linton?’

‘Ye canna cheynge fit ye’ve deen,’ he girned, haudin back fae her, ‘oonless ye cheynge it fer the waur bi termentin me intae a fivver.’

‘Weel, syne, I maun gang?’ she repeatit.

‘Lat me alane, at laist,’ said he; ‘I canna thole yer spikkin.’

She hung aboot, an haudit aff ma priggin wi her tae cam awaa fer far ower lang; but as he neither luikit up nor spikkit, she finally makkit a meevement tae the door, an I follied. We were caaed back bi a scraich. Linton hidd slippit fae his seat on tae the hearthstane, an lay warslin in the contermashiousness o a bairn clean connached, makkin shair tae be as sairious an feechin as it cin. I hidd nae problem wirkin oot his naiter fae the wey he wis cairryin on, and saa at eence it widd be feel tae sey gaun alang wi him. Nae sae ma companion: she rin back in fricht, cooriet doon, an grat, an soothit, an priggit, tull he growit quaet fae lack o braith: bi nae means fae second thochts at wirryin her.

‘I will heist him on tae the settle,’ I said, ‘an he may row aboot as muckle as he wints: we canna stap tae gaak at him. I howp ye are saitisfied, Miss Kitty, that *ye* are nae the body tae hep him; an that his ullness is nae caasit bi missin ye. Noo, syne, there he is! Cam awaa: as seen as he kens there is naebody bi tae care fer his nonsinse, he’ll be glaid to lie quaet.’

She pit a cushion aneth his heid, and offerit him some watter; he rejeckit the latter, an tossit unaisily on the former, gin it were a stane or a block o wid. She ettlit tae pit it mair tae aise him.

‘I canna dee wi thon,’ he said; ‘it’s nae heich eneuch.’

Kitty brocht anither tae pit abune it.

‘That’s *ower* heich,’ mummlit the aggraavatin thing.

‘Foo maun I pit it, syne?’ she spiered at her weet’s eyn.

He twinit himsel up tae her, as she hauf cooriet bi the settle, an makkit her shooder tae haud him

‘Na, that winna dee,’ I said. ‘Ye’ll hae tae pit up wi the cushion, Maister Heathcliff. Miss his wastit ower muckle time on ye aaready: we canna bide five meenits langer.’

‘Aye, aye, we cin!’ reponit Kitty. ‘He’s guid an patient noo. He’s begood tae think I will hae far gryter meesery than he will the nicht, gin I troo he is the waur fer ma veesit: an syne I daurnae cam again. Spikk the trowth aboot it, Linton; fer I maunna cam, gin I hiv hurtit ye.’

‘You maun cam, tae makk me better,’ he answert. ‘Ye hiv tae cam, because ye hiv hurtit me: ye ken ye hiv affa sair! I wisnae as ull fan ye cam in as I am noo—wis I?’

‘But ye’ve makkit yersel ull bi greetin an haein an on-cairry.—I didnae dee it aa,’ said his cousin. ‘Hooivver, we’ll be friens noo. An ye wint me: ye wid wiss tae see me files, widn’t ye?’

‘I tellt ye I deed,’ he reponit aggraavatit. ‘Reist on the settle an lat me lean on yer knee. That’s as Ma eesed tae dee, hale aifterneens thegither. Reist richt steell an dinna spikk: but ye may sing a sang, gin ye cin sing; or ye may say a rare lang intairistin ballad—een o thon eens ye said ye wid larn me; or a story. I’d raither hae a ballad, though: begood.’

Kitty repeatit the langest she cwid mine. The wark contintit baith michtily. Linton widd hae anidder, an aifter that anidder, naewithstaunnen ma strang objeckshions; an sae they wint on ontil the clock struck twal, an we heerd Hareton in the coort, camin back fer his denner.

‘An the morn, Kitty, will ye be here the morn?’ spierit young Heathcliff, haudin her frock as she steed up sweirtly.

‘Na,’ I answert, ‘nor neist day nedder.’ She, fooivver, gied an antrin repone I cwid see, fer his foreheid clairit as she bint doon an fuspert in his lug.

‘Ye winna gang the morn, mine, Miss!’ I begood, fan we were oot o the hoose. ‘Ye arenae dwaumin o it, are ye?’

She smilit.

‘Och, I’ll takk guid care,’ I wint on: ‘I’ll hae thon sneck mendit, an ye cin get oot bi nae wey idder.’

‘I cin gang ower the waa,’ she said lachin. ‘The Grange is nae a jyle, Ellen, an ye are nae ma jyler. An syne, I’m aamaist sivventeen: I’m a wumman. An I’m shair Linton widd get weel faist gin he hidd me tae luik aifter him. I’m auler than he is, ye ken, an clivverer: nae sae bairny, am I nae? An he’ll seen dee as I direck him, wi some slicht priggin. He’s a bonny wee darlin fan he’s guid. I’d makk sic a pet o him, gin he were ma ain. We shid, nivver faa oot, shid we aifter we were eesed ilka tae the idder? Didna ye takk tae him, Ellen?’

‘Like him!’ I skirlit. ‘The waur-timpert bit o a peely-wally heuk that ivver warslit intae its teens. Happily, as Mr. Heathcliff thocht, he’ll nae win tae twinty. I doot fither he’ll see spring, indaid. An smaa loss tae his faimly fanivver he draps aff. An lucky it is fer us that his faither taen him: the kynder he wis treatit, the mair deidly an aff-takkin he’d be. I’m glaid ye hiv nae chunce o haein him fer a man, Miss Kitty.’

My companion turnt sairious at heerin this speech. Tae spikk o his deith sae haivelessly hurtit her feelins.

‘He’s younger nor I,’ she answert, aifter thinkin fer a filie, ‘an he shid live the langest: he will—he maun live as lang as I dee. He’s as strang noo as fan he first cam intae the north; I’m shair o thon. It’s jist a caul that’s wrang, the same as Pa his. You say Pa will get better, an fit wey shidna he?’

‘Weel, weel,’ I skirled, ‘aifter aa, we dinna nott tae tribble oorsels; fer list, Miss—an mine, I’ll kep ma wird—gin ye attimt gaan tae Whudderin Heichts again, wi or withoot me, I will spikk tae Mr. Linton, an, oonless he alloo it, the frienship wi your cousin maunna be cairriet on.’

‘It his been revivit,’ mummlit Kitty, mumpin.

‘Maunna be cairriet on, syne,’ I said.

‘We’ll see,’ wis her repone, an she set aff at a gallop, leavin me ta tyaave ahin.

We baith wun hame afore oor denner-time; ma maister thocht we hidd bin wannerin throu the park, an sae he luikit fer nae raison o oor absence. As seen as I wint in I hastent tae cheynge ma sipin sheen an stockins; but reistin sic a lang filie at the Heichts hidd deen the hairm. On the neist mornin I wis nae weel, an durin three wikks I wisnae able tae dee ma daily darg: a mishanter nivver hidd afore, an nivver, I am thankfu tae say, syne.

Ma wee mistress wis like an angel in cammin tae weyt on ma, an brichten ma laneliness; bein in ma chaumer a ma lane an nae able tae gang oot makkit me affa disjaskit. It is fair founerin, tae an eident body: but feow hiv slichter raisons fer girnin than I hidd. The meenit Kitty left Mr. Linton’s chaumer she turnt up aside ma bed. Her day wis pairtit atween us; nae ameesement taen awaa a meenit: she negleckit her mait, her skweel buiks, an her play; an she wis the fonnest nurse that ivver watchit. She maun hae hidd a warm hert, fan she luvved her faither sae, tae gie sae muckle tae me. I said her days were pairtit atween us; but the maister wint tae bed airly, an I maistly nott naethin aifter sax o’clock, sae the evenin wis her ain. Peer thing! I nivver thocht fit she deed wi hersel aifter tae. An though aften, fan she luikit in tae bid me guid-nicht, I saa a caller colour in her chikks an a pinkness ower her jimp fingers, insteed o funcyin the line borriet fae a caul ride ower the muirs, I pit it doon tae the chairge o a het inglelowe in the library.

CHAPTER TWINTY-FOWER

FARRER IN

At the eyn o three wikks I cwid cam oot o ma chaumer an meeve aboot the hoose. An fan I cwid erst reist up in the evenin I spiered at Kitty tae read tae me, because ma een were fushionless. We were in the library, the maister hivvin gaun tae bed: she said aye but, raither unweellinly, I funcied; an imaIginin ma kyne o buiks didnae shuit her, I tellt her plaise hersel in choosin fit she wintit tae read. She pickit oot een o her ain favourites, an wint forrit steedily aboot an ooer; syne cam questions een aifter the idder.

‘Ellen, are ye nae wabbit? Hidnae ye better lie doon noo? Ye’ll be ull, keppin up sae lang, Ellen.’

‘Na, na, ma dearie, I’m nae ferfochen,’ I returnit, ivvery time.

Seein I wisnae tae be shiftit, she seyit anither wey o shawin she hidd nae likin fer her darg. It cheynged tae gantin, an streekin oot, an—

‘Ellen, I’m wabbit.’

‘Gie ower syne an spikk,’ I answert.

Thon wis waur: she frettit an souched, an luikit at her watch tull acht, an in the hinner eyn wint tae her chaumer, fair owerdeen wi sleep; judgin bi her girny, hivvy luik, an aa the faachin o her een. The folliein nicht she seemit aye mair fykie; an on the third fae recoverin ma company she girned o a sair heid, an left me. I thocht the wey she wis ackin unco; an hivvin bade aa ma lane a lang filie, I resolvit on gaun an spierin fither she were ony better, an wintit tae cam an lie on the sofa, insteed o up e stairs in the dairk. Nae Kitty cwid I fun up e stairs, an neen alow. The servants tellt me they hidnae seen her. I listed at Mr. Edgar’s door; aa wis seelence. I wint back tae her chaumer, pit oot ma caunnel, an reistit masel in the windae.

The meen shone bricht; a scaitterin o snaa happit the grun, an I thocht that she micht, mebbe, hae taen it intae her heid tae danner aboot the gairden, tae gee hersel up. I did deteck a body creepin alang the inner fence o the park; but it wisnae ma young mistress: on its cammin oot intae the licht, I saa it wis een o the grooms. He steed a fair filie, luikin at the cairrage-roadie throu the gruns; syne stertit aff at a fair lick, gin he hidd fun summin, an noo cam intae view, leddin Miss’s pony; an there she wis, jist dismountit, an dannerin bi its side. The chiel taen his charge steelthily acrost the girse taewards the byre. Kitty cam in bi the casement-windae o the draain-room, an snoovit withoot a soun up to faar I weytit fer her. She caaed the door quaetly tee, taen aff her snaavy sheen, taen aff her hat, an wis aboot tae, nae kennin o ma spyin, pit aside her cwyte, fan aa o a sudden I steed up an shawed masel. The begeck stappit her in her tracks fer a meenit: she udderit a smaa soun, an steed hauden tae the spot.

‘Ma dear Miss Kitty,’ I begood, ower taen bi her recent cantiness tae brakk intae a ragin, ‘faar hivv ye been ridin oot at this ooer? An fit wey shid ye sey tae mislip me bi tellin a lee? Faar hivv ye bin? Spikk!’

‘Tae the boddim o the park,’ she stammert. ‘I didna tell a lee.’

‘An naewey else?’ I demandit.

‘Na,’ was the mummlit repone.

‘Och, Kitty!’ I skraichit, fu o sorra. ‘Ye ken ye hivv bin deein wrang, or ye widna be driven tae udderin a lee tae me. Thon daes makk me hertsair. I’d raither be three months ull, than heer ye makk up a deleeberate lee.’

She loupit forrit, an, burstin intae tears, threw her airms roon ma neck.

‘Weel, Ellen, I’m sae feart o ye ragin,’ she said. ‘Gie yer wird nae tae be ragin, an ye will ken the verra trowth: I canna thole tae hod it.’

We reistit in the windae-seat; I assurit her I widdnae rage, fitivver her saicret micht be, an I jaloused it, o coorse; sae she begood —

‘I hiv bin tae Whudderin Heichts, Ellen, an I hiv nivver missed gaun a day syne ye fell ull; excep thrice afore, an twice aifter ye left yer chaumer. I gied Michael buiks an picters tae hae Minny roadit ivvery evenin, an tae pit her back in the byre: ye maunna scold *him* eddar, mine. I wis at the Heichts bi hauf-past sax, an maistly bade tull hauf-past acht, an syne gallopit hame. It wisnae tae ameese masel that I wint: I wis aften vratchit aa the time. Noo an then I wis seely: eence in a wikk mebbe. At first, I expeckit there widd be dowie wirk persuadin ye tae lat me kep ma wird tae Linton: for I hidd taen on tae caa in by again the neist day, fan we quittit him; but, as ye bade up e stairs on the morrow, I got oot o thon tribble. Files Michael wis recleekin the sneck o the park door in the aifterneen, I got haud o the ky, an tellt him foo ma cousin wintit me tae veesit him, because he wis ull, an cwidna cam tae the Grange; an foo Pa widd objeck tae ma gaun: an syne I sortit oot wi him aboot the pony. He is fon o readin, an he thinks o leavin seen to get mairriet; sae he offert, gin I widd len him buiks oot o the library, to dee fit I wintit: but I wis seelier giein him ma ain, an thon saitisfiet him better.

‘On ma second veesit Linton seemit in lichtsome speerits; an Zillah (that is their hoosekeeper) makkit us a clean chaumer an a guid lowe, an tellt us that, gin Joseph wis oot at a prayer-meetin an Hareton Earnshaw wis aff wi his dugs—robbin oor wids o pheasants, as I heerd aifterwards—we micht dee fit we likit. She brocht me a suppie warm wine an gingerbreid, an appearit by-ordinaar guid-naitert, an Linton reistit in the airm-cheer, an I in the wee rockin cheer on the ingle-stane, an we lached an spikkit sae blithely, an fun sae muckle tae say: we plannit faar we widd gang, an fit we widd dee in simmer. I nott nae tae repeat thon, because ye widd caa it glaikit.

‘Ae time, fooivver, we were near faain oot. He said the maist lichtsome wey o spennin a het July day wis lyin fae mornin tull gloamin on a bank o heath in the middle o the muirs, wi the bees hummin dwaumily aboot amang the flooers, an the laverocks singin heich up owerheid, an the blue lift an bricht sun shinin steedily an cloodlessly. Thon wis his maist perfeck idea o hivven’s seeliness: mine wis rockin in a reeshlin green tree, wi a wast win souchin, an bricht fite cloods gaun faist bi abune; an nae ainly laverocks, but throstles, an blaikburds, an linties, an gowks poorin oot music on ivvery side, an the muirs seen fae hine awaa, brakkit intae cweel mirky hollas; but close bi gryte swalls o lang girse swallin in waves tae the win; an wids an soondin watter, an the hale warld wakkened an wud wi joy. He wintit aa tae lie in a trunce o peace; I wintit aa tae blinter an dunce in a wunnerfae ceeleebration. I said his hivven widd be ainly hauf alist; an he said mine widd be fou: I said I shid faa asleep in his; an he said he cwidna braithe in mine, an begood tae grow affa ill-naitert. In the hinner eyn, we greed tae ettle baith, as seen as the richt wither cam; and syne we bussed ilky tae the idder an were friens.

‘Aifter reistin still an ooer, I luikit at the gryte room wi its smeeth fleer, wi nae carpet an thocht foo snod it widd be tae play in, gin we taen awaa the table; an I spierit Linton tae cry Zillah in tae help us, an we’d hae a game at blindman’s-buff; she shid sey tae catch us: ye eesed tae, ye ken, Ellen. He widdna: there wis nae pleesure in it, he said; but he consintit tae play at baa wi me. We fun twa in a press, amang a hellock o aul toys, taps, an girds, an battledores an shuttlecocks. Een wis markit C., an the idder H.; I wintit to hae the C., because thon steed fer Catherine, an the H. micht be fer Heathcliff, his name; but the bran cam oot o H., an Linton didnae like it. I bet him aa the time: an he got ill-naitert again, an hoastit, an wint back tae his cheer. Thon nicht, though, he aisily recovert his guid naiter: he wis taen wi twa or three bonny sangs—*yer* sangs, Ellen; an fan I hidd tae gang, he priggit sair wi me to cam the folliein evenin; an I said I widd. Minny an I wint fleein hame as licht as air; an I dwaumit o Whudderin Heichts an ma blithe, darlin cousin, tull mornin.

‘On the morrow I wis dowie; pairtly because ye were nae weel, an pairtly that I wissed ma faither kennt, an thocht weel o ma traivels: but it wis affa bonny meenlicht aifter tae; an, as I rode on, the mirk clairit. I will hae anidder seely evenin, I thocht tae masel; an fit delichts me mair, ma bonny Linton will. I treetlit up their gairden, an wis turnin roon tae the back, fan thon halflin Earnshaw trystit wi me, taen ma bridle, an tellt me gang in bi the front wey. He pattit Minny’s neck, an said she wis a bonny beast, an luikit gin he wintit me tae spikk tae him. I ainly tellt him nae tae bather ma horse, or else it widd kick him. He answert in his orra accent, “It widnae dee muckle hairm gin it deed;” an luikit at its legs wi a smile. I wis hauf fain tae makk it sey; hooivver, he meevit aff tae apen the door, an, as he heistit the sneck, he luikit up tae the inscription abune, an said, wi a glaikit mixter o gaakiness an delicht: “Miss Kitty! I cin read yon, noo.”

‘“Wunnerfu,” I skirlit. “Pray lat us heer ye—ye *are* grown clivver!”

‘He spelt, an drawlit ower bi syllables, the name “Hareton Earnshaw.”

‘“An the figures?” I skirled, herteninly, seein that he cam tae a deid halt.

‘“I canna dee them yet,” he answert.

‘“Och, ye feel!” I said, lachin hertily at him stickin.

‘The feel gaakit, wi a grin hoverin aboot his lips, an a glower gaitherin ower his een, gin he wisnae shair fither he micht nae jyne in ma lachter: fither it were nae lichtsome aise, or fit it really wis, scadden. I settlit his doots, bi aa o a sudden turnin sairious an tellin him tae gang awaa, fer I cam tae see Linton, nae him. He wint reid—I saa thon bi the meenlicht—drappit his haun fae the sneck, an mollached aff, a picter o affrontit proodness. He thocht himsel tae be as skeely as Linton, I jalouse, because he cwid spell his ain name; an wis by-ordinaar pit oot that I didnae think the same.’

‘Stap, Miss Kitty, dearie!’ I brakkit in. ‘I willnae tell ye aff, but I dinna like fit ye did there. Gin ye hidd mindit that Hareton wis yer cousin as muckle as Maister Heathcliff, ye widd hivv felt foo wrang it wis tae cairry on in thon wey. At laist, it wis a guid thing fer him ettlin tae be as weel taucht as Linton; an mair likely he didnae larn jist tae shaw aff: ye hidd makkit him affrontit o nae kennin afore, I hiv nae doot; an he wintit tae dee summin aboot it an plaise ye. Tae jamph at fit he seyit wis verra bad breedin. Hidd *ye* bin brocht up the wey he wis, widd ye be less roch? He wis as quick an as clivver a bairn as ivver ye were; an I’m disappintit that he shid be luikit doon on noo, because that vratch Heathcliff his traitit him sae oonjoostly.’

‘Weel, Ellen, ye winna greet aboot it, will ye?’ she skirled, taen aback at ma eernestness. ‘But weyt, an ye will heer gin he conned his ABC tae plaise me; an gin it were wirthwhile bein ceevil tae the breet. I wint in; Linton wis lyin on the settle, an hauf got up tae welcome me.

‘“I’m nae weel the nicht, Kitty, luvv,” he said; “an ye maun hae aa the spikkin, an lat me list. Cam, an reist bi me. I wis shair ye widdnae brakk yer wird, an I’ll makk ye gie yer wird tae cam again, afore ye gang.”

‘I kennt noo that I maunna terment him, as he wis ull; an I spikkit saftly an pit nae questions, an seyit nae tae kittle him in ony wey. I hid brocht a pucklie o ma snoddest buiks fer him: he askit me tae read a bittie o een, an I wis aboot tae dee sae, fan Earnshaw breengit throu the door: hivvin gaithert pooshen wi his thochts. He cam richt up tae us, ruggit Linton bi the airm, an cowpit him aff the seat.

‘“Get tae yer ain chaumer!” he said, in a vyce gey near wirdless wi picher; an his face luikit swalled and feerious. “Takk her there gin she cams tae see ye: ye willnae kep me oot o this. Aff wi’ ye baith!”

‘He sweirit at us, an left Linton nae time tae repone, near cassin him intae the kitchie; an he heistit his neive as I follied, seeminly ettlin tae ding me doon. I wis feart fer a meenit, an I let ae volume faa; he kickit it aifter me, an shut us oot. I heerd a nesty, skraichin lach bi the ingle, an turnin, saa that hatefu Joseph staunnin rubbin his bany hauns, an shakkin.

‘“I wis shair he’d sarve ye oot! He’s a gryte loon! He’s gettin the richt speerit in him! *He* kens—aye, he kens, as weel as I do, faa shid be the maister yonder—ach, ach, ach! He makkit ye takk a shift on! Ach, ach, ach!”

‘“Faar maun we gang?” I spiered o ma cousin, takkin nae tent o the aul vratch’s termentin.

‘Linton wis fite an shakkin. He wisnae bonny then, Ellen: och, na! he luikit frichtfu; fer his skinny face an muckle een were vrocht intae a luik o wud, pooerless feery. He ruggit the haunel o the door, an shakkit it: it wis faistent inside.

‘“Gin ye dinna lat me in, I’ll kill ye!—Gin ye dinna lat me in, I’ll kill ye!” he raither skwallached than said. “Divvil! divvil!—I’ll kill ye—I’ll kill ye!”

Joseph uddert his skraichin lach again.

‘“There, thon’s the faither!” he skirlit. “Thon’s faither! We hiv aye a bittie o edder side in us. Nivver list, Hareton, loon—dinna be feart—he canna get at ye!”

‘I taen haud o Linton’s hauns, an seyit tae pu him awaa; but he skwallached sae shockinly that I daured nae gang on. In the hinner eyn his cries were smorit bi an affa fit o hoastin; bleed poored fae his mou, an he faait on the grun. I ran intae the yaird, seek wi fricht; an caaed fer Zillah, as lood as I cwid. She seen heerd me: she wis milkin the kye in a byre ahin the barn, an hurryin fae her wirk, she spiered fit there wis tae dee? I hiddnae breath tae spikk; ruggin her in, I luikit aboot fer Linton. Earnshaw hidd cam oot tae see fit mishanter he hidd caasit, an he wis then cairryin the peer thing up e stairs. Zillah an I wint up aifter him; but he stappit me at the tap o the steps, an said I shidna gang in: I maun gang hame. I skirlit that he hidd killed Linton, an I *widd* gang in. Joseph sneckit the door, an declared I shid dee “nae sic stuff”, an spierit me fither I were “born tae be as wud as him.” I steed greetin tull the hoosekeeper cam oot. She tellt me he widd be better in a filie, but he cwidna dee wi thon skwallichin an din; an she taen me, an near cairriet me intae the hoose.

‘Ellen, I wis aa set tae tear ma hair aff ma heid! I sobbit an grat sae that ma een were gey near blin; an the breet ye hivv sic unnerstaunin fer steed anent: daurin ivvery noo an then tae bid me “weesht”, an sayin that it wisnae his wyte; an, in the eyn, frichtent fan I said that I widd tell Pa, an that he shid be pit in jyle an hingit, he begood greetin himsel, an the cooard rinnit oot tae hod that he wis fair vexit. Still, I wisnae shot o him: fan in the hinner eyn they garred me tae gang awa, an I hidd got a feow hunner yairds aff the fairm, aa o a sudden he steppit oot fae the shadda o the road-side, an chaikit Minny an taen haud o me.

‘“Miss Kitty, I’m affa sorra,” he begood, “but it’s raither ower bad—”

‘I gied him a cut wi ma whip, thinkin mebbe he widd murder me. He lat go, thunnerin een o his affa sweirs, an I gallopit hame mair than hauf oot o ma sinses.

‘I didnae bid ye guidnicht thon evenin, an I didnae gang tae Whudderin Heichts the neist: I wis ettlin sair tae gang; but I wis unco kittlet up, an dreidit tae heer that Linton wis deid, files; an files shuddert at the thocht o encoonterin Hareton. On the third day I taen courage: at laist, I cwidna thole it ony langer, an stole aff eence mair. I wint at five o’clock, an stravaigit; funcyin I micht manage tae creep intae the hoose, an up tae Linton’s chaumer, without bein seen. Hooivver, the dugs gied notice I wis camin. Zillah receivit me, an sayin “the loon wis mendin snodly”, shawed me intae a smaa, tidy, carpetit chaumer, faar, tae ma by-ordinaar joy, I saa Linton reistit on a wee sofa, readin een o ma buiks. But he widd nedder spikk tae me nor luik at me, throu a hale ooer, Ellen: he his sic an meeserable naiter. An fit fair connached me, fan he did apen his mou, it wis tae udder the lee that I hidd stertit the hale stramash, an it wisnae Hareton’s wyte! Nae able tae repone, excep feeriously, I got up an wint oot o the room. He sint aifter me a fuspert “Kitty!” He didnae jalouse on bein answert sae: but I widdnae gang back; an the morrow wis the second day on which I bade at hame, near deetermint tae veesit him nae mair. But it wis sae meeserable gaun tae bed an gettin up, an nivver heerin onythin aboot him, that ma steedfaistness meltit intae air afore it wis richt formit. It hidd appearit wrang tae takk the traivel eence; noo it wis wrang nae tae gang. Michael cam tae spier gin he maun saddle Minny; I said “Aye” an thocht masel deein a darg as she cairriet me ower the hills. I wis garred tae gang by the front windaes tae get tae the coort: it wis nae eese seyin tae hide that I wis there.

‘“Young maister is in the hoose,” said Zillah, as she saa me makkin fer the parlour. I wint in; Earnshaw wis there an aa, but he wint oot o the room direckly. Linton reistit in the gryte airm-cheer hauf asleep; gaun up tae the ingle, I begood in a sairious tone, pairtly meanin it tae be true—

‘“As ye dinna like me, Linton, an as ye think I cam deeleeberately tae hairm ye, an makk on that I dee sae ivvery time, this is oor laist tryst: lat us say guidbye; an tell Mr. Heathcliff that ye hivv nae wiss tae see me, an that he maunna makk up ony mair lees on the subjeck.”

‘“Sit doon an takk yer hat aff, Kitty,” he answert. “Ye are sae muckle seelier than I am, ye ocht tae be better. Pa spikks eneuch o ma fauts, an shaws eneuch scadden o me, tae makk it naiteral I shid doot masel. I doot fither I am nae aathegither as wirthless as he caas me, aa the time; an syne I feel sae ill-naitert an dour, I hate aabody! I *am* wirthless, an ull in timper, an ull in speerit, gey narr ayewis; an, gin ye choose, ye *may* say fare ye weel: ye’ll get shot o an a tirment. Ainly, Kitty, dee me this joostice: trow that gin I micht be as blythe, an as couthy, an as guid as ye are, I widd be; as weellinly, an mair sae, than as seely an as sonsy. An trow that yer couthiness his makkit me luvv ye mair than gin I deseervit yer luvv: an though I cwidna, an canna hep shawin ma naiter tae ye, I regreet it an repint it; an will regreet an repint it tull I dee!”

‘I felt he spikkit the trowth; an I felt I maun forgie him: an, though we shid faa oot the neist meenit, I maun forgie him again. We were friens again; but we grat, baith o us, the hale time I bade: nae jist fer sorra; yet I *wis* sorra Linton hidd that gizzent naiter. He’ll nivver lat his friens be at aise, an he’ll nivver be at aise himsel! I hivv ayewis gaen tae his wee parlour, syne thon nicht; because his faither cam back the day aifter.

‘Aboot three times, I think, we hivv bin seely an howpfu, as we were the erst evenin; the rist o ma veesits were dreich an tribblit: noo wi his selfitness an ull weel, an noo wi his sufferins: but I’ve larnt tae thole the former wi narr as smaa resintmint as the latter. Mr. Heathcliff deelibeerately bides awaa fae me: I hivv hairdly seen him at aa. Laist Sunday, indaid, camin airlier than eesual, I heerd him caain peer Linton coorsely fer the wey he ackit the nicht afore. I canna tell foo he kennt o it, oonless he listed. Richt eneuch Linton hidd bin angersome: hooivver, it wis naethin tae dee wi onybody but me, an I brakkit intae Mr. Heathcliff’s spikk bi gaun in an tellin him sae. He burst intae a lach, an wint awaa, sayin he wis glaid I taen thon view o the maitter. Syne, I’ve tellt Linton he maun fusper his soor things. Noo, Ellen, ye hivv heerd aa. I canna be stappit fae gaun tae Whudderin Heichts, excep bi pittin meesery on twa fowk; whereas, gin ye’ll ainly nae spikk tae Pa, ma gaun nott bather the sereenity o neen. Ye’ll nae tell, will ye? It will be affa hertless, gin you dae.’

‘I’ll makk up ma myn on thon pint bi the morn, Miss Kitty,’ I reponit. ‘It notts a bittie thinkin ower; an sae I’ll leave ye tae yer rist.’

I thocht it ower oot lood, in ma maister’s presence; gaun stracht fae her chaumer tae his, an relatin the hale story: apairt fae her newsin wi her cousin, an ony spikk o Hareton. Mr. Linton wis pit oot an vexit, mair than he widd lat on tae me. In the mornin, Kitty larnt that I hidd tellt, an she larnt an aa that her saicret veesits were tae eyn. Eeselessly she grat an cairriet on agin the rowle, an priggit wi her faither tae hae peety on Linton: aa she got tae makk it up tae her wis he gied his wird that he widd scrieve an gie him leave tae cam tae the Grange fanivver he wintit; but tellin him that he maun nae langer expeck tae see Kitty at Whudderin Heichts. Mebbe, hidd he bin aware o his nephew’s naiter an foo nae weel he wis, he widd hae seen fit tae haud back aiven thon slicht eesedom.

CHAPTER TWINTY-FIVE

MAISTER LINTON’S THOCHTS ON FIT IS TAE CAM

‘Thon things happent last winter, sir,’ quo Mrs. Dean; ‘hairdly mair than an eer syne. Last winter, I didnae think, at anither twal months’ eyn, I shid be ameesin an ootlin tae the faimly wi spikkin aboot them! Yet, faa kens foo lang ye’ll be an ootlin? Ye’re ower young tae rist ayewis contintit, bidin bi yersel; an I some wey funcy naebody cwid see Kitty Linton an nae luvv her. Ye smile; but fit wey div ye luik sae blythe an interaistit fan I spikk aboot her? An fit wey hivv ye spiered me tae hing her picter ower yer ingle? an fit wey—?’

‘Stap, ma guid frien!’ I skirled. ‘It may be verra lickly that *I* shid looe her; but widd she looe me? I doot it ower muckle tae connach ma peace o myn bi rinnin intae timptation: an syne ma hame is nae here. I’m o the eident warld, an tae its airms I maun gang back. Gang on. Daed Kitty dee fit her faither tellt her?’

‘She daed,’ wint on the hoosekeeper. ‘Her affeckshun fer him wis aye the grytest sintimint in her hert; an he spikkit wioot ragin: he spikkit in thon deep kyne-hertit wey o een aboot tae leave his treesure amang perils an foes, faar the wirds o his minded widd be the ainly hep that he cwid leave ahin tae gie her. He spikkit tae me, a feow days aifterwards, “I wiss ma nephew widd scrieve, Ellen, or veesit. Spikk tae me, fae the boddim o yer hert, fit ye think o him: is he cheynged fer the better, or is there a chunce o impreevemint, as he grows a chiel?”

‘“He’s gey dweeble, sir,” I reponit; “an nae affa lickly tae win tae manhood: but this I cin say, he isnae like his faither; an gin Miss Kitty hidd the mishanter tae wad him, he widd nae be ayont her pooer: oonless she were by-ordinaar an glaikitly unnerstaunin. Hooivver, maister, ye’ll hae plinty o time to get acquant wi him an see fither he widd dee fer her: it wints fower eers an mair tae his bein o age.”’

Edgar souchit; an, gaen tae the windae, luikit oot taewards Gimmerton Kirk. It wis a mirky aiterneen, but the February sun shone dimly, an we cwid jist makk oot the twa fir-trees in the yaird, an the sparely-scaittert gravestanes.

‘I’ve prayed aften,’ quo he hauf tae himsel, ‘fer fit is camin; an noo I begood tae cooer, an be frichtent o it. I thocht mindin the ooer I cam doon thon glen a bridegroom widd be less swate than the thocht that I wis seen, in a feow months, or, mebbe, wikks, tae be cairriet up, an pit doon in its lanely holla! Ellen, I’ve bin verra seely wi ma wee Kitty: throu winter nichts an simmer days she wis a livin howp at ma side. But I’ve bin as seely musin bi masel amang thon stanes, aneth thon aul kirk: lyin, throu the lang June evenins, on the green mound o her mither’s mools, an wissin—ettlin fer the time fan I micht lie aneth it. Fit cin I dee fer Kitty? Foo maun I quit her? I’d nae care ae meenit fer Linton bein Heathcliff’s sin; nor fer his takkin her fae me, gin he cwid luik oot fer her on ma loss. I’d nae care avaa that Heathcliff gained his eyns, an winnit in robbin me o ma laist blessin! But shid Linton be unwirthy—ainly a dweeble tool tae his faither—I canna tint her tae him! An, sair though it be tae smore her lichtsome speerit, I maun haud gaan in makkin her dowie files I live, an leavin her aa her lane fan I dee. Dawtie! I’d raither gie her up tae God, an pit her in the airth afore me.’

‘Gie her up tae God as it is, sir,’ I answert, ‘an gin we shid tint ye—which may he ferbid—aneth his weird, I’ll staun her frien an coonsellor tae the eyn. Miss Kitty is a guid quine: I’m nae feart that she will gang weelfu wrang; an fowk faa dee their darg are ayewis rewaardit at the eyn.’

Spring wint on; yet my maister gaithert nae real strinth, though he wint back tae his daunders in the gruns wi his dother. Tae her oonpreeven aydeas, this itsel wis a sign o getting weel; an syne his chikk wis aften flushed, an his een were bricht; she felt shair o his recoverin. On her sivventeenth birthday, he didnae veesit the kirkyaird: it wis rainin, an I observit ‘Ye’ll shairly nae gang oot the nicht, sir?’

He answert ‘Na, I’ll pit it aff this eer a bittie langer.’ He scrievit again tae Linton, expressin his gryte desire tae see him; an, hidd the invalid bin fit tae be seen, I hivv nae doot his faither widd hae lat him cam. As it wis, bein tellt, he pit back an answer, lattin him ken that Mr. Heathcliff objeckit tae his veesitin the Grange; but his uncle’s couthy mindin delichtit him, an he howpit tae tryst wi him files in his stravaigin, an himsel tae prig wi him that his cousin an he micht nae bide lang sae udderly apairt.

Thon pairt o his letter wis strachtforrit, an mair likely his ain. Heathcliff kennt he cwid prig meevinly fer Kitty’s company, syne—

‘I dinna spier,’ he said, ‘that she micht veesit here; but am I nivver tae see her, because ma faither winna lat me gang tae her hame, an ye winna lat her cam tae mine? Dee, noo an then, ride wi her taewards the Heichts; an lat us newse thegither, wi ye there! We hivv deen naethin tae deseerve bein haudin apairt; an ye hinna faain oot wi me: ye hivv nae raison tae hae an ull-wull at me, ye alloo, yersel. Dear uncle! sen me a douce note the morn, an alloo me tae jyne ye onywey ye wint, excep at Thrushcross Grange. I trow spikkin thegither widd preeve tae ye that ma faither’s naiter isnae mine: he voos I am mair yer nephew than his sin; an though I hivv fauts which makk me unwirthy o Kitty, she his forgien them, an fer her sake, ye shid an aa. Ye spier aifter ma health—it is better; but files I bide cut aff fae aa howp, an doomit tae bein aa ma lane, or bein wi fowk faa nivver did an nivver will takk tae me, foo can I be lichtsome an weel?’

Edgar, though he felt fer the loon, cwidna aloo his request; because he cwidna gang wi Kitty. He said, in simmer, mebbe, they micht tryst: if noo, he wintit him tae gang on scrievin, an said he widd gie him fit rede an easedom he wis able bi letter; bein weel aware o foo ull it wis fer him in his faimly. Linton deed sae; an hidd he bin unrynit, widd probably hae connached aa bi sennin letters fu o girnin. but his faither kep a gleg waatch ower him; an, o coorse, insistit on ivvery line that ma maister sennit bein shawn; sae, insteed o scrievin his ain personal sufferins an feechs, that were aye uppermaist in his thochts, he harpit on the coorseness o bein hauden awa fae his frien an luvv; an doucely lat Mr. Linton ken that he maun alloo a tryst seen, or he shid be feart he wis deeleeberately leein tae him wi teem wirds.

Kitty wis a pooerfu ally at hame; an atween them they in the eyn brocht ma maister roon tae lattin them hae a ride or a stravaig thegither aboot aince a wikk, aneth ma keppin, an on the muirs neist tae the Grange: fer Jeen fun him aye gaun doonhill. Though he hidd set aside airly a pairt o his income fer ma young leddy’s fortune, he hidd a naiteral ettlin that she micht haud on tull—or at laist gang back in a wee filie tae—the hoose o her ancestors; an he thocht her ainly prospeck o deein thon wis bi camin thegither wi his heir; he hidd nae aydea that the latter wis failin aamaist as faist as himsel; nor hidd onybody, I trow: nae doctor veesitit the Heichts, an naebody saa Maister Heathcliff tae makk an acoont o foo ull he wis amang us. I, fer ma pairt, begood tae funcy ma forebodins were fause, an that he maun be fair camin roon, fan he spikkit aboot ridin an stravaigin on the muirs, an seemit sae eernist in winnin tae his objick. I cwidnae picter a faither oolin a deein bairn as maroonjus an deevilitchly as I aifterwards larnt Heathcliff hidd oolt him, tae garr him tae shaw he wis ettlin sae muckle: his ongyaans gryter the mair seener his naar-bygaan an coorse plans were threetent wi defait bi deith.

CHAPTER TWINTY-SAX

A THREETNIN TRYST

Simmer wis aariddy past its heichest pint, fan Edgar, sweirt, gied in tae their priggin, an Kitty an I set oot on oor erst ride tae jyne her cousin. It wis a mochy kyne o day: wi nivver a bit o sunshine, but wi a lift ower-dapplit wi cloods tae threeten rain: an oor place o trystin hidd bin fixit at the guide-stane, bi the cross-roads. On arrivin there, hooivver, a wee halflin, sint aff tae be a messenger, tellt us that ‘Maister Linton wis jist on yon side the Heichts: an he’d be muckle obleeged tae us tae gang on a bittie farrer.’

‘Syne Maister Linton hisnae mindit the first comman o his uncle,’ I observit: ‘he tellt us kep on the Grange laan, an here we are aff at aince.’

‘Weel, we’ll turn oor horses’ heids roon fan we win tae him,’ answert ma companion; ‘oor traivellin will pint taewards hame.’

But fan we won tae him, an thon wis jist a corter o a mile fae his ain door, we fun he hidd nae horse; an we were garred tae get aff, an leave oors tae graze. He reistit on the hidder, weytin fer us, an didnae raise tull we cam within a feow yairds. Syne he daunnert sae dweebly, an luikit sae gowsty, that I richt awaa skirled ‘Och, Maister Heathcliff, ye arenae weel eneuch fer a stravaig this mornin. Foo ull ye div luik!’

Kitty taen a richt begeck fan she luikit ower him : she cheynged the udderin o joy on her lips tae een o alarm; an the thunkin on their lang pit aff tryst tae spierin, fither he were waur than eesual?

‘Na—better—better!’ he peched, shakkin, an haudin on tae her haun gin he nott its support, files his muckle blue een wannert skeichly ower her; the hollaness roon them owersettin tae chandler-chaftit wuddenness the dwaumin luik they aince hidd.

‘But ye hivv bin waur,’ wint on his cousin; ‘waur than fan I saa ye last; ye are skinnier, an—’

‘I’m wabbit,’ he pit in, hashit like. ‘It is ower het fer stravaigin, lat us rist here. An, in the mornin, I aften feel seek—Pa says I grow sae fait.’

Nae richt saitisfied, Kitty sat doon, an he reclinit aside her.

‘Yon is summin like tae yer paradise,’ quo she, seyin at bein lichtsome. ‘Ye mine the twa days we greed tae spen in the bield an wey ilka een thocht maist snod? Yon is fairly yers, ainly there are cloods; but syne they are sae saft an mella: it is mair snod than sunshine. Neist wikk, gin ye cin, we’ll ride doon tae the Grange Park, an sey mine.’

Linton didnae appear tae mine fit she wis spikkin aboot an he hidd clairly gryte diffeekwalty in keppin up ony kyne o newsin. His wint o interaist in the subjicks she stairtit, an nae bein weel eneuch tae jyne in, were sae clair that she cwidna hod her disappintmint. A cheynge ye cwidna pit yer finger on hidd cam ower his hale naiter. The girniness that micht be bosied intae fondness, hidd gied wey tae summin fushionless; there wisnae sae muckle o the naiter o a bairn which girns an terments deleeberately tae be aisit, an mair o the hame-draughtit dourness o a lang-time invalid, haudin aff easedom, an riddy tae luik upon the guid-naitert lachter o idders as an affront. Kitty saa, as weel as I did, that he haudit it raither a peenalty, than a pleesure, tae thole oor company; an she makkit naethin o sayin we shid gang. Thon noshun, unexpeckitly, haulit Linton fae his thowlessness, and threw him intae an unco fluchtit state. He luikit fearfu taewards the Heichts, priggin wi her that she widd bide anidder hauf-ooer, at laist.

‘But I think,’ quo Kitty, ‘ye’d be mair at aise at hame than reistin here; and I canna ameese ye the day, I see, bi my tales, an sangs, an newsin: ye hivv grown clivverer than I, in these sax month; ye hivnae ony taste fer ma enterteenments noo: or else, gin I cwid ameese ye, I’d weellinly bide.’

‘Bide tae rist yersel,’ he reponit. ‘An, Kitty, dinna think or say that I’m *affa* nae weel: it is the hivvy wither an heat that makk me doon i the mou; an I daunnert aboot, afore ye cam, a gryte deal fer me. Tell uncle I’m in nae ull, will ye?’

‘I’ll lat him ken that *ye* say sae, Linton. I cwidna say fer shair that ye are,’ quo ma young leddy, winnerin at his thrawn wey o gaun on aboot fit wis eevidintly a lee.

‘An be here again neist Thursday,’ wint on he, turnin awa fae her bumbazit luik. ‘An gie him ma thunks fer allooin ye tae cam—ma best thunks, Kitty. An—an, gin ye *deed* tryst wi ma faither, an he spiered ye aboot me, dinna lat him think that I’ve bin bi-ordinaar seelint an glaikit: dinna luik dowie an disjaskit, as ye *are* deein—he’ll be ragin.’

‘I care naethin fer his ragin,’ skirlit Kitty, jalousin she widd be its objick.

‘But I dee,’ said her cousin, shakkin. ‘*Dinna* wun him up agin me, Kitty, fer he is affa coorse.’

‘Is he maroonjus tae ye, Maister Heathcliff?’ I spiered. ‘His he grown weeriet o bein unnerstaunnin, an gaen fae seelint ta ootricht hatred?’

Linton luikit at me, but didnae repone; an, aifter reistin aside him fer anither ten meenits, durin which his heid faait drowily on his breist, an he udderit naethin excep smorit mains that cam fae bein ferfochen or in pyne, Kitty begood tae sikk easedom in rakin fer blairdies, an sharin fit she fun wi me: she didnae gie them tae him, fer she saa farrer tent widd ainly fooner an kittle him up.

‘Is it hauf-an-ooer noo, Ellen?’ she fuspert in ma lug, in the eyn. ‘I canna tell fit wey we shid bide. He’s faain asleep, an Pa will be wintin us back.’

‘Weel, we maunna leave him asleep,’ I reponit; ‘weyt tull he wakkens an thole it. Ye were rarin tae gang, but yer ettlin tae see peer Linton his seen gaen!’

‘Fit wey did *he* wint tae see me?’ returnit Kitty. ‘In his maist ill-naitert teens, afore, I likit him better than I div in his unco teen the noo. It’s jist gin it were a darg he wis garred tae dee—yon tryst—fer fear his faither shid gie him a ragin. But it’s nae gin I wis camin tae gie Mr. Heathcliff pleesure; fitivver reason he may hivv fer garrin Linton tae unnergae yon affcome. An, though I’m glaid he’s better in health, I’m sorra he’s nae sae lichtsome, an nae sae takkin tae me.’

‘Ye think he *is* sonsier, syne?’ I said.

‘Aye,’ she reponit; ‘because he ayewis makkit sic a cairry on o his sufferins, ye ken. He is nae affa weel, as he tellt me tae tell Pa; but he’s better, belike.’

‘There ye dinna gree wi me, Miss Kitty,’ quo I; ‘I shid jalouse him tae be far waur.’

Linton here stertit fae his slumber in dozent fricht, an spiered gin onybody hidd cried his name.

‘Na,’ said Kitty; ‘oonless in dwaums. I canna figger oot foo ye takk aboot tae dover oot o doors, in the mornin’

‘I thocht I heerd ma faither,’ he peched, gaakin up tae the froonin nab abune us. ‘Ye are shair naebody spikkit?’

‘Richt shair,’ reponed his cousin. ‘Ainly Ellen an I were haein wirds aboot yer weelness. Are ye truly stranger, Linton, than fan we were apairt in winter? Gin ye be, I’m shair ae thing is nae stranger—fit ye think o me: spikk—are ye?’

The tears poored fae Linton’s een as he answert, ‘Aye, aye, I am!’ An, still aneth the spell o the imaiginary vyce, his luik wannert up an doon tae fun its ainer.

Kitty raisit. ‘Fer the day we maun pairt,’ she said. ‘An I winna hod that I hivv bin affa disappintit wi oor tryst; though I’ll spikk aboot it tae naebody but ye: nae that I staun in dreid o Mr. Heathcliff.’

‘Weesht,’ mummlit Linton; ‘fer God’s sake, weesht! He’s camin.’ An he haudit on tae Kitty’s airm, streevin tae kep her; but at thon wirds she faist taen herself awaa, an fustled tae Minny, faa aye deed fit wis tellt like a dug.

‘I’ll be here neist Thursday,’ she skirled, loupin tae the saddle. ‘Guidbye. Luik slippy, Ellen!’

An sae we left him, nae really kennin we hidd gaen, sae taen up wis he in aweytin his faither draain narr.

Afore we won hame, Kitty’s displeesure saftent intae a bumbazit sinsation o peety an regreet, mixtert maistly wi nae verra clair, unaisy doots aboot foo Linton fairly wis, feesical an social: in which I taen pairt, though I coonselled her nae tae say muckle; fer a second traivel widd makk us better joodges. Ma maister askit fer an accoont o oor ongyaans. His nephew’s offerin o thunks wis passit on, Miss Kitty doucely touchin on the rist: I ceest nae muckle licht on fit he spierit eddar, for I hairdly kennt fit tae hod an fit tae shaw.

CHAPTER TWINTY-SIVVIN

JYLT

Sivven days slippit awaa, ivvery een markin its coorse fae then on wi the ful teer cheynge o Edgar Linton’s coondition. The sotter that months hidd vrocht afore wis noo follied bi the inroads o ooers. Kitty we widd hae rather nae tellt yit; but her smeddum widna taak her in: it fun oot in saicret, an worriet ower the affa thocht o fit wis belike camin, steedily growin intae summin siccar. She hiddnae the hert tae spikk aboot her ride, fan Thursday cam roon; I spikkit aboot it fer her, an wis allooed tae garr her oot o doors: fer the library, faar her faither stappit a wee filie ivvery day—the ainly time he cwid thole tae reist up—an his chaumer, hidd becam her hale warld. She taen an ull will at ilky meenit that didnae fun her bennin ower his pilla, or reistit bi his side. Her coontenance growit gowsty wi watchin an sorra, and ma maister glaidly tellt her tae gang tae fit he phraisit himsel widd be a seely cheynge o bield an fowk; draain easedom fae the howp that she widdnae noo be left aa her lane aifter his deith.

Somehoo he hidd the aydea, I jaloused bi a puckle thochts he lat faa, that, as his nevew luikit like him in person, he widd takk aifter him in mind; fer Linton’s letters haudit feow or nae pinters o his fashious naiter. An I, throu forgieable waikness, didnae correck the faut; spierin o masel fit guid there widd be in baatherin his last meenits wi repoorts that he hidd nedder pooer nor the chunce tae turn tae accoont.

We pit aff our traivels tull the aifterneen; a gowden aifterneen o August: ivvery souch fae the hills sae fu o life, that it seemit faaivver braithed it, though deein, micht brichten up. Kitty’s phizog wis jist like the laan—shaddas an sunshine flittin faist ower it een aifter the idder; but the shaddas risted langer, an the sunshine didna laist; an her peer wee hert tickit her aff itsel fer forgattin its tribbles fer sic a wee meenit.

We saa Linton luikin oot fer us at the verra spot he hidd pickit afore. Ma young mistress alichtit, an tellt me that, as she hidd makkit up her myne tae bide a wee file, I hidd better haud the pony an bide on horseback; but I said na: I widdna risk tintin sicht o the charge giein tae me fer ae meenit; sae we climmit the brae o hidder thegither. Maister Heathcliff greetit us wi gryter virr on this occasion: nae the virr o heich speerits though, nor yit o joy; it luikit mair like fricht.

‘Ye’re latchie!’ he said, spikkin faist an wi deeficulty. ‘Is nae yer faither gey nae weel? I thocht ye widdna cam’

‘*Fit wey* winna ye be stracht?’ skirlit Kitty, swalliein her greetin. ‘Fit wey canna ye spikk at aince ye dinna wint me? It is unco, Linton, that fer the second time ye hivv brocht me here deeleeberately, it souns gin ye wint tae kittle us baith, and fer nae objick forbye!’

Linton shakkit, an luikit at her, hauf priggin, half affrontit; but his cousin’s patience wisnae eneuch tae thole yon antrin conduck.

‘Ma faither *is* verra nae weel,’ she said; ‘an fit wey am I caaed fae his bedside? Fit wey didnae ye sen tae lat me aff ma wird, fan ye wissed I widdnae kep it? Cam! I wint a raison: playin an trifflin are pit richt oot o ma myne; an I canna dunce attendance fer yer palaivers noo!’

‘Palaivers!’ he mummlit; ‘fit’s thon? For hivven’s sake, Kitty, dinna luik sae kittlit up! Think lichtfu o me as muckle as ye wint; I am an orra, cooardly vratch: I canna be jamphit eneuch; but I’m ower mean fer yer ragin. Hate ma faither, an lat me be fer scadden.’

‘Nonsinse!’ skirlit Kitty. ‘Glaikit, dunderheid o a loon! An there! he shakks: gin I were fair gaun tae pit a finger on him! Ye nott na spikk aboot scadden, Linton: onybody will hae it instanter fer ye. Get aff! I will gang hame: it is gypit tae rugg ye fae the ingle-stane, an makkin on—fit div we makk on? Lat go ma frock! Gin I peetied ye fer greetin an luikin sae verra frichtent, ye shid turn awa fae sic peety. Ellen, tell him foo affa yon oncairry is. Staun up, an dinna pit yersel doon tae an abjick reptile—*dinnae*!’

Wi begrutten face an a luik o affa pyne, Linton hidd thrown himsel alang the grun: he seemit writhen wi fricht.

‘Och!’ he grat, ‘I canna thole it! Kitty, Kitty, I’m a traitor, an aa, an I daurnae tell ye! But gang awaa fae me, an I will be killt! Kitty dearie, ma life is in yer hauns: an ye hiv said ye luvved me, an gin ye deed, it widdna hairm ye. Ye’ll nae gang, syne? couthie, swate, guid Kitty! An mebbe ye *will* gree—an he’ll lat me dee wi ye!’

Ma young leddy, on seein foo termintit he wis, bennit doon to heist him. The aul feelin o douce unnerstaunin owercam her displeesure, an she growit fair meevit an wirriet.

‘Gree tae fit?’ she spiered. ‘Tae bide! tell me the meanin o yon unco spikkin, an I will. Ye conter yer ain wirds, an distrack me! Be peacefu an trowthfu, an oot wi at aince aa that wyes on yer hert. Ye widdnae hairm me, Linton, widd ye? Ye widdna lat ony naisty body hairm me, gin ye cwid stap it? I’ll trow ye are a cooard, fer yersel, but nae een faa lats doon yer best frien.’

‘But ma faither threetent me,’ peched the loon, haudin his lang skinny fingers thegither, ‘an I dreed him—I dreed him! I *daurna* spikk!’

‘Och, weel!’ quo Kitty, wi scowffu peety, ‘kep yer saicret: *I’m* nae cooard. Luik tae yersel: I’m nae frichtent!’

Her couthieness o speerit garred him greet: he grat wudly, bussin her hauns that haudit him, an yet cwidna caa fer courage tae spikk oot. I wis thinkin ower fit the antrin saicret micht be, an shair Kitty shid nivver thole onythin fer his guid or onybody else, bi ma guid will; fan, heerin a reeshle amang the hidder, I luikit up an saa Mr. Heathcliff aamaist richt in-bye, camin doon the Heichts. He didna cassen a luik towards ma companions, though they were near eneuch fer Linton’s greetin tae be heerd; but caain tae me in the gey narr herty tone he eesed tae neen forbye, an the sinceerity o which I cwidna avoid dootin, he said—

‘It is summin tae see ye sae narr tae ma hoose, Nelly. Foo are ye at the Grange? Lat us heer. The claik gangs,’ he addit, in a quaeter tone, ‘that Edgar Linton is on his deith-bed: mebbe they owerstate his ullness?’

‘Na; ma maister is deein’ I reponit: ‘it is true eneuch. A sorrafu thing it will be fer us aa, but a blissin fer him!’

‘Foo lang will he laist, div ye think?’ he spiered.

‘I dinnae ken,’ I said.

‘Because,’ he wint on, luikin at the twa young fowk, faa were fixit aneth his ee—Linton luikit gin he cwidna oonertakk tae steer or heist his heid, an Kitty cwidna meeve, on his accoont— ‘because thon loon ower ere seems shair tae owercam me; an I’d thunk his uncle tae be faist, an gang afore him! Aye aye! his the young een bin playin thon game lang? I *did* gie him a puckle lessons aboot girnin. Is he aye fair lichtsome wi Miss Linton?’

‘Lichtsome? na—he his shawn the grytest feech,’ I answert. ‘Tae see him, I shid say, that insteed o stravaigin wi his lass on the hills, he ocht tae be in bed, aneth the hauns o a doctor.’

‘He will be, in a day or twa,’ mummlit Heathcliff. ‘But first—staun up, Linton! Staun up!’ he skwalliched. ‘Dinna mollach on the grun there: up, this meenit!’

Linton had faain doon again shakkin in pooerless fricht, caased bi his faither’s luik towards him, I jalouse: there wis naethin else tae gie aff sic mortifeecashun. He seyit a feow times tae dee fit he wis tellt, but his smaa strinth wis wipit oot fer the time, and he faait back again wi a main. Mr. Heathcliff cam forrit, an heistit him tae lean agin a rig o divots.

‘Noo,’ quo he, wi feeriocity haudin in, ‘I’m gettin kittlit up an gin ye dinna dee summin aboot thon shilpit speerit o yers—*Damn* ye! Staun up direckly!’

‘I will, faither,’ he peched. ‘Ainly, lat me alane, or I will takk a dwaam. I’ve deen as ye wintit, I’m shair. Kitty will tell ye that I—that I—hiv bin blythe. Ach! kep bi me, Kitty; gie me yer haun.’

‘Takk mine,’ said his faither; ‘staun on yer feet. There noo—she’ll len ye her airm: thon’s richt, luik at *her*. Ye widd thunk I wis the divvil himsel, Miss Linton, tae steer up sic ugsome weys. Be sae kyne as tae gang hame wi him, will ye? He grues gin I pit a haun on him.’

‘Linton, dearie!’ fuspered Kitty, ‘I canna gang tae Whudderin Heichts: Pa hisnae allooed me. He’ll nae hairm ye: fit wey are ye sae africhtit?’

‘I cin nivver gang back intae thon hoose,’ he answert. ‘I’m *nae* tae gang back intae it withoot ye!’

‘Stap!’ skirled his faither. ‘Kitty kens fit’s richt an wrang fer a dother. Gie her respeck. Nelly, takk him in, an I’ll follie yer rede aboot the doctor, withoot weytin ony mair.’

‘Ye’ll dee weel,’ reponit I. ‘But I maun bide wi ma mistress: tae luik aifter yer sin is nae ma darg.’

‘Ye are affa unbennin,’ quo Heathcliff, ‘I ken thon: but ye’ll garr me tae birse the babby an makk it skraich afore it meeves yer peety. Cam, syne, ma hero. Are ye weelin tae gang back, on ma airm?’

He cam in aboot aince mair, an makkit gin he widd takk a haud o the dweeble loon; but, draain back, Linton steekit tae his cousin, an priggit wi her tae cam wi him, priggin sae hysteerically that he cwidna be deniet. Hooivvver I didnae like it, I cwidna hinner her: indaid, foo cwid she hae said na tae him hersel? Fit wis fullin him wi dreid we hidd nae wey o funnin oot; but there he wis, pooerless aneth its clacht, an onythin pit on seemit shair o frichtenin him intae eediocy. We won tae the doorcheek: Kitty wint in, an I steed weytin tull she hidd taen the invalid tae a cheer, expeckin her oot richt awa; fan Mr. Heathcliff, shivvin me forrit, skirlit:

‘Ma hoose isnae strucken wi the plague, Nelly; an I wint tae be frienly the day: set doon, an alloo me tae caa tee the door.’

He shut an sneckit it an aa. I stertit.

‘Ye will hae tae afore ye gang hame,’ he addit. ‘I am bi masel. Hareton is gaen wi a feow kye tae the Lees, an Zillah an Joseph are aff on a traivel o pleeshur; an, though I’m eesed tae bein alane, I’d raither hae a suppie interaistin company, gin I cin hae it. Miss Linton, takk yer seat bi *him*. I gie ye fit I hiv: the preesent is hairdly wirth takkin; but I hiv naethin else tae gie. It is Linton, I mean. Foo she daes gaak! It’s unco fit a coorse feelin I hiv tae onythin that seems feart o me! Hidd I bin born faar laans are nae ower strick an tastes nae ower perjink, I shid trait masel tae a slow vivisection o thon twa, as an evenin’s ameesement.’

He draait in his braith, duntit the table, an sweerit tae himsel, ‘Bi hell! I canna thole them.’

‘I am nae feart o ye!’ skirlit Kitty, faa cwidna heer the latter pairt o fit he spikkit. She steppit in bye; her blaik een blinterin wi flochtit an deeteerminashun. ‘Gie me thon ky: I will hae it!’ she said. ‘I widdna ait or drink here, gin I were stairvin.’

Heathcliff hidd the ky in his haun that bade on the table. He luikit up, cleekit wi a kine o begeck at her impidence; or, mebbe, myndit, bi her vyce an luik, o the body fae whom she inheritit it. She nabbit at the ky, an hauf succaidit in takkin it fae his lowsit fingers: but fit she deed brocht him back tae the preesint; he haudit it back faist.

‘Noo, Kitty Linton,’ he said, ‘staun aff, or I will dird ye doon; an thon will makk Mrs. Dean wud.’

Regairdless o this warnin, she taen haud o his ticht nieve an fit wis in it again. ‘We *will* gang!’ she repeatit, makkin ivvery attimt tae caase the iron muscles tae lat gae; an funnin that her nails were nae eese, she appliet her teeth fair sair. Heathcliff gied me a luik that kep me fae hinnerin a meenit. Kitty wis ower eident wi his fingers tae takk heed o his face. He opent them at aince, an gied up the objick o the stushie; but, afore she hidd makkit it siccar, he nabbit her wi the liberatit haun, an, puuin her on his knee, gied wi the idder a shooer o affa clours on baith sides o the heid, ilka eneuch tae hae cairriet oot his threet, hidd she bin able tae faa.’

At yon divvelitch violence I breenged at him feeriously. ‘Ye breet!’ I begood tae skirl, ‘ye breet!’ A touch on the chist seelenced me: I am stoot, an seen pit oot o braith; an, fit wi thon an the rage, I heitert licht-heidit back an felt aboot tae smore, or tae burst a bleed-vessel. The scene wis ower in twa meenits; Kitty, lat gae, pit her twa hauns tae her timples, an luikit jist gin she werenae shair fither her lugs were aff or on. She shakkit like a rash, peer thing, an leant agin the table fair in a begeck.

‘I ken hoo tae lick bairns, ye see,’ said the vratch, dourly, as he bennit doon tae taak haud o the ky, which hidd drappit tae the fleer. ‘Gang tae Linton noo, as I tellt ye; an greet at yer aise! I will be yer faither, the morn—aa the faither ye’ll hae in a feow days—an ye’ll hae eneuch o thon. Ye can thole muckle; ye’re nae a fushionless craitur: ye will hae a taste ivvery day, gin I catch sic a divvil o a timper in yer een again!’

Kitty rinnit tae me insteed o Linton, an cooriet doon an pit her burnin chikk on ma lap, greetin sair. Her cousin hidd faain back intae a neuk o the settle, as quaet as a moose, thunkin himsel, I daur say, that the correckshun hidd alichtit on anither than him. Mr. Heathcliff, seein us aa bumbazit, steed up an makkit the tea himsel. The cups an sassers were pit oot aareddy. He poored it oot, an gied me a cup.

‘Dicht awaa yer spleen,’ he said. ‘An help yer ain ill-trickit pet an mine. It is nae pooshened, though I makkit it. I’m gaan oot tae sikk yer horses.’

Oor first thocht, fan he wint oot, wis tae get oot some wey. We seyit the kitchie door, but thon wis steekit ootside: we luikit at the windaes—they were ower narra fer even Kitty’s smaa-boukit figure.

‘Maister Linton,’ I skirlit, seein we were weel an truly lockit up, ‘ye ken fit yer divvelitch faither is aifter, an ye will tell us, or I’ll clour yer lugs, as he his deen yer cousin’s.’

‘Aye, Linton, ye maun tell,’ said Kitty. ‘It wis fer yer sake I cam; an it will be wickitly ungratefu gin ye winna.’

‘Gie me some tae, I’m drouthy, an syne I’ll tell ye,’ he answert. ‘Mrs. Dean, gang awaa. I dinna like ye staunnin ower me. Noo, Kitty, ye are lattin yer tears faa intae ma cup. I winna drink thon. Gie me anidder.’ Kitty pushit anidder tae him, an dichtit her face. I felt scunnert at the wee vratch’s cweelness, syne he wis nae langer in fricht fer himsel. The pyne he hidd shawn on the muir wint awaa as seen as ivver he wint intae Whudderin Heichts; sae I jaloused he hidd bin threetened wi an affa ragin gin he didnae get us there; an, thon deen, he hidd nae farrer frichts if noo.

‘Pa wints us tae be mairriet,’ he wint on, after sippin a suppie tae. ‘An he kens yer pa widdna lat us mairry noo; an he’s feart o ma deein gin we weyt; sae we are tae be mairriet in the mornin, an ye are tae bide here aa nicht; an, gin ye dee as he wints, ye will gang hame neist day, an takk me wi ye.’

‘Takk ye wi her, peetifu changelin!’ I skirled. ‘*Ye* mairry? Och, the chiel is wud! or he thinks us feels, ivvery een. An div ye imaigine thon bonny young leddy, thon sonsy, herty quine, will tie hersel tae a wee perishin monkey like ye? Are ye haudin the thocht that *onybody*, lat aleen Miss Kitty Linton, widd hae ye fer a man? Ye wint wheepin fer fessin us in here at aa, wi yer sleekit girnin joukery-pawkerie: an—dinna luik sae glaikit, noo! I’ve a verra guid myne tae gie ye a richt shakk, fer yer dirten treechery, an yer glaikit big-heidit weys.’

I deed gie him a slicht shakkin; but it brocht on the hoast, an he taen tae his eesual mainin an greetin, an Kitty tellt me aff.

‘Bide aa nicht? Na,’ she said, luikin slowly aroon. ‘Ellen, I’ll brunt thon door doon but I’ll win oot.’

An she widd hae begood direckly, but Linton wis up in alairm fer his dear sel again. He taen her in a bosie wi his twa dweeble airms greetin:

‘Winna ye hae me, an makk me siccar? nae lat me cam tae the Grange? Och, Kitty dearie! ye maunna gang awaa, aifter aa. You *maun* dee fit ma faither says—ye *maun*!’

‘I maun dee fit ma ain tellt me,’ she reponit, ‘an aise him fae yon coorse wirryin. The hale nicht! Fit widd he think? He’ll be feechit aariddy. I’ll edder brakk or brunt a wey oot of the hoose. Weesht! Ye’re in nae danger; but gin ye hinner me—Linton, I luve Pa better nor ye!’ The deidly fricht he felt o Mr. Heathcliff’s ragin brocht back tae the loon his cooard’s fine wirds. Kitty wis fair distraacht: aye, she wint on that she maun gang hame, an seyit entraity hersel, priggin wi him to haud back his selfit pyne. Files they were sae eident, oor jyler cam in.

‘Yer beasts hiv trottit aff,’ he said, ‘an—noo, Linton! girnin again? Fit his she bin deein tae ye? Cam, cam—hae deen an get tae bed. In a month or twa, ma loon, ye’ll be able to pey her back fer the wey she’s bin cairryin on wi a strang haun. Ye’re ettlin fer richt luve, are ye nae? naethin else in the warld: an she will hae ye! There, tae bed! Zillah winna be here the nicht; ye maun takk aff yer ain claes. Weesht! haud yer noise! Aince in yer ain chaumer, I’ll nae cam near haun ye: you nott nae fear. Bi chunce, ye’ve deen aaricht. I’ll luik tae the rist.’

He spikkit these wirds, haudin the door open fer his sin tae gang throu, an the latter wint oot in exackly the wey a spaniel micht which jalousit the body faa wis wi it thunkin o a spitefu birse. The sneck wis steekit. Heathcliff cam tae the ingle, faar ma mistress an I steed seelent. Kitty luikit up, an withoot thinkin heistit her haun tae her chikk: his neeborhood brocht back a painfu sinsation. Onybody else cwidnae hae luikit on the bairny ack in a maroonjus wey, but he glowert on her an mummlit:

‘Och! ye are nae feart o me? Yer spunk is weel hodden: ye *seem* verra afeart!’

‘I *am* afeart noo,’ she reponit, ‘because, gin I bide, Pa will be disjaskit: an foo cin I thole makkin him doonhertit—fan he—fan he—Mr. Heathcliff, *lat* me gang hame! I gie ye ma wird tae mairry Linton: Pa widd like me tae: an I luve him. Fit wey shid ye wint tae garr me tae do fit I’ll weellinly dee o masel?’

‘Lat him daur tae garr ye,’ I skirlit. ‘There’s laa in the laan, thunk God! there is; though we be in an oot-o-the-wey bield. I’d tell gin he were ma ain sin: an it’s ranegill withoot a meenister!’

‘Be quaet!’ said the rochian. ‘Tae the divvil wi yer skwallachin! I dinna wint *ye* tae spikk. Miss Linton, it will fairly be a pleesure tae think yer faither will be doon-hertit: I winna sleep fer contintment. Ye cwid hae hut on nae shairer wey o keppin ye aneth ma reef fer the neist twinty-fower ooers than repoortin tae me that sic an aivent widd follie. As tae yer greein tae mairry Linton, I’ll takk care ye will kep it; fer you winna get oot o this bield tull it is deen.’

‘Sen Ellen, syne, tae lat Pa ken I’m siccar!’ skirlit Kitty, greetin sairly. ‘Or mairry me noo. Peer Pa! Ellen, he’ll think we’re gaein wull. Fit will we dee?’

‘Nae he! He’ll think ye are founert fae weytin on him, an rin aff fer a bittie ameesement,’ answert Heathcliff. ‘Ye canna deny that ye cam intae ma hoose on yer ain, agin his wisses. An it is kine o naiteral that ye shid wint ameesement at yer age; an that ye widd weariet o luikin aifter a seek chiel, an that chiel *ainly* yer faither. Kitty, his seeliest days were ower fan yer days begood. He cursit ye, I daur say, fer camin intae the warld (I deed, onywey); an it widd jist dee gin he cursit ye as *he* wint oot o it. I’d jyne him. I dinna luve ye! Fit wey shid I? Greet awaa. As far as I cin see, it will be yer ainly distrackshun fae noo on; oonless Linton makks up fer idder things tynt: an yer wyce faither appears tae funcy he may. His letters o rede an easedom entertainit me grytely. In his last he coonselled ma jewel tae be canny wi his; an douce tae her fan he got her. Canny an douce—that’s a faither spikkin. But Linton widd nott his hale stock o cannieness an couthieness fer himsel. Linton cin play the wee tyrant weel. He’ll unnertakk tae terment ony nummer o cats, gin their teeth be draan an their claws clippit. Ye’ll be able tae tell his uncle rare tales o his *couthieness*, fan ye gang hame again, I cin tell ye.’

‘Ye’re richt there!’ I said; ‘spikk aboot yer sin’s naiter. Shaw foo like he is tae yersel: an syne, I howp, Miss Kitty will think twice afore she takks the craitur!’

‘I’m nae bathered aboot spikkin o his lichtsom kwaalities noo,’ he answert; ‘because she maun edder accep him or bide a preesoner, an ye alang wi her, tull yer maister dees. I cin haud ye baith, richt hodden, here. Gin ye doot, hertin her tae takk back her wird, an ye’ll hae the chunce tae fin oot!’

‘I’ll nae takk back ma wird,’ quo Kitty. ‘I’ll mairry him within this ooer, gin I may gang tae Thrushcross Grange aifterwards. Mr. Heathcliff, ye’re a coorse chiel, but ye’re nae a fiend; ane ye winna, jist fae wikkitness, wipe oot fer guid aa ma seeliness. Gin Pa thocht I hidd left him deeleeberately, an gin he deid afore I cam back, cwid I thole tae live? I’ve gien ower greetin: but I’m gaun tae hunker doon here, at yer knee; an I’ll nae staun up, an I’ll nae takk ma een fae yer face tull ye luik back at me! Na, dinna turn awaa! *div* luik! ye’ll see naethin tae kittle ye. I dinna hate ye. I’m nae ragin that ye duntit me. Hiv ye nivver looed *onybody* in aa yer life, uncle? *Nivver*? Ach! Ye maun luik aince. I’m sae vratchit, ye canna hep bein sorra an peetyin me.’

‘Kep yer eft’s fingers aff; an meeve, or I’ll dird ye!’ skraiched Heathcliff, rochly shivvin her. ‘I’d raither hae a bosie fae a snake. Foo the divvil cin ye dream o bein fraisie wi me? I *canna thole* ye!’

He shruggit his shooders: shakkit himsel, indaid, as gin his flesh creepit wi ull-wull; an shivvit back his cheer; files I got up, an opent ma mou, tae begood a doonricht speet o abuse. But I wis makkit dumb in the middle o the first sintince, bi a threet that I shid be shawn intae a room bi masel the verra neist wird I uddert. It wis growin mirk—we heerd a soun of vyces at the gairden-yett. Oor host hurriet oot richt awaa: *he* hidd his wits aboot him; *we* hidnae. There wis spikkin fer twa or three meenits, an he cam back alane.

‘I thocht it hidd bin yer cousin Hareton,’ I observit tae Kitty. ‘I wish he widd cam! Faa kens but he micht takk oor pairt?’

‘It wis three servants sint tae sikk ye fae the Grange,’ said Heathcliff, owerheerin me. ‘Ye shid hae opent a windae an caaed oot: but I cwid sweer that limmer is glaid ye didnae. She’s glaid tae be obleegit tae bide, I’m shair.’

At funnin oot the chunce we hidd tynt, we baith grat sair; an he allooed us tae skwallach on tull nine o’clock. Then he tellt us tae gang up e stairs, throu the kitchie, tae Zillah’s chaumer; an I fuspert tae ma companion tae dee fit we were tellt: mebbe we cwid get throu the windae there, or intae a laft, an oot bi its skylicht. The windae, hooivver, wis narra, like thon alow, an the laft trap wis siccar fae oor attimts; fer we were steekit in as afore. We nedder o us lay doon: Kitty steed bi the windae, an luikit sair fer mornin; a lang souch bein the ainly answer tae ma mony entraities that she widd sey tae rist. I seatit masel in a cheer, an rockit tae an fae, caain masel aathin fer ma mony mishanters; fae which, I syne jaloused, aa the mislippenmints o ma employers cam aboot. It wisnae the trowth, at aa, I ken; but it wis, in ma mynd, that dreich nicht; an I thocht it wis mair ma wyte than Heathcliff’s.

At sivven o’clock he cam, an spierit gin Miss Linton wis wakkent. She rinnit tae the door richt awaa, an reponit, ‘Aye.’ ‘Here, syne,’ he said, openin it, an puuin her oot. I steed up tae follie, but he steekit the sneck again. I demandit he lat me gae.

‘Be patient,’ he reponit; ‘I’ll sen up yer brakkfist in a file.’

I duntit on the panels, an rattlit the sneck feeriously an Kitty spiered fit wey I wis aye shut up? He answert, I maun sey tae thole it anither ooer, an they wint awaa. I tholed it twa or three ooers; in the hinner eyn, I heerd a fitstep: nae Heathcliff’s.

‘I’ve brocht ye summin tae eat,’ said a vyce; ‘appen e door!’

Deein it as faist as I cwid, I saa Hareton, laden wi mait eneuch tae laist me aa day.

‘Takk it,’ he addit, shivvin the tray intae ma haun.

‘Bide a meenit,’ I begood.

‘Na,’ skirlit he, an wint awaa, peyin nae tent tae ony guid wirds I cwid poor oot to haud him back.

And there I bade the hale day, an the hale o the neist nicht; an anither, an anither. Five nichts an fower days I bade, aa the gither, seein naebody but Hareton aince ivvery mornin; an he wis a model o a jyler: dour, nae spikkin a wird, an deef tae ivvery attimpt at meevin his sinse o peety or fit wis richt.

CHAPTER TWINTY-ACHT

THE LAIST O THE LINTONS

On the fifth mornin, or raither aifterneen, an antrin step cam by—lichter an nae sae lang; an, this time, the body cam intae the room. It wis Zillah; weerin her scarlet shaal, wi a blaik silk bonnet on her heid, and a willa-basket hingin fae her airm.

‘Och, dearie! Mrs. Dean!’ she skirlit. ‘Weel! there is a spikk aboot ye at Gimmerton. I nivver thocht but ye were droonit in the Blackhorse stank, an missy wi ye, till maister tellt me ye’d bin fun, and he’d taen ye here! Fit! an ye maun hae got on an island, shairly? An foo lang were you in the stank? Did maister save ye, Mrs. Dean? But ye’re nae sae skinny—ye’ve nae bin sae ull, hiv ye?’

‘Yer maister is a richt breet!’ I reponit. ‘But he will answer fer it. He nott nae hae makkit up thon tale: it will aa cam oot!’

‘Fit div ye mean?’ spiered Zillah. ‘It’s nae his tale: they tell that in the village—aboot yer bein tynt in the stank; an I caas tae Earnshaw, fan I cam in “Ach, they’s unco things, Mr. Hareton, hoppent syne I wint aff. It’s a sad peety o thon bonny young quine, an cantie Nelly Dean.” He gaakit. I thocht he hiddnae heerd ocht, sae I tellt him the claik. The maister listed, an he jist smiled tae himsel, an said, “Gin they hiv bin in the stank, they are oot noo, Zillah. Nelly Dean is bidin, at this meenit, in yer chaumer. Ye cin tell her tae gang, fan ye gang up; here is the ky. The bog-watter got intae her heid, an she widd hae rinnit hame fair flichty; but I fixit her tull she cam roon tae her sinses. Ye cin bid her gang tae the Grange at aince, gin she be able, an cairry a message fae me, that her young leddy will follie in time tae gang tae the squire’s funeral.”’

‘Mr. Edgar isnae deid?’ I skirlit. ‘Och! Zillah, Zillah!’

‘Na, na; sit ye doon, ma guid mistress,’ she reponit; ‘ye’re richt seekly aye. He’s nae deid; Doctor Kenneth thinks he may laist anither day. I trystit wi him on the road an spiered.’

Insteed o settin doon, I ruggit ma ootdoor things, an hastent alow, fer the wey wis free. On gaun intae the hoose, I luikit aboot fer a body tae tell me aboot Kitty. The bield wis fu wi sunshine, an the door steed wide apen; but naebody seemit aboot. As I swithert fither tae gang aff at aince, or gang back and sikk ma mistress, a slicht hoast draait ma attinshun tae the ingle. Linton reistit on the settle himsel, sookin galshachs, an folliein ma meevemints wi weeriet een. ‘Faar is Miss Kitty?’ I spierit steernly, jalousin I cwid frichten him intae giein summin awaa, bi catchin him aa his lane. He sookit on like it wis naethin tae dee wi him.

‘Is she gaen?’ I said.

‘Na,’ he reponit; ‘she’s up e stairs: she’s nae tae gang; we winna lat her.’

‘Ye winna lat her, ye shilpit gype!’ I skirlit. ‘Direck me tae her chaumer richt awaa or I’ll makk ye sing oot sairly.’

‘Pa widd makk ye sing oot, gin ye seyit tae gang there,’ he answert. ‘He says I’m nae tae be saft wi Kitty: she’s ma wife, an it’s shamefu that she shid wish tae gang awaa fae me. He says she canna thole me an wints me tae dee, that she may hiv ma siller; but she winna hae it: an she winna gang hame! She nivver will!—she may greet, an be seek as muckle as she wints!’

He wint back tae fit he wis deein afore, caain tee his lids, gin he meant tae drap aff tae sleep.

‘Maister Heathcliff,’ I stertit again, ‘div ye nae mine aa Kitty’s couthieness tae ye laist winter, fan ye annooncit ye luvved her, an fan she brocht ye buiks an sung ye sangs, an cam mony a time throu win an snaa tae see ye? She grat tae miss ae evenin, because ye widd be disappintit; an ye felt then that she wis a hunner times ower guid tae ye: an noo ye believe the lees yer faither tells, though ye ken he canna thole ye baith. An ye jyne him agin her. That’s a rare wey tae thunk her, is it nae?’

The neuk o Linton’s mou faait, an he taen the galshachs fae his lips.

‘Deed she cam tae Whudderin Heichts because she cwidna thole ye?’ I wint on. ‘Think fer yersel! As tae yer siller, she daesnae even ken that ye will hae ony. An ye say she’s seek; an yet ye leave her aa her leen, up there in an antrin hoose! *Ye* faa his felt fit it is tae be sae negleckit! Ye cwid peety yer ain sufferins; an she peetied them, an aa; but ye winna peety hers! I lat tears faa, Maister Heathcliff, ye see—an aul wifie, an jist a seervint —an ye, aifter makkin on tae hae sic luuv, an haein raison tae luik up tae her aamaist, pit awa ivvery tear ye hiv fer yersel, an reist there fair at aise. Ach! yer a hertless, aff-takkin loon!’

‘I canna bide wi her,’ wis his crabbit repone. ‘I’ll nae bide bi masel. She greets sae I canna thole it. An she winna gie ower, though I say I’ll greet fer ma faither. I deed caa him aince, an he threetent tae thraw her neck gin she wisnae quaet; but she begood richt awaa fan he wint oot o the room, mainin and grievin aa nicht lang, though I scraichit fer tirment that I cwidna sleep.’

‘Is Mr. Heathcliff oot?’ I spiered, jalousin that the vratch hidd nae pooer tae unnerstaun fit his peer cousin wis gaun throu.

‘He’s in the coort,’ he reponit, ‘spikkin tae Doctor Kenneth; faa says uncle is deein, truly, at laist. I’m glaid, fer I will be maister o the Grange aifter him. Kitty ayewis spikkit o it as *her* hoose. It’s nae hers! It’s mine: Pa says aathin she his is mine. Aa her snod buiks are mine; she wis gaun tae gie me them, an her bonny burds, an her pony Minny, gin I widd get haud o the ky o oor chaumer, an lat her oot; but I tellt her she hidd naethin tae gie, they were aa, aa mine. An syne she grat, an taen a wee picter fae her neck, an said I shid hae thon; twa picters in a gowden case, on ae side her mither, an on the ither uncle, fan they were young. That wis yestreen—I said *they* were mine, an aa; and seyit tae get them fae her. The spitefu thing widdna lat me: she shivvit me aff, an hurtit me. I skwaaliched oot—that frichtens her—she heerd Pa camin, an she brakkit the hinges an spleet the case in twa, an gied me her mither’s portrait; the idder she seyit ta hod: but Pa spiered fit wis the maitter, an I tellt him. He taen the een I hidd awaa, an tellt her to gie up hers tae me; she widna, an he—he dirdit her doon, an ruggit it aff the cheyn, an pranned it wi his fit.’

‘An were ye glaid tae see her dirdit?’ I spiered: haein ma raisons in kittlin him tae spikk.

‘I winkit,’ he answert: ‘I wink tae see ma faither clour a dug or a horse, he daes it sae sair. Yet I wis glaid at first—she deservit punishin fer shivvin me: but fan Pa wis gaen, she makkit me cam tae the windae an shawed me her chikk cut on the inside, agin her teeth, an her mou fu wi bleed; an syne she gaithert up the bitties o the picter, an wint an sat doon wi her face tae the waa, an she his nivver spikkit tae me syne: an files I think she canna spikk fer pain. I dinna like tae think sae; but she’s an ill-trickit craitur fer greetin aa the time; an she luiks sae peely-wally an wud, I’m frichtent o her.’

‘And ye canna get a haud o the ky gin ye wintit tull?’ I said.

‘Aye, fan I am up e stairs,’ he answert; ‘but I canna gang up e stairs noo.’

‘In fit chaumer is it?’ I spiered.

‘Och,’ he skirled, ‘I winna tell ye faar it is. It is oor saicret. Naebody, nedder Hareton nor Zillah, is tae ken. There! ye’ve founert me—gang awaa, gang awaa!’ And he pit his face on tae his airm, and shut his een again.

I thocht it best to gang awaa withoot seein Mr. Heathcliff, an fess fowk tae hep ma young leddy oot fae the Grange. On winnin tae it, the begeck o ma fella-seervints tae see me, an their plaishure an aa, wis strang; an fan they heerd that their wee mistress wis siccar, twa or three were aboot tae hurry up an skirl the claik at Mr. Edgar’s door: but I taen on tae spikk tae him masel. Foo cheynged I fun him, even in thon feow days! He lay a picter o sorra an accepance aweytin his deith. Gey young he luikit: though his richt age wis thirty-nine, a body widd hae caaed him ten eer younger, aamaist. He thocht o Kitty; fer he mummlit her name. I strakit his haun, an spikkit.

‘Kitty is camin, maister, ma dearie!’ I fuspert; ‘she is alive an weel; an will be here, I howp, the nicht.’

I chittert at foo he taen fit I hidd said: he hauf heistit up, ettlin, he luikit roon the chaumer, an syne faait back in a dwaum. As seen as he wis aaricht, I tellt o bein garred tae veesit, an bein lockit up at the Heichts. I said Heathcliff garred me to gang in: which wisnae jist the trowth. I didnae udder muckle agin Linton; nor did I tell aathin aboot his faither’s roch weys—I didna wint tae pit ony soorness, gin I cwid hep it, tae his aariddy ower-flowin caup.

He jaloused that his enemy wintit tae makk siccar the personal belaangins, as weel as the laan, tae his sin: or raither himsel; yet fit wey he didnae weyt tull his deith wis a bleck tae ma maister, because he didnae ken foo narrly he an his neffy widd quit the warld the gither. Hooivver, he thocht that his weell hidd better be cheyngit: insteed o leavin Kitty’s heirskip fer her tae dee wi, he wintit tae pit it in the hauns o trustees fer her eese durin life, an fer her bairns, gin she hidd ony, aifter her. Bi that means, it cwidnae faa tae Mr. Heathcliff shid Linton dee.

Hivvin bin gied his instruckshuns, I sint aff a chiel tae fess the attorney, an fower mair, airmit wi richt weepins, tae sikk ma young leddy o her jyler. Baith pairties were hauden back gey latchie. The ae seervint cam back first. He said Mr. Green, the lawyer, wis oot fan he cam tae his hoose, an he hidd tae weyt twa ooers; an syne Mr. Green tellt him he hidd a puckle things tae dee in the village that maun be deen; but he widd be at Thrushcross Grange afore mornin. The fower chiels cam back on their ain an aa. They brocht wird that Kitty wis ull: ower ull tae cam oot o her chaumer; an Heathcliff widdna alloo them to see her. I ragit at the gypes fer listin tae thon tale, which I widdnae cairry tae ma maister; makkin shair tae takk a hale bourach up tae the Heichts, at day-licht, an breenge in fitivver, oonless the preesoner were gien up quaetly tae us. Her faither *will* see her, I sweerit, an sweerit again, gin that divvil be murthered on his ain doorstanes in seyin tae stap it!

Glaidly, I wis sparit the traivel an the tribble. I hidd gaen doon e stairs at three o’clock tae fess a joog o watter; an wis passin throu the hall wi it in ma haun, fan a chap at the front door makkit me loup. ‘Och! it is Green,’ I said, minin masel, ‘ainly Green,’ an I wint on, intendin tae sen anidder body tae open it; but the chap cam again: nae lood, but aye nae tae be ignorit. I pit the joog on the banister an wint faist as I cwid tae lat him in masel. The hairst meen shone bricht ootside. It wisnae the attorney. Ma ain swate wee mistress loupit on ma neck greetin, ‘Ellen, Ellen! Is Pa aye wi us?’

‘Aye,’ I skirled: ‘aye, ma angel, he is, God be thunkit, ye are siccar wi us again!’

She wintit tae rin, pechin as she wis, up e stairs tae Mr. Linton’s chaumer; but I garred her tae reist on a cheer, an makkit her drink, an dichtit her pae-wae face, chafin it intae a suppie colour wi my apron. Syne I said I maun gae first, an tell o her arrival; priggin wi her tae say, she shid be seely wi young Heathcliff. She gaakit, but seen unnerstaunin fit wey I coonselled her tae udder the lee, she tellt me she widdnae girn.

I cwidna thole tae be preesint at their tryst. I steed ootside the chaumer-door a corter o an ooer, an hairdly wint near the bed, syne. Aa wis quaet, hooivver: Kitty’s meesery wis as seelint as her faither’s joy. She haudit him up steedily, in ootward luiks; an he faistent on her coontenance his heistit een that seemed apenin wi udder delicht.

He deit seely, Mr. Lockwood: he deit sae. Bussin her chikk, he said saftly ‘I am gaen tae her; an ye, ma dear bairn, will cam tae us!’ an nivver steered or spikkit again; but cairriet on thon spellboond, blythe luik, tull his pulse, withoot a myowte, stappit an his sowel wint awaa. Naebody cwid hae taen tent o the exact meenit o his deith, it wis sae udderly withoot a tyaave.

Fither Kitty hidd spennit her tears, or fither the sorra wis ower wechty tae lat them flow, she sat there dry-eed tull the sun cam up: she sat tull neen, an widd aye hae bade cleckin ower that deithbed, but I priggit wi her cam awaa an takk some rist. It wis weel I deed takk her awaa, fer at denner-time cam the lawyer, hivvin cried in bi Whudderin Heichts tae be tellt fit tae dee. He hidd sellt himsel tae Mr. Heathcliff: that wis the caase o him haudin back an nae camin fan ma maister sint fer him. Thunkfully, nae thocht o warldly affairs bathered him, aifter his daughter cam.

Mr. Green taen upon himsel tae order aathin an aabody aboot the bield. He gied aa the seervints but me, notice tae gang. He widd hae cairriet the pooer gien him tae the pint o threepin that Edgar Linton shidnae be beeriet aside his wife, but in the chapel, wi his faimly. There wis the weell, hooivver, tae hinner thon, an ma lood skwallichin agin ony conterin o fit it said. The funeral wis hurriet ower; Kitty, Mrs. Linton Heathcliff noo, wis allooed tae bide at the Grange tull her faither’s corp hidd quittit it.

She tellt me that her affa pyne hidd in the hinner eyn garrit Linton tae rin the risk o lattin her gang. She heerd the men I sint caasin a stramash at the door, an she gaithered the sinse o Heathcliff’s repone. It dreevit her sair made. Linton faa hidd bin cairriet up tae the wee parlour seen aifter I wint awaa, wis frichtent intae fessin the ky afore his faither cam back. He wis sleekit eneuch tae unsneck an re-sneck the door, withoot caain it tee; an fan he shid hae gaen tae bed, he priggit tae sleep wi Hareton, an his peteeshun wis gruntit fer aince. Kitty creppit oot afore brakk o day. She daured nae sey the doors lest the dugs shid gie the alairm; she veesitit the teem chaumers an hidd a guid luik at their windaes; an, bi guid lick, lichtin on her mither’s, she climmit aisily oot o its windae, an on tae the grun, bi eesin doon the fir-tree near haun. Her pairtner in crime suffert fer the smaa pairt he hidd in her gettin awaa, naewithstaunnin foo skeigh it wis.

CHAPTER TWINTY-NINE

HEATHCLIFF OWERCAMS AA

The evenin aifter the funeral, ma young leddy an I were reistit in the library; noo musin dowie like—een o us doonhertitly—on fit we’d tint, noo thinkin on fit wis gaan tae hoppen in the dreich days tae cam.

We hidd jist greed the best wey forrit fer Kitty widd be bein allooed tae gang on bidin at the Grange; at laist durin Linton’s life: he bein allooed tae jyne her there, an I tae bide as hoosekeeper. Thon seemit far ower guid an ootcome tae be howpit fer; an yet I deed howp, an begood tae be mair lichtsome unner the prospeck o keppin haud o ma hame an ma wirk, an, abune aa, ma beluvvit young leddy; fan a seervint—een o the eens lat go, nae yet gaen awaa—breengit in, an said ‘thon divvil Heathcliff’ wis camin throu the coort: shid he sneck the door in his phizog?

Gin we hidd bin wud eneuch tae gie thon direckshun, we hidnae time. He didnae bather wi chappin or annooncin his name: he wis maister, an he waakit stracht in, withoot sayin a wird. The soun o oor informant’s vyce direckit him tae the library; he cam in an waggin him oot, caaed the door tee.

It wis the verra room intae which he hidd bin shawn, as a guest, achteen eer afore: the verra meen shone throu the windae; an the verra autumn laanscape lay ootside. We hidnae yet lichtit a caunnel, but aa the chaumer cwid be seen, e’en tae the picters on the waa: the magneeficint heid o Mrs. Linton, an the braw een o her man. Heathcliff cam forrit tae the ingle. Time hiddnae cheyngit him edder. There wis the verra chiel: his dour face raither yalla an mair cweel, his frame a stane or twa hivvier, mebbe, an nae idder deeffirince. Kitty hidd heistit up wi a thocht tae breenge oot, fan she saa him.

‘Stap!’ he said, takkin her bi the airm. ‘Nae mair rinnin awaa! Faar widd ye gang? I’m cam tae fess ye hame; an I howp ye’ll be a dother that daes fit ye’re tellt an nae kittle up ma sin tae farrer brakkin o ma laas. I hidd a fair begeck foo tae deescipline him fan I fun oot his pairt in the on-gyaans: he’s sic a moosewob, a birse widd feenish him; but ye’ll see bi his luik that he his bin gien fit he deesirvit! I brocht him doon ae evenin, the day afore yestreen, an jist pit him in a cheer, an nivver wint near haun him aifterwards. I sint Hareton oot, an we hidd the room tae oorsels. In twa ooers, I cried Joseph tae cairry him up again; an syne ma preesence is as pooerfu on his nirves as a ghaist; an I funcy he sees me aften, though I am nae near. Hareton says he wakkens an skraichs in the nicht bi the ooer the gither, an cries ye tae makk him siccar fae me; an, fither ye like him, or nae, ye maun cam: he’s faa yer aboot; I gie up aa ma pairt in him tae ye.’

‘Fit wey nae lat Kitty gang on here,’ I priggit, ‘an sen Maister Linton tae her? As ye canna thole them baith, ye’d nae mang fer them: they *cin* ainly be a bather aa the time tae yer unnaiteral hert.’

‘I’m sikkin a tenant fer the Grange,’ he reponit; ‘an I wint ma bairns aboot me, tae be shair. Forbye, thon quine awes me her seervices fer her breid. I’m nae gaan tae kep her in easedom an idleseat aifter Linton is gaen. Makk haste an get roadit, noo; an dinna obleege me tae garr ye.’

‘I will,’ quo Kitty. ‘Linton is aa I hivv tae luv in the warld, an though ye hiv deen fit ye cwid tae makk him hatefu tae me, an me tae him, ye *canna* makk us hate ilka the idder. An I daur ye tae hairm him fan I am near haun, an I daur ye tae frichten me!’

‘Ye are a prood chumpion,’ reponit Heathcliff; ‘but I dinna like ye weel eneuch to hairm him: ye will get aa the termentin, as lang as it laists. It is nae I faa will makk him hatefu tae ye—it is his ain swate speerit. He’s as soor as gall at yer gaan awaa an syne fit hoppent: dinna expeck thunks fer giein yersel tae him. I heerd him draa a bonny picter tae Zillah o fit he widd dee gin he were as strang as I: he widd fain dee it, and his verra wykeness will makk him eese his clivverness tae fun a staun-in fer strinth.’

‘I ken he his an ull-naiter,’ said Kitty: ‘he’s yer sin. But I’m glaid I’ve a better, tae forgie it; an I ken he luvvs me, an fer thon raison I luvv him. Mr. Heathcliff *ye* hiv *naebody* tae luvv ye; an, fooivver meesrable ye makk us, we will aye get back at ye fan thinkin that yer coorseness cams fae yer gryter sorra. Ye *are* meesrable, are ye nae? Aa yer leen, like the divvil, an risintfu like him? *Naebody* luvs ye—*naebody* will greet fer ye fan ye dee! I widdna be ye!’

Kitty spikkit wi a kyne o dour owercammin: she seemit tae hae makkit up her myne tae takk on the speerit o her faimily tae be, an draa pleeshur fae the sorra o the eens agin her.

‘Ye will regreet tae be yersel seen,’ said her faither-in-law, ‘gin ye staun there anither meenit. Aff wi ye, limmer, an fess yer things!’

Jamphin she wint oot. Files she wisnae wi us I begood tae prig fer Zillah’s wirk at the Heichts, offering tae gie up mine tae her; but he widdnae alloo it on ony accoont. He tellt me be seelent; an syne, fer the first time, lat himself hae a luik roon the room an at the picters. Hivvin gien Mrs. Linton’s a guid luik, he said ‘I will hae thon hame. Nae because I nott it, but—’ He turnit faist back roon tae the ingle, an wint on, wi fit, for wint o a better wird, I maun caa a smile: ‘I’ll tell ye fit I deed yestreen! I garrit the sexton, faa wis howkin oot Linton’s mools, takk awaa the yird aff her coffin lid, an I apent it. I thocht, aince, I widd hae bade there: fan I saa her face again—it is hers aye!—he hidd sair wirk tae steer me; but he said it widd cheynge gin the air souchit on it, an sae I dirdit ae side o the coffin lowse, an happit it up: nae Linton’s side, damn him! I ettle he’d bin soldert in leed. An I bribit the sexton to puu it awaa fan I’m pit there, an slide mine oot an aa; I’ll hae it makkit like thon: an syne bi the time Linton cams tae us he’ll nae ken fit een is fit!’

‘Ye were affa wikkit, Mr. Heathcliff!’ I skirled; ‘were you nae affrontit tae bather the deid?’

‘I bathert naebody, Nelly,’ he reponit; ‘an I gied a suppie aise tae masel. I will be faar mair contintit noo; an ye’ll hae a better chunce o keppin me aneth the grun, fan I get there. Bathered her? Na! she his bathered me, nicht an day, throu achteen eers—ivvery meenit—withoot fail—tull yestreen; an laist nicht I wis quaet. I dwaumit I was sleepin the laist sleep bi thon sleeper, wi ma hert stappit an ma chikk gealt agin hers.’

‘An gin she hidd bin dissolvit intae yird, or waur, fit widd ye hae dwaumit o syne?’ I said.

‘O dissolvin wi her, an bein aye mair seely!’ he answert. ‘Div ye jalouse I dreid ony cheynge o thon kine? I expeckit sic a cheynge on heistin the lid—but I’m fair delichtit that it shidnae begood tull I am there an aa. Forbye, oonless I hidd bin gien a richt luik o her quaet features, thon unco feelin widd hairdly hae bin taen awaa. It begood in an antrin wey. Ye ken I wis wud aifter she deeit; an aa the time, fae daybrakk tae daybrakk, priggin her tae cam back tae me her speerit! I hiv a strang faith in ghaists: I hae a convickshun that they cin, and div, gang amang us! The day she wis beeriet, there cam a faa o snaa. In the evenin I wint tae the kirkyaird. It souchit dreich as winter—aa roon ere wisnae a sowel. I didnae fear thon feel o a man o hers widd wanner up the glen sae ahin; and naebody else hidd buzness tae fess them there. Bein aa ma leen, an kennin ainly twa yairds o lowse yird wis atween us, I said tae masel ‘I’ll hae her in ma airms again! Gin she be caul, I’ll thunk it is yon north win that geels *me*; an gin she disnae meeve, it is sleep.” I fessit a spaad fae the tool-hoose, an begood tae howk wi aa ma micht—it scrattit the coffin; I faait tae wirk wi ma hauns; the wid stertit spleetin aboot the screws; I wis on the pint o winnin tae fit I wintit, fan I thocht I heerd a souch fae a body abune, in bye at the edge o the mools, an bennin doon. “gin I cin ainly get yon aff,” I mummlit, “I wiss they may caa in the yird ower us baith!” an sair made I ruggit at it e’en mair . There wis anither souch, richt aside ma lug. I thocht I felt the warm souch o it haudin aff the sleety win. I kennt nae livin thing in flesh an bleed wis by; but, as shairly as ye ken the there’s a muckle body in the dairk, though it canna be makkit oot, sae shairly I felt that Kirsty wis there: nae aneth me, but on the airth. Richt awaa a sinse o relief flowit fae ma hert throu ivvery limb. I gied up ma hertsair darg, an wis lichtsome at aince: sae lichtsome that I cwidna spikk o it. Her preesince wis wi me: it bade files I pit the yird back intae the mools, an taen me hame. Ye may lach, gin ye will; but I wis shair I shid see her there. I wis shair she wis wi me, an I cwidna hep spikkin tae her. Haein won tae the Heichts, I breenged tae the door. It wis sneckit; an, I mine, thon divvil Earnshaw an ma wife widna lat me in. I mine stappin tae dird the braith oot o him, an syne rinnin up e stairs, tae ma chaumer an hers. I luikit roon ettlin—I felt her bi me—I cwid aamaist see her, an yet I *cwidna*! I ocht tae hae sweytit bleed syne, fae the hertsair ettlin—fae the farrach o ma priggin tae hae but ae sicht! I hiddnae een. She shawed hersel, as she aften wis in life, a divvil tae me! An, syne, files mair an files less, I’ve bin the sport o thon ull-eesin I canna thole! Heelish! keppin ma nirves sae raxit that, gin they were like tae catgut, they widd lang syne hae wun doon tae the shilpitness o Linton’s. Fan I sat in the hoose wi Hareton, tae me it wis as gin I wint oot I shid tryst wi her; fan I stravaigit the muirs I shid tryst wi her camin in. Fan I wint fae hame I hastent tae gang back; she *maun* be somewey at the Heichts, I wis shair! An fan I sleepit in her chaumer—I wis dirdit oot o thon. I cwidna rist there; fer the meenit I caaed tee ma een, she wis edder ootside the windae, or puuin back the panels, or camin intae the chaumer, or e’en ristin her dawtie heid on the verra pilla as she deed fan a bairn; an I maun apen ma lids tae see. An sae I apent an caaed them tee a hunner times a nicht—tae be ayewis disappintit! It hurtit me! I’ve aften groanached alood, tull thon aul scoondrel Joseph nae doot thocht that ma inner guid sinse wis playin the divvil inside o me. Noo, sin I’ve saait her, I’m nae sae ull—a bittie. It wis an unco wey o killin: nae bi inches, but bi frackshuns o hairbreedths, tae hant me wi the ghaist o a howp throu achteen eer!’

Mr. Heathcliff stappit an dichtit his foreheid; his hair hingit tae it, weet wi sweyt; his eyes were fixit on the reid eizel o the lowe, the broos nae contrackit, but heistit neist the timples; makkin the luik o his coontenance nae sae dour, but impairtin an antrin luik o tribble, an ye cwid see foo haudit ticht his myne wis taewards ae subjick at wis aathin tae him. He ainly hauf spikkit tae me, an I keppit seelence. I didnae like tae heer him spikk! Aifter a wee filie he wint back tae luikin at the picter, taen it doon an pit it agin the sofa tae luik at it nearer haun; an file he wis deein at Kitty cam in, annooncin that she wis riddy, fan her pony shid be saddlit.

‘Sen thon ower the morn,’ quo Heathcliff tae me; syne turnin tae her, he addit: ‘Ye may dee withoot yer pony: it is a gran evenin, an ye’ll nae nott ponies at Whudderin Heichts; fer fit traivels ye takk, yer ain feet will dee. Cam awaa.’

‘Fareweel, Ellen!’ fuspert ma dear wee mistress.

As she bussed me, her lips felt like slidder. ‘Cam an see me, Ellen; be shair tae mine.’

‘Takk care ye dee nae sic thing, Mrs. Dean!’ said her new faither. ‘Fan I wint tae spikk tae ye I’ll cam here. I wint neen o yer lang nebbit on-gyaans at ma hoose!’

He waggit her tae gang in front o him; an cassin back a luik that wint throu ma hert, she deed fit she wis tellt. I watchit them, fae the windae, wakk doon the gairden. Heathcliff pit Kitty’s airm aneth his; though I cwid see she didnae wint tull an wi lang spangs he breengit wi her intae the wynd, faa’s trees hoddit them.

CHAPTER THIRTY

KITTY AA HER LEEN

I hiv peyed a veesit tae the Heichts, but I hivnae seen her syne she wint awaa: Joseph haudit the door in his haun fan I cried in by tae spier aifter her, an widdnae lat me gang by. He said Mrs. Linton wis ‘thrang’, an the maister wisnae in. Zillah his tellt me summin o the wey they gang on, idderwise I shid hairdly ken faa wis deid an faa aye wi us. She thinks Kitty prood, an daesnae like her, I cin jalouse bi the wey she spikks. Ma young leddy spiered some hep o her fan she first cam; but Mr. Heathcliff tellt her tae follie her ain wirk, an lat his dother-in-laa luik aifter hersel; an Zillah weellinly deed sae, bein a narra-mindit, aff-takkin wumman. Kitty shawit a bairn’s tirment at yon negleck; peyed it back wi scadden, an syne makkit Zillah een o her enemies, as shairly gin she hidd deen her some gryte wrang. I hidd a lang newse wi Zillah aboot sax wikks syne, a bittie afore ye cam, ae day fan we trystit on the muir; an this is fit she tellt me.

‘The erst thing Mrs. Linton deed,’ she said, ‘fan she cam tae the Heichts, wis tae rin up e stairs, withoot e’en wissin guid evenin tae me an Joseph; she shut herself intae Linton’s chaumer, an bade tull mornin. Syne, files the maister an Earnshaw were at brakkfist, she cam intae the hoose, an shakkin aa ower, spiert gin the doctor micht be sen fer? her cousin wis gey ull.

“We ken thon!” answert Heathcliff; “but his life isnae wirth a fardin, an I winna spen a fardin on him.”

“But I canna tell foo tae de,” she said; “an gin naebody will hep me, he’ll dee!”

“Wakk oot o the room,” skirlit the maister, “an lat me nivver heer a wird mair aboot him! Naebody here cares fit becams o him; gin ye dee, ack the nurse; gin ye dinna, sneck his door an leave him.”

‘Then she begood tae bather me, an I said I’d hid eneuch batherin wi the kittlesome thing; we ilky hidd oor darg, an hers wis tae luik aifter on Linton: Mr. Heathcliff tellt me tae leave aa thon tae her.

‘Foo they makkit dee thegither, I canna tell. I funcy he girned muckle, an mained tae himsel nicht an day; an she hidd hairdly ony rist: I cwid jalouse bi her fite face an hivvy eeen. Files she cam intae the kitchie aa dozent like, an luikit gin she widd hae priggit fer a haun; but I wisnae gaun tae nae dee fit the maister tellt me: I nivvver daur nae tae dee fit I’m tellt, Mrs. Dean; an, though I thocht it wrang that Kenneth shidna be sen fer, it wis naethin tae dee wi me edder tae say fit tae dee or compleen, an I ayewis haudit awaa fae middlin. Aince or twice, aifter we hidd gaen tae bed, I’ve hoppened tae apen ma door again an seen her greetin at the tap o the stairs; an syne I hiv caaed tee the door faist, fer fear o bein meeved tae dee summin aboot it. I deed peety her then, I’m shair: still I didnae wiss tae tynt ma place, ye ken.

‘In the hinner eyn, ae nicht she cam daurinly intae ma chaumer, an frichtent me oot o ma wits, bi sayin, “Tell Mr. Heathcliff that his sin is deein—I’m shair he is, this time. Get up, instanter, an lat him ken.”

‘Hivvin spikkit, she wint awa again. I lay a corter o an ooer listin an shakkin. Naethin meeved—the hoose wis quaet.

‘She’s mistaen, I said tae masel. He’s got ower it. I nott nae bather them; an I begood tae doze. But ma sleep wis blaadit a second time bi a shairp ring o the bell—the ainly bell we hiv, pit up on purpose fer Linton; an the maister cried tae me tae see fit wis the maitter, an lat them ken that he wouldna hae thon noyse ower again.

‘I tellt him fit Kitty hid said. He sweirit tae himsel, and in a feow meenits cam oot wi a lichted caunnel, an wint tae their chaumer. I follied. Mrs. Heathcliff wis seatit bi the bedside, wi her hauns faulit on her knees. Her faither-in-laa wint up, haudit the licht tae Linton’s face, luikit at him, an pit his haun on him; aifterwirds he turnit tae her.

“Noo—Kitty,” he said, “foo div ye feel?”

‘She didna spikk.

“Foo div ye feel, Kitty?” he spiered again.

“He’s siccar, an I’m free,” she answert: “I shid feel weel—but,” she wint on, wi a soorness she cwidna hod, “ye hiv left me sae lang tae warsle agin deith aa ma leen, that I feel an see ainly deith! I feel like deith!”

‘An she luikit like it, an aa! I gied her a suppie wine. Hareton an Joseph, faa hidd bin wakkent bi the ringin an the soun o feet, an heerd oor spikkin fae ootside, noo cam in. Joseph wis fain, I believe, o the loon bein taen awaa; Hareton seemit a thocht bathered: though he wis mair taen up wi gaakin at Kitty than giein a thocht tae Linton. But the maister tellt him get aff tae bed again: we didnae wint his hilp. He aifterwaids makkit Joseph cairry the body tae his chaumer, an tellt me tae gang back tae mine, an Mrs. Heathcliff bade bi hersel.

‘In the mornin, he sint me tae tell her she maun cam doon tae brakkfist: she hidd taen aff her claes, an wintit tae sleep, an said she wis ull; at which I hairdly winnert. I tellt Mr. Heathcliff, an he reponit “Weel, lat her be tull aifter the funeral; an gang up noo an then tae fess her fit she nott; an, as seen as she luiks better, lat me ken.”’

Kitty bade up e stairs a fortnicht, accordin tae Zillah; faa veesitit her twice a day, an widd hae bin raither mair frienly, but her attimps at bein mair couthy were proodly rejeckit richt awaa.

Heathcliff wint up aince, tae shaw her Linton’s weell. He hidd bequeathit the hale o his, an fit hidd bin her, meeveable belangins, tae his faither: the peer craitur wis threetent, or ticit, intae thon ack files she wis awaa, fan his uncle deeit. The laans, bein a minor, he cwidna mell wi. Hooivver, Mr. Heathcliff his claimit an kep them in his wife’s richt an his an aa: I jalouse bi the laa; at ony rate, Kitty, wi nae siller an nae friens, canna dee onythin aboot it.

‘Naebody,’ said Zillah, ‘ivver wint near haun her door, excep that aince, but I; an naebody spiered onythin aboot her. She first cam doon intae the hoose on a Sunday aifterneen. She hid skirlit oot, fan I carriet up her denner, that she cwidna thole ony langer bein in the caul; an I tellt her the maister wis gaun tae Thrushcross Grange, an Earnshaw an I nott nae hinner her fae cammin doon; sae, as seen as she heerd Heathcliff’s horse trot aff, she cam doon, riggit in blaik, an her yella curls combit back ahin her lugs as oonbuskit as a Quaker: she cwidna comb them oot.

‘Joseph an I maist times gang tae chapel on Sundays’ (the kirk, ye ken, his nae meenister noo, explainit Mrs. Dean; an they caa the Methodists’ or Baptists’ bield (I canna say fit een it is) at Gimmerton, a chapel). ‘Joseph hidd gaen,’ she wint on, ‘but I thocht it richt tae bide at hame. Young fowks are ayewis the better fer an elder’s ower-luikin; an Hareton, bein baachit, isnae aye shawin foo tae ack perjink. I lat him ken that his cousin widd gey lickly reist wi us, an she hid bin ayewis eesed tae hae the Sabbath respeckit; sae he hidd as guid leave his guns an bitties o indoor wirk aleen, files she bade. He wint reid at fit I said, an cassen his een ower his hauns an claes. The train-ile an gun pooder were shivvit oot o sicht in a meenit. I saa he meant tae gie her his company; an I jalousit, bi his wey, he wintit tae be preesintable; sae, lachin, as I daurnae nae lach fan the maister is aboot, I offered tae hilp him, gin he widd, an taen the rise oot o foo bumbazit he wis. He growit dour, an begood tae sweer.

‘Noo, Mrs. Dean,’ Zillah wint on, seein me nae affa taen bi her weys, ‘ye hoppen think yer young leddy ower braw fer Mr. Hareton; an hoppen ye’re richt: but I ken I shid luvv weel tae takk her doon a peg or twa. An fit will aa her larnin an her fantoosh weys dae fer her, noo? She’s as peer as ye or I: peerer, I’ll be binnit: ye’re sayin, an I’m deein ma wee bittie aa thon road.’

Hareton lat Zillah hilp him; an she fraisit him intae a guid naiter; sae, fan Kitty cam, hauf fergattin her ull wirds afore, he seyit tae makk himsel snod, bi the hoosekeeper’s accoont.

‘Missis wakkit in,’ she said, ‘as caul as an icicle, an as heich as a princess. I heistit tae gie her ma seat in the airm-cheer. Na, she turnit up her neb at ma mainners. Earnshaw heistit, an aa, an tellt her cam tae the settle, an sit aside the ingle: he wis shair she wis geelt tae the bane.

“I hivv bin geelt a month an mair,” she answert, risting on the wird as scornfu as she cwid.

‘An she fessit a cheer fer hersel, an pit it a bittie awaa fae baith o us. Hivvin sat tull she wis warm, she begood tae luik roon, an fun a puckle buiks on the dresser; she wis instanter apon her feet again, raxin tae win tae them: but they were ower heich. Her cousin, aifter watchin her on-gyaans a filie, in the eyn caaed up the nirve tae hilp her; she haudit oot her frock, an he fullt it wi the first that cam tae haun.

‘Thon wis a gryt wey forrit for the loon. She didnae thunk him; still, he felt guid that she hidd lat him hilp, an seyit tae staun ahin as she luikit at them, an e’en tae ben doon an pint oot fit strickit his funcy in a feow of the aul picters which they hidd; nor wis he pit aff bi the sansach wey in which she tittit the page fae his finger: he contintit himsel wi gaun a bittie farrer back an luikin at her insteed o the buik. She wint on readin, or sikkin fer summin tae read. His tent wis taen ower bittie bi bittie bi her bonny curls: her phizog he cwidna see, an she cwidna see him. An, mebbe, nae richt kenning fit he deed, but attrackit like a bairn tae a caunel, syne he wint fae gaakin tae touchin; he pit oot his haun an strakkit ae curl, as saftly gin it were a burd. He micht hae pit a knife intae her neck, she stairtit roon in sic a takkin.

“Gang awaa this meenit! Foo daur ye touch me? Fit wey are ye stappin there?” she skirlit, in an ugsome vyce. “I canna thole ye! I’ll gang up e stairs again, gin ye cam near haun me.”

‘Mr. Hareton loupit back, luikin as gypit as he cwid dee: he sat doon in the settle affa quaet, an she wint on turnin ower her buiks anidder hauf ooer; in the hinner eyn, Earnshaw cam ower, an fuspert tae me.

‘Will ye spier fer her tae read tae us, Zillah? I’m scunnert o deein nocht; an I div like—I cwid like tae heer her! Dinna say I wintit it, but spier for yersel.”

“Mr. Hareton wisses ye widd read tae us, ma’am,” I said, richt awaa. “He’d takk it verra couthie—he’d be muckle obleeged.”

‘She frooned; an luikin up, answert “Mr. Hareton, an the hale jing bang o ye, will be guid eneuch tae unnerstaun that I rejeck ony makkin on tae be couthie ye hiv the heepocrisy tae shaw! I canna thole ye, an will hae naethin tae say tae ony o ye! Fan I widd hae gien ma life fer ae couthie wird, e’en tae see een o yer faces, ye aa keppit aff. But I winna girn tae ye! I’m dreevit doon here bi the caul; nae edder tae ameese ye or hae a guid time wi ye.”

“Fit cwid I hae deen?” begood Earnshaw. “Foo wis it ma wyte?”

“Och! ye are an excepshun,” reponit Mrs. Heathcliff. “I nivver tynt sic a wirry as ye.”

“But I pit forrit mair than aince, an spiered,” he said, kittlin up at her ill-trickit weys, “I spiered Mr. Heathcliff tae lat me wake fer ye—”

“Wheesht! I’ll gang oot o doors, or onywey, raither than hae yer naisty vyce in ma lug!” said ma leddy.

‘Hareton mummlit she micht gang tae hell, fer him! an unslingin his gun, haudit himsel fae his Sunday dargs nae langer. He spikkit noo, freely eneuch; an she preesently saa fit tae gang back tae bein aa her leen: but the frist hid taen haud, an, in spite o her proodness, she wis garred tae pit up wi us, mair an mair. Hooivver, I makkit shair there shid be nae farrer jamphin at ma guid naiter: ivver syne, I hiv bin as aff-takkin as hersel; an she his nae luvver or liker amang us: an she daesnae deseerve een; fer, lat them spikk the smaaest wird tae her, an she’ll repone back withoot respeck o ony een. She’ll girn at the maister himsel, an as guid as daurs him tae dird her; an the mair hairm she gets, the mair ill-naitert she grows.’

At first, on heerin this accoont fae Zillah, I makkit up ma myne tae leave ma poseeshuns, takk a cottage, an get Kitty tae cam an bide wi me: but Mr. Heathcliff widd as seen alloo that as he widd set up Hareton in his ain hoose; an I cin see nae wey, at preesent, oonless she cwid mairry again; an thon is nae summin that’s doon tae me tae arreenge.

Sae eynit Mrs. Dean’s story. Naewithstaunnin the doctor’s prophecy, I am faist recoverin strinth; an though it be ainly the second wikk in January, I am gaun tae gang oot on horseback in a day or twa, an ridin ower tae Whudderin Heichts, tae inform ma landlord that I will spen the neist sax month in London; an, if he likes, he may luik oot for anidder tenant tae takk the bield aifter October. I widdnae thole anidder winter here fer onythin.

CHAPTER EEN AN THIRTY

MAISTER LOCKWOOD GANGS AWAA

Yestreen wis bricht, wi nae win, an freesty. I wint tae the Heichts as I said I widd: ma hoosekeeper priggit wi me tae cairry a wee note fae her tae her young leddy, an I didnae say na, fer the wirthy wumman didnae see naethin unco in fit she spiert fer. The front door steed apen, but the ootside yett wis sneckit, as at ma laist veesit; I chappit an cried Earnshaw fae amang the gairden-beds; he uncheyned it, an I wint in. The fella is as buirdly a cintra loon as nott be seen. I taen a guid luik at him this time; but syne he daesnae makk onythin o hissel.

I spiered gin Mr. Heathcliff were at hame? He answert, Na; but he widd be in at denner-time. It wis elivven o’clock, an I tellt him I wis gaan tae gang in an weyt fer him; at which he instanter dingit doon his tools an cam wi me, tae kep an ee on fit I wis deein, nae tae ack the host.

We wint in thegither; Kitty wis there, makkin hersel eesefu in gettin riddy a pucklie vegetables fer the meal tae cam; she luikit mair mumpy an nae sae speerited than fan I saa her erst. She hairdly heistit her een tae luik at me, an wint on wi her darg takkin nae tent tae mainners as afore; nivver returnin ma boo an guid mornin bi the slichtest repone.

‘She daesnae seem so lichtsome,’ I thocht, ‘as Mrs. Dean widd hae me tae believe. She’s bonny, it is true; but nae an angel.’

Earnshaw dourly tellt her tae takk her things tae the kitchie. ‘Takk them yersel,’ she said, shivvin them fae her as seen as she hidd deen; an gaan ower tae a steel bi the windae, faar she begood tae makk figures o burds an beasts oot o the neep-parins in her lap. I wint tae her, makkin on I wis wintin a luik at the gairden; an, as I funcied, swackly drappit Mrs. Dean’s note on tae her knee, nae seen bi Hareton—but she spiered alood, ‘Fit is thon?’ An cowpit it aff.

‘A letter fae yer aul frien, the hoosekeeper at the Grange,’ I answert; fair kittled at her shawin up ma couthie deed, an frichtent lest it shid be thocht a meessive o ma ain. She widd glaidly hae gaithert it up fan she heerd that, but Hareton won tae it; he yarkit an pit it in his weskit, sayin Mr. Heathcliff shid luik at it erst. At yon, Kitty seelently turnit her face fae us, an, gey steelthily, draait oot her hunky an dabbit her een; an her cousin, aifter warslin a filie tae kep doon his safter feelins, puued oot the letter an dingit it on the fleer aside her, as ull-mainnert as he cwid. Catherine catcht an read it throu feerichly; syne she pit a feow questions tae me aboot the fowk an the beasts o her aul hame; an gaakin taewirds the hills, mummlit tae hersel:

‘I shid like tae be ridin Minny doon there! I shid like tae be climmin up there! Oh! I’m weariet—I’m *stalled*, Hareton!’ An she pit her bonny heid back agin the sill, wi hauf a gant an hauf a souch, an faait intae a luik o abstrackit sorra: nedder carin nor kennin fither we were luikin at her.

‘Mrs. Heathcliff,’ I said, aifter reistin a filie withoot spikkin, ‘ye dinna ken that I am acquant wi ye? I ken ye sae weel that I think it unco ye winna cam an spikk tae me. Ma hoosekeeper is nivver weariet o spikkin aboot an fraisin ye; an she’ll be affa disappintit gin I cam back wi nae claik o or fae ye, excep that ye were gien her letter an said naethin!’

She luikit like she wis winnerin at this spikk, an spiered: ‘Daes Ellen like ye?’

‘Aye, gey weel,’ I reponit, heesitatinly.

‘Ye maun tell her,’ she wint on, ‘that I widd scrieve till her, but I hiv naethin tae scrieve wi: nae even a buik fae which I micht rive a leaf.’

‘Nae buiks!’ I skirlit. ‘Foo div ye dee tae bide here withoot them? gin I may takk the leebirty tae spier. Though I hiv a muckle library, I’m aften affa dowie at the Grange; takk ma buiks awaa, an I shid gang clean gyte!’

‘I wis ayewis readin, fan I hidd them,’ said Kitty; ‘an Mr. Heathcliff nivver reads; sae he taen it intae his heid ta connach ma buiks. I hivnae hidd a luik o een fer wikks. Ainly eence, I rakit throu Joseph’s puckle buiks on theology, tae his gryte aggravation; an aince, Hareton, I cam apon a secret bourach in yer chaumer—eens in Latin an Greek, an eens o tales an poetry: aa aul friens. I brocht the laist here—an ye gaithert them, as a pyot gaithers siller speens, fer jist the luve o stailin! They are o nae eese tae ye; or else ye hoddit them in the ull speerit that, as ye canna ameese yersel wi them, naebody else will. Mebbe *yer* envy coonselled Mr. Heathcliff tae takk awaa ma treeshures? But I hiv maist o them scrievit on ma myne an printit in my hert, an ye canna takk them awaa fae me!’

Earnshaw wint reid fan his cousin makkit it kennt aboot the buiks he hidd hodden awaa, an stammert it wisnae the trowth.

‘Mr. Hareton wints tae larn mair,’ I said, camin tae his rescue. ‘He isnae envious, but *wints tae be mair like ye*. He’ll be a clivver scholar in a feow eers.’

‘An he wints me ta gang doon tae a dunderheid, if noo,’ answert Kitty. ‘Aye, I heer him seyin tae spell an read tae himsel, an bonny mistaaks he makks! I wiss ye widd repeat Chevy Chase as ye deed yestreen: it wis by-ordinaar ameesin. I heerd ye; an I heerd ye turnin ower the dickshunary tae sikk oot the hard wirds, an syne sweerin because ye cwidnae read fit they said!’

The halflin eevidintly thocht it nae richt at aa that he shid be lached at fer nae kennin owt, an syne lached at fer seyin tae dee summin aboot it. I hidd the verra thocht; an, minin Mrs. Dean’s tale o fan he first seyit tae impreeve himself fae the ull wey he hidd bin brocht up, I observit ‘But, Mrs. Heathcliff, we hiv ilky een hidd tae stert somewey, an ilky een heitert an stytert on the doorcheek; hidd oor dominies lached at us, we widd hivv aye bin heiterin and styterin an aa.’ ‘Och!’ she reponit, ‘I dinna wiss tae haud him back: still, he his nae richt tae takk fit is mine, an makk it gypit tae me wi his affa mistakks an the affa wey he spikks them! Thon buiks, baith prose an verse, are dear tae me throu idder conneckshuns; an I dinna like tae hae them cassen doon in his mou! Forbye, o aa, he his taen oot the eens that I luvv the maist tae gang ower, as gin he wis deein it deeleeberately.’

Hareton’s cheest heezit in seelence a meenit: he wirkit sair aneth a sinse o mortifiet an wraith, which it wis nae aisy wirk tae kep doon. I rase an, fae a gentlemanly idea o lichtenin his affront, wint an steed in the doorwey, luikin oot. He follied ma, an wint oot o the chaumer; but preesently cam back in, haudin hauf a dizzen buiks in his hauns, which he cassen intae Kitty’s lap, skirlin ‘Takk them! I nivver wint tae heer, or read, or think o them again!’

‘I winna hae them noo,’she answert. ‘I will conneck them wi ye, an hate them.’

She apent een that cwid bi seen tae hae bin aften turnt ower, an read a bittie in the draalin vyce o a body that hidd jist stairtit tae larn; syne lached, an cassit it fae her. ‘An list,’ she wint on, needlin him, stairtin a verse o an aul ballad in the verra same wey.

But he wis prood an widnae thole ony farrer termentin: I heerd, an nae aathegither creeticisin o it, a wheek gien tae her ill-trickit tongue. The wee vratch hidd deen her utmaist tae dee ull tae her cousin’s roch though aisily kittlit feelins, an a pheesical faain oot wis the ainly wey he hidd o getting his ain back, an repeyin its effecks on the een faa stertit it. He aifterwards gaithered the buiks an cassit them on the lowe. I saa in his coontenance foo ull it wis fer him tae dee thon. I funciet that as they brunt, he mindit the pleesure they hidd aariddy impairtit, an the triumph an ivver-growin pleesure he hidd luikit forrit tae fae readin them; an I funcied I jaloused foo it encooraged his secret larnin an aa. He hidd bin contint wi his daily darg an orra ameesemints, tull he cam apon Kitty. Begeck at her scorn, an howp o her guid opeenion were his furst kittlin tae heicher interaists; an insteed o makkin him siccar fae een an winnin him tae the idder, his endeevours tae heist himsel hidd gien jist the opposeet ootcam.

‘Aye that’s aa the guid that sic a breet as ye cin get fae them!’ skirled Kitty, sookin her blaadit lip, an luikin at the lowe wi feerious een.

‘Ye’d *better* haud yer tongue, noo,’ he answert fiercely.

An his feerichness stappit farrer spikkin; he wakkit faist tae the entrance, faar I makkit wey fer him tae gang by. But ere he hid gaen ower the door-stanes, Mr. Heathcliff, camin up the caasie, encoontert him, an takkin haud o his shooder spiered ‘Fits tae dee noo, ma loon?’

‘Nocht, nocht,’ he said, an brakkit awaa tae think on his sorra an ragin aa his leen.

Heathcliff gaakit aifter him, an souchit.

‘It will be unco gin I ack agin masel,’ he mummlit, nae kennin that I wis ahin him. ‘But fan I luik fer his faither in his face, I fun *her* ivvery day mair! Foo the divvil is he sae like? I cin hairdly thole tae see him.’

He binnt his een tae the grun, an wakkit dourly in. There wis a ristless, wirriet luik on his coontenince. I hidd nivver saait there afore; an he luikit skinnier in pairson. His dother-in-laa, on seein him throu the windae, instanter rinnit tae the kitchie, sae that I bade aleen.

‘I’m glaid to see ye oot o doors again, Mr. Lockwood,’ he said, in repone tae ma greetin; ‘fae ma ain raisons pairtly: I dinna think I cwid reedily gie ye fit ye’ve tynt in this dreich cintraside. I’ve winnert mair than eence fit brocht ye here.’

‘I jist takkit a gee, I fear, sir,’ wis ma answer; ‘or else a gee that is gaun tae speerit me awaa. I will set aff fer London neist wikk; an I maun gie ye warnin that I’m nae likely tae kep on Thrushcross Grange ayont the twal months I greed tae takk it. I trow I willnae bide there ony mair.’

‘Och, indaid; ye’re weariet o bein haudin awaa fae the warld, are ye?’ quo he. ‘But gin ye be camin tae prig wi me aboot peyin fer a bield you winna be bidin in, yer traivel is eeseless: I nivver gie in aboot takkin fit I’m due fae onybody.’

‘I’m camin to prig wi ye aboot naethin,’ I skirled, ma birss fair up. ‘Shid ye wiss it, I’ll pey up noo,’ an I draait ma note-buik fae ma pouch.

‘Na, na,’ he reponit, cweely; ‘ye’ll leave eneuch ahin tae cover yer debts, gin ye dinna cam back: I’m nae in sic a hurry. Set doon an takk yer denner wi us; a guest that is siccar fae veesitin again cin eesually be makkit weelcam. Kitty fess the things in: faar are ye?’

Kitty cam in again, haudin a tray o knives an forks.

‘Ye may hae yer denner wi Joseph,’ mummlit Heathcliff, aside, ‘an bide in the kitchie tull he is awaa.’

She deed fit she wis tellt richt awaa: mebbe she wisnae timptit tae dee wrang. Bidin amang gypes an dour fowk, she maist like cwidnae be thunkfu fer a better class o fowk fan she trysts wi them.

Wi Mr. Heathcliff, allagrooze, froonin an blaik brooed, on the ae haun, an Hareton, nae spikkin ae wird, on the idder, I makkit a richt drumly meal, an wissit them fareweel airly. I widd hae gaen oot bi the back wey, to get a laist luik o Kitty an kittle up aul Joseph; but Hareton wis tellt tae fess up ma horse, an ma host himsel wint wi me tae the door, sae I cwidnae saitisfie ma wiss.

‘Foo dreich life is ower in thon hoose!’ I refleckit, files ridin doon the road. ‘Foo mair romantic than a tale o a seely wicht it widd hae bin fer Mrs. Linton Heathcliff, hidd she an I hidd cam thegither, as her guid nurse ettlit, an taen aff thegither intae the mair lichtsome on-gyaans o the toon!’

CHAPTER TWA AN THIRTY

MONY CHEYNGES

1802.—

This September I wis invitit tae gang sheetin on the muirs o a frien in the north, an on ma traivels tae far he bade, I oot o the blae cam within fifteen mile o Gimmerton. The ostler at a roadside public-hoose wis haudin a backet o watter fer ma drouthy horses, fan a cairt o affa green corn, jist hairstit, wint by, an he remarkit ‘Yon’s fae Gimmerton, nah! They’re ayewis three wikk’ aifter idder fowk wi’ the hairst.’

‘Gimmerton?’ I repeatit—ma hame in thon bield hidd aariddy grown like a dwaum fae hine awaa. ‘Ach! I ken. Foo far is it fae this?’

‘Mebbe fowerteen mile ower the hills; an a roch road,’ he answert.

Aa o a sudden an ettlin taen haud o me tae veesit Thrushcross Grange. It wis afore neen, an I thocht that I micht as weel spen the nicht aneth ma ain reef as in a chynge hoose. Forbye, I cwid aisily alloo a day tae sort oot maitters wi ma laanlord, an sae nae hae the tribble o traivellin back tae the neeborhood again. Hivvin ristit a filie, I tellt ma seervint tae spier the wey tae the village; an, though oor beasts were sair made an wabbit, we were there in aboot three ooers.

I left him there, an wint doon the glen aa ma leen. The grey kirk luikit greyer, an the lanely kirkyaird lanelier. I cwid makk oot a muir-sheep crappin the short girse on the mools. It was swate, grand wither—ower het fer traivellin; but the heat didnae hinner me fae takkin plaishure in the delichtfu cintraside abune an alow: hidd I saa it airlier in August, I’m shair it widd hae timptit me tae spen a month amang its quaetness. In winter naethin mair dreich, in summer naethin mair hivvinly, than yon glens shut in bi hills, an yon cantie bauld swallins o hidder.

I won tae the Grange afore sunset, an chappit tae be lat in; but the faimly hidd taen tae the back o the hoose, I jalousit, bi ae thin, blae threid o rick, birlin fae the kitchie chimblay, an they didnae heer. I rodit intae the coort. Aneth the porch, a quine o nine or ten sat wyvin, an an aul wifie reistit on the hoosesteps, thochtfully feuchin a cutty.

‘Is Mrs. Dean in the hoose?’ I spiered o the aul wife.

‘Mistress Dean? Na!’ she answert, ‘she daesnae bide here: she’s up at the Heichts.’

‘Are ye the hoosekeeper, syne?’ I wint on.

‘Aye, ah kep the hoose,’ she reponit.

‘Weel, I’m Mr. Lockwood, the maister. Are there ony chaumers I cin bide in, I winner? I wiss tae bide ae nicht.’

‘The maister!’ she taen a richt begeck. ‘Fit? Faivver kennt ye were camin? Yah shid hae sennit wird. They hiv nocht nedder dry nor eesefu aboot the bield: nocht there isnae!’

She cassit doon her cuttie an breengit in, the quine folliet, an I wint in an aa; seein that fit she said wis true, an forbye, that I hidd aamaist connached her wits bi turnin up withoot lattin onybody ken, I tellt her tae puu herself thegither. I widd gang oot fer a stravaig; an, jist noo she maun sey tae get riggit a neuk o a sittin-room fer me tae hae ma mait, an a chaumer tae sleep in. Nae sweypin an dustin, ainly a guid lowe an dry sheets were nott. She seemit weelin tae dee her best; though she shivvit the ingle-besom intae the grates in mistakk fer the poker, an miseesit a puckle idder things o her hoosehold : but I left her till it, leavin her tae fun a ristin-place fer me fan I cam hame. Whudderin Heichts wis faar I wis ettlin tae gang. An aifterthocht brocht me back, fan I had quittit the coort.

‘Aa weel at the Heichts?’ I spierit o the wumman.

‘Ach, fer aa I ken!’ she answert, skitin awaa wi a pan o het shunners.

I widd hae spiered fit wey Mrs. Dean hidd gaen awaa fae the Grange, but it wisnae richt tae haud her back in the mids o sic ongyaans, sae I turnit awaa an wint stracht oot, daunnerin leeshurly alang, wi the lowe o the sun drappin doon ahin, an the douce glory o a risin meen in front—een fadin, an the idder brichtenin—as I quittit the park, an climmit the steeny by-roadie takkin aff tae Mr. Heathcliff’s hoose. Afore I cam in sicht o it, aa that bade o day wis a straik o amber licht alang the wast: but I cwid see ivvery chuckie on the roddie, an ivvery blade o girse, bi thon magneeficint meen. I hidd nedder tae clumb the yett nor tae chap—it apent tae ma haun. Thon is an impreevemint, I thocht. An I saa anidder, wi ma neb; a swate guff o stocks an waaflooers waftit on the air fae amang the hamely fruit-trees.

Baith doors an windaes were apen; an yit, as is eesual in a coal-districk, a fine reid lowe leet up the chimbley: the eesedom which the ee takks fae it alloos mair heat tae be tholed. But the hoose o Whudderin Heichts is sae muckle that the fowk that bide there hiv eneuch space fer withdraaain oot o its effecks; an sae fit fowk there were hidd reistit nae far fae een o the windaes. I cwid baith see them an heer them spikk afore I wint in, an luikit an listed; bein meeved tae dee thon bi a sinse o baith keeriosity an envy, that growit as I scuttert.

‘Contermashious!’ said a vyce as douce as a siller bell. ‘That fer the third time, ye dunderheid! I’m nae gaun tae tell ye again. Mine, or I’ll puu yer hair!’

‘Contermashious, syne,’ reponit anidder, in deep but saftent tones. ‘An noo, buss me, fer mindin sae weel.’

‘Na, read it ower furst correckly, withoot ae mistakk.’

The male spikker begood tae read: he wis a young chiel, respeckably claithed an seatit at a table, hivvin a buik afore him. His buirdly features alowe wi plaishure, an his een kep ettlin tae wanner fae the page tae a wee fite haun ower his shooder, which mindit him bi a smairt wheek on the chikk, fanivver its owner deteckit sic signs o nae takkin tent. Its owner steed ahin; her licht, shinin ringlets, noo an then a mixter-maxter, wi his broon luiks, as she binnit tae owersee his larnin; an her phizog—it wis licky he cwidnae see her phizog, or he widd nivver hae bin sae steedy. I cwid; an I bit ma lip mauger o haein cassen awaa the chunce I micht hae hidd o deein summin aside gaakin at its daiverin bonniness.

The darg wis deen, nae withoot farrer mistakks; but the scholar spiered fer his rewaard, an wis giein at least five busses; which, hooivver, he couthiely gied back. Syne they cam tae the door, an fae their newsin I jalousit they were aboot to gang oot an hae a daunner on the muirs. I thocht I shid be doomit in Hareton Earnshaw’s hert, gin nae in his mou, tae the laichest pit in Heel gin I shawed masel in his neeborhood syne; an feelin affa orra an nesty, I molloched roon tae sikk a siccar bield in the kitchie. There wis an aisy wey in on thon side an aa; an at the door sat ma aul frien Nelly Dean, shewin an singin a sang; which wis aften interruptit fae within bi maroonjus wirds o scorn an narra-mindedness, uddert in a far fae musical vyce.

‘I’d raither, bi th hauf, hiv them sweerin in ma lugs fae morn tae nicht, nor hae tae list tae ye hooanivver!’ said the body in the kitchie, in repone tae an unheerd spikk o Nelly’s. ‘It’s fair a begeck, that I canna appen the blessit Buik, but ye set up them glories tae Aul Nick, an aa the coorse wikkitnesses that ivver were born intae the warld! Och! ye’re a richt nowt; an she’s anidder; an thon peer loon ’ll be tynt atween ye. Peer loon!’ he addit, wi a main; ‘he’s witchit: I’m shair on it. Och, Lord, judge them, fer there’s nedder laa nor justice amang oor rulers!’

‘Na! or we shid be reistin in a lowe o kindlin, I jalouse,’ retortit the singer. ‘But weesht, aul chiel, an read yer Bible like a Christian, an nivver myne me. This is “Fairy Annie’s Waddin”—a bonny tune—it gangs wi a dunce.’

Mrs. Dean wis aboot tae begood again, fan I cam up; an kennin it wis me richt awaa, she loupit tae her feet, skirlin ‘Michty me, bliss ye, Mr. Lockwood! Foo cwid ye think o camin back in this wey? Aa’s shut up at Thrushcross Grange. Ye shid hae lat us ken!’

‘I’ve sortit oot tae be pit up there, for as lang as I will bide,’ I answert. ‘I gang awaa again the morn. An fit wey are ye meevit here, Mrs. Dean? tell me thon.’

‘Zillah wint awaa, an Mr. Heathcliff wissed me tae cam, seen aifter ye wint tae London, an bide tull ye cam back. But, step in, widd ye! Hiv ye wakkit fae Gimmerton this evenin?’

‘Fae the Grange,’ I reponit; ‘an files they makk riddy a chaumer there, I wint tae feenish ma buzness wi yer maister; because I dinna think o haein anidder chunce in a hurry.’

‘Fit buzness, sir?’ said Nelly, shawin me intae the hoose. ‘He’s gaen oot at preesint, an winna be back seen.’

‘Aboot the rent,’ I answert.

‘Och! syne it is Mrs. Heathcliff you maun pey,’ she observit; ‘or raither wi me. She hisnae larnit tae luik aifter her affairs if noo, an I ack fer her: there’s naebody else.’

I taen a richt begeck.

‘Ach! Ye hivnae heerd o Heathcliff’s deith, I see,’ she wint on.

‘Heathcliff deid!’ I skraiched. ‘Foo lang syne?’

‘Three months syne: but set yersel doon, an lat me takk yer hat, an I’ll tell ye aa aboot it. Stap, ye hiv hidd naethin tae ate, hivv ye?’

‘I wint naethin: I hiv spierit fer supper at hame. Ye sit yersel doon an aa. I nivver thocht o his deein! Lat me heer foo it cam tae pass. Ye say ye dinna expeck them back fer a filie—the young fowk?’

‘Na—I have tae gie them a ragin ivvery evenin fer their stravaigin late at nicht: but they dinna gie a docken. At least, hae a drap o oor aul ale; it will dee ye guid: ye luik wabbit.’

She hastent tae fess it afore I cwid say na, an I heerd Joseph spierin fither ‘it wisnae affaa that she shid hae folliers at her time o life? An syne, tae fess them joogs oot o the maister’s cellar! He widd hae an affa begeck gin he bade an saa it.’

She didnae bide tae spikk back, but re-entert in a meenit, cairryin a reamin siller pint, faa’s contints I reezit wi snod eernestness. An aifterwirds she tellt me the rist o Heathcliff’s history. He hidd an ‘unco’ eyn, as she pit it.

I wis caaed fer tae Whudderin Heichts, within a fortnicht o yer leavin us, she said; an I wis seely, fer Kitty’s sake. Aifter ma furst spikk wi her, I wis fair dumfoonert, richt sorrafae: she hidd cheynged sae muckle syne she wis taen awaa. Mr. Heathcliff didnae tell me fit his raisons fer takkin a new myne aboot ma camin here; he ainly tellt me he winted me, an he was seek o seein Kitty: I maun makk the wee parlour ma sittin-room, an kep her wi me. It wis eneuch gin he hidd tae see her aince or twice a day. She seemit seely at the wey this wis deen; an, bittie bi bittie, without onybody seein, I taen ower a hellock o buiks, an idder trock, that hidd gien her ameesemint at the Grange; an fraisit masel we shid gang alang aaricht. Thon noshun didnae laist lang. Kitty, contintit at furst, in a wee filie growit ill-naitert an ristless. Fer ae thing, she wisnae alooed oot o the gairden, an it frettit her sairly tae be haudit tae its narra boons as spring draait on; for anidder, in folliein the hoose, I wis garred tae gang awaa fae her aften, an she girned o bidin aa her leen: she widd raither faa oot wi Joseph in the kitchie than reist at peace on her ain. I wisnae bathered bi their faain oot: but Hareton aften hidd tae sikk the kitchie an aa, fan the maister wintit tae hae the hoose tae himsel! an though tae stert wi she edder wint oot fan he cam in, or quaetly jyned in ma on-gyaans, an widnae spikk aboot him or tae him—an though he wis ayewis as dour an seelent as he cwid—aifter a filie, she cheynged the wey she ackit, an cwidnae lat him aleen: spikkin at him; spikkin aboot foo gypit he wis an foo sweir; winnerin foo he cwid thole the life he lived—foo he cwid sit a hale evenin gaakin intae the lowe, an doverin.

‘He’s jist like a dug, is he nae, Ellen?’ she aince observit, ‘or a cairt-horse? He daes his wirk, eats his mait, an sleeps aa the time! Fit a dreich teem myne he maun hae! Div ye ivver dwaam, Hareton? An, gin ye div, fit is it aboot? But ye canna spikk tae me!’

Syne she luikit at him; but he widd nedder apen his mou nor luik again.

‘He’s, mebbe, dwaumin noo,’ she wint on. ‘He grueit his shooder as Juno grues hers. Spier at him, Ellen.’

‘Mr. Hareton will spier the maister tae sen you up e stairs, gin ye dinna behave!’ quo I. He hiddnae ainly grueit his shooder but steekit his nieve, as gin timptit to eese it.

‘I ken fit wey Hareton nivver spikks, fan I am in the kitchie,’ she skirled, anidder time ‘He is feart I will lach at him. Ellen, fit div ye think? He begood tae larn himself tae read aince; an, because I lached, he brunt his buiks, an drappit it: wis he nae a feel?’

‘Werenae ye ill-trickit?’ I said; ‘answer me thon.’

‘Mebbe I wis,’ she wint on; ‘but I didnae expeck him tae be sae gypit. Hareton, gin I gied ye a buik, widd ye takk it noo? I’ll sey!’

She pit een she hidd bin readin on his haun; he cowpit it aff, and mummlit, gin she didnae gie ower, he widd brakk her neck.

‘Weel, I will pit it here,’ she said, ‘in the table-draaer; an I’m gaun tae bed.’

Then she fuspert me tae watch fither he touched it, an wint awaa. But he widnae cam nar it; an sae I tellt her in the mornin, tae her gryte disappintmint. I saa she wis sorra fer his dourness an sweirty: her inner vyce tickit her aff fer frichtenin him aff impreevin himsel: she hid deen it ower weel. But her clivverness wis at wirk tae dee summin aboot it: files I ironed, or wint aboot idder sic dargs as I cwidnae weel dee in the parlour, she widd fess ilka lichtsome buik an read it alood tae me. Fan Hareton wis there, she widd aye stap fer a filie in an interaistin pairt, an left the buik lyin aboot: thon she deed aa the time; but he wis as thraan as a cuddy, an, insteed o raxin at her bait, in weet wither he taen tae feuchin wi Joseph; an they sat like automatons, een on ilky side o the ingle, the aul body happily ower deef tae unnerstaun her wikkit styte as he widd hae caaed it, the younger deein his best to seem tae nae takk tent. On fine evenins the latter follied his sheetin ootins, an Kitty ganted an souched, an termentiti me tae spikk tae her, an rinnit aff intae the coort or gairden the meenit I begood; an, as a laist resource, grat, an said she wis fair ferfochen o livin: her life wis eeseless.

Mr. Heathcliff, faa wintit mair an mair tae be aa his leen, hidd aamaist cassen Earnshaw oot o his chaumer. Awin tae a mishanter at the stairt o March, he hidd tae bide a filie in the kitchie. His gun rivit files he wis oot on the hills bi himsel; a skelf cut his airm, an he tynt muckle bleed afore he cwid win hame. Syne, he hidd tae bide quaetly at the ingle, tull he makkit it up again. It suitit Kitty tae hae him there: at ony rate, it makkit her hate her room up e stairs mair than ivver: an she widd garr me tae fun oot buszness alow, that she micht cam wi me.

On Pace Monday, Joseph wint tae Gimmerton fair wi a feow kye; an, in the aifterneen, I wis eident gettin up linen in the kitchie. Earnshaw sat, dour as ivver, at the chimbley neuk and ma wee mistress wis beguilin an idle ooer wi draain picters on the windae-panes, edder giein herself ameesemint wi smored bitties o sang, an fuspert ootbursts o wirds, an quick luiks o ull-will an ill-naiter in the deereckshun o her cousin, faa steedfaistly feuchit, an luikit intae the lowe. Bein tellt that I cwid dee wi her nae langer staunin in ma licht, she taen hersel tae the ingle. I didnae pey muckle tent tae fit she wis daein, but, preesintly, I heerd her begood ‘I’ve fun oot, Hareton, that I wint—that I’m glaid—that I shidd like ye tae be ma cousin noo, gin ye hidnae grown sae ill-naitert tae me, an sae roch.’

Hareton didnae repone.

‘Hareton, Hareton, Hareton! Div ye heer?’ she cairriet on.

‘Awaa wi’ ye!’ he grumphit, wi unbinnin strungeness.

‘Lat me takk thon cutty,’ she said, pittin oot her hand cannily an takkin it fae his mou.

Afore he cwid sey tae get it back, it wis brakkit, an ahin the lowe. He sweerit at her an nabbit anidderr een.

‘Stap,’ she skirled, ‘ye maun list tae me furst; an I canna spikk files yon cloods are rickin in ma face.’

‘Will ye gang tae the divvil!’ he skirled, feerishly, ‘an lat me be!’

‘Na,’ she cairriet on, ‘I winna: I dinna ken fit tae dee tae makk ye spikk tae me; an ye are set on nae unnerstaunin. Fan I caa ye gypit, I dinna mean onythin: I dinna mean that I canna thole ye. Cam, ye will takk tent o me, Hareton: ye are ma cousin, an ye will takk tent o me.’

‘I will hae naethin tae dee wi ye an yer clarty prood weys, an yer heelish geckin on-gyaans!’ he answert. ‘I’ll gang tae hell, body an sowel, afore I luik sideyweys aifter ye again. Get oot o the wey, noo, this meenit!’

Kitty frooned, an wint back tae the windae-seat chaain her lip, an seyin, bi hummin an unco tune, tae hod that she wis gaan tae greet.

‘Ye shid be friens with yer cousin, Mr. Hareton,’ I brakkit in, ‘syne she is wae fer her impidence. It widd dee ye muckle guid: it widd makk ye anidder chiel tae hae her fer a frien.’

‘A frien!’ he skraiched; ‘fan she canna thole me, an daesnae think me fit tae dicht her sheen! Na, gin it makkit me a king, I’d nae be gekkit fer sikkin her guidweell ony mair.’

‘It isnae I faa canna thole ye, it is ye faa canna thole me!’ grat Kitty, nae langer hoddin her tribble. ‘Ye hate me as muckle as Mr. Heathcliff daes, an mair.’

‘Ye’re a damned leear,’ begood Earnshaw: ‘fit wey hiv I makkit him rage, bi takkin yer pairt, syne, a hunner times? an thon fan ye turnit yer neb up at me an thocht lichtfu o me, an— Go on kittlin me, an I’ll wakk in yonder, an say ye worriet me oot o the kitchie!’

‘I didna ken ye taen ma pairt,’ she reponit, dryin her een; ‘an I wis meeserable an soor at aabody; but noo I thunk ye, an prig wi ye tae forgie me: fit cin I dee asides?’

She wint back tae the ingle, an frankly raxit oot her haun. He blaikent an glowert like a thunner-clood, an kep his nieves tichtly steekit, an gaakit at the grun. Kitty, bi eenstinckt, maun hae jaloused he wis bein thraan an contermashious, an nae shawin dislike that dreevit the wey he wis ackin; fer, aifter switherin a meenit, she bennit doon an gied his chikk a douce buss. The wee limmer thocht I hidnae seen her, an, draain back, she wint back tae staunin bi the windae, quite doucely. I shakkit ma heid tae shaw I didnae like fit she wis deein, an syne she wint reid an fuspert ‘Weel! Fit shid I hae deen, Ellen? He widdnae shakk hauns, an he widdnae luik: I maun shaw him ilky wey that I like him—that I wint tae be friens.’

Fither the buss won ower Hareton, I canna tell: he wis affa canny, fer a feow meenits, that we shidnae see his face an fan he deed heist it, he wis fair bumbazit faar tae pit his een.

Kitty wis eident wrappin a graan buik snodly in fite paper, an haein tied it wi a suppie ribbon, an addressit it tae ‘Maister Hareton Earnshaw’, she wintit me tae taak the preesent an cairry it tae the een it wis fer.

‘An tell him, gin he’ll takk it, I’ll cam an larn him tae read it richt,’ she said; ‘an, gin he disnae wint it, I’ll gang up e stairs, an nivver terment him again.’

I cairriet it, an repeatit fit she said; airchily watchit bi ma employer. Hareton widdnae apen his fingers, sae I pit it on his knee. He didnae shiv it aff, edder. I wint back tae ma wirk. Kitty leanit her heid an airms on the table, tull she heerd the slicht reeshle o the coverin bein taen aff; syne she stole awaa, an quaetly seatit hersel aside her cousin. He shakkit, an his face wis in a lowe: aa his orra weys an aa his dourness hidd gien awaa: he hidd nae spunk, at furst, tae udder a wird in repone tae her questionin luik, an her mummlit priggin.

‘Say ye forgie me, Hareton, dee. Ye cin makk me sae seely bi spikkin yon wee wird.’

He mummlit summin I cwidnae heer.

‘An ye’ll be ma frien?’ spiered Kitty.

‘Naa, ye’ll be affrontit o me ivvery day o yer life,’ he answert; ‘an the mair affrontit, the mair ye ken me; an I canna thole it.’

‘So ye winna be ma frien?’ she said, smilin as swate as honey, an creepin close tee.

I owerheerd nae farrer spikkin I cwid makk oot, but, on luikin roon again, I saa twa sic seely coontenances binnit ower the page o the buik she hidd gien him, that I didnae doot the traity hidd bin appreevit on baith sides; an the faes were, fae then on, richt guid friens.

The wirk they luikit at wis fu o bonny picters; an yon an faar they were wis lichtsome eneuch tae kep them unmeeved tull Joseph cam hame. He, peer chiel, taen an affa begeck at the sicht o Kitty reistit on the same bench wi Hareton Earnshaw, leanin her haun on his shooder; an bumbazit at his faavrit tholin her aside him: it bathered him ower muckle tae spikk thon nicht. His feerich wis ainly shawn bi the gryte souchs he draait, as he seeriously laid oot his muckle Bible on the table, an owerlaid it wi clarty bunk-notes fae his pooch-buik, fit siller he hidd gotten the day. In the hinner eyn he caaed Hareton fae his seat.

‘Takk these in tae the maister, loon,’ he said, ‘an bide there. I’ll gang up tae ma ain chaumer. This bield’s nedder richt nor daicent fer us: we maun gang oot an fun anidder.’

‘Cam, Kitty,’ I said, ‘we maun “gang oot” an aa: I hiv deen ma ironin. Are ye riddy tae gang?’

‘It isnae acht o’clock!’ she answert, heistin unweellinly.

‘Hareton, I’ll pit this buik apon the chimbley-piece, an I’ll fess some mair the morn.’

‘Ony buiks that ye leave ahin, I will takk intae the hoose,’ said Joseph, ‘an it winna be likely gin ye fun them again; sae, ye may plaise yersel!’

Kitty threetent that his library shid pey fer hers; an, smilin as she wint bi Hareton, wint singin up e stairs: lichter o hert, I ettle tae say, than ivver she hidd bin aneth thon reef afore; excep, mebbe, durin her airliest veesits tae Linton.

The unnerstaunnin sae begood growit faist; though it encoontert tribbles noo an again. Earnshaw wisnae tae be ceevilised wi a wiss, an ma young leddy wis nae gryte thinker, an nae affa patient; but baith their minds tennin tae the same pint—een luvvin an ettlin tae respeck, an the idder luvvin an ettlin tae be respeckit—they contrivit in the eyn tae win tae it.

Ye see, Mr. Lockwood, it wis aisy eneuch tae win Mrs. Heathcliff’s hert. But noo, I’m glaid you didnae sey. The croon o aa ma wisses will be the jynin o thon twa. I will envy naebody on their waddin day: there winna be a seelier wumman than masel in England!

CHAPTER THREE AN THIRTY

THE HAANTIT SOWEL

On the mornin o yon Monday, Earnshaw bein still nae able tae follie his eesual wirk, an therefore bidin aboot the hoose, I richt awaa fun it widd be nae eese tae kep ma quine aside me, as I hidd deen afore. She got doon e stairs afore me, an oot intae the gairden, faar she hidd saait her cousin deein some aisy wirk; an fan I wint tae bid them cam tae breakfast, I saa she hidd priggit wi him tae teem oot a muckle bit o grun fae currant an grozaart busses, an they were eident aboot plannin thegither meevin plants fae the Grange.

I wis terrifeed at the mineer which hidd bin caasit in thon hauf-ooer; the blaikcurrant trees were the aipple o Joseph’s ee, an she hidd jist makkit her roon flooer-bed richt in the mids o them.

‘There! Thon will be aa shawn tae the maister,’ I skirled, ‘the meenit it is fun oot. An fit raison hiv ye tae gie fer takkin sic leebirties wi the gairden? We will hae a richt faain oot on the heid o it: see gin we dinna! Mr. Hareton, I winner ye shid hae nae mair wit than tae gang an makk thon mineer at her biddin!’

‘I didnae mine they were Joseph’s,’ answert Earnshaw, raither bumbazit; ‘but I’ll tell him I deed it.’

We ayewis ate oor mait wi Mr. Heathcliff. I haudit the mistress’s darg in makkin tae an carvin; sae I hidd tae be at table. Kitty eesually sat bi me, but the day she crappit narrer tae Hareton; an I preesintly saa she widd hae nae mair canniness in her frienship than she hidd in her hosteelity.

‘Noo, mine ye dinna spikk wi an takk tent o your cousin ower muckle,’ were ma fuspert instruckshuns as we entert the room. ‘It will shairly kittle up Mr. Heathcliff, an he’ll be ragin at ye baith.’

‘I’m nae gaun tae,’ she reponit.

The meenit aifter, she hidd sidlit tae him, an wis pittin primroses in his plate o porritch.

He daured nae spikk tae her there: he daured hairdly luik; an yet she wint on termentin, tull he wis twice on the pint o lachin. I frooned, an syne she luikit taewirds the maister: faa’s mind wis eident on idder subjicks than wi the fowk roon aboot, as his coontenance shawed; an she growit sairious fer a filie. Aifterwirds she turnit, an begood her styte again; at laist, Hareton udderit a smorit lach. Mr. Heathcliff stertit; his ee luikit faist roon oor phizogs, Kitty met it wi her eesual luik o unaisiness an yit impidence, which he cwidnae thole.

‘It is weel fer ye I canna rax tae ye,’ he skirlit. ‘Fit divvil kittles ye tae gaak back at me, aa the time, wi thon heelish een? Doon wi them! An dinna mine me that ye’re hereaboots again. I thocht I hidd stappit ye fae lachin.’

‘It wis me,’ mummlit Hareton.

‘Fit deed ye say?’ spiered the maister.

Hareton luikit at his plate, an didnae spikk again. Mr. Heathcliff luiked at him a filie, an syne seelintly wint on wi his brakkfaist an his interruptit thochts. We hidd naarly feenished, an the twa young fowk cannily meevit farrer apairt, sae I didnae see onythin farrer tae bather us durin thon sittin: fan Joseph turnit up at the door, shawin bi his shakkin lip an feerious een that the ootrage deen tae his treeshured busses wis deteckit. He maun hae seen Kitty an her cousin aboot the spot afore he luikit at it, fer files his jaas wirkit like yon o a coo chawin its cud, an makkit his spikkin haird tae unnerstaun, he begood:

‘I maun hiv ma siller, an I maun gang! I *hidd* ettlit tae dee faar I’d sarved fer saxty eer; an I thocht I’d cairry ma buiks up intae the laft, an aa ma bitties o trock, an they shid hae the kitchie tae themsels; fer the sake o quaetness. It wis haird tae gie up ma ain ingle, but I thocht I *cwid dee thon*! But na, she’s taen ma gairden fae me, an bi the hert, maister, I canna staun it! Ye may benn tae the yoak an ye will—I’m eesed tae it, an an aul mannie daesnae seen get eesed tae new on-gyaans. I’d raither arn ma mait wi a haimer in the road!’

‘Noo, na, ye gype!’ brakkit in Heathcliff, ‘makk it short! Fit’s yer compleent? I’ll hae naethin tae dee wi faains oot atween ye an Nelly. She may shiv ye intae the coal-hole fer onythin I care.’

‘It’s nae Nelly!’ answert Joseph. ‘I shidnae meeve fer Nelly—nesty ull coo as she is. Thunk Goad! *She canna* blaad the sowel o naebody! She were nivver sae bonny, but fit a body widd luik at her withoot winkin. It’s yon limmer o a quine, that’s witchit oor loon, wi her baul een an her impident weys—tull—Na! it fair brusts ma hert! He’s forgatten aa I’ve deen fer him, an makkit on him, an gaen an rivit up a hale raa o the grannest currant-trees in the gairden!’ an here he grat ootricht; taen doon bi a soor sinse o the hairm deen tae him, and Earnshaw’s thunkless an feerich weys.

‘Is the feel fou?’ spierit Mr. Heathcliff. ‘Hareton, is it ye he’s finnin faut wi?’

‘I’ve puued up twa or three busses,’ reponit the halflin; ‘but I’m gaun tae set ’em again.’

‘And fit wey hiv ye puued them up?’ said the maister.

Kitty wisely pit in her tongue.

‘We wintit tae plant a puckle flooers there,’ she skirled. ‘It’s ma wyte, fer I wissed him tae dee it.’

‘An faa the divvil allooed ye tae touch a stick aboot the bield?’ spiered her faither-in-laa, takkin an affa begeck. ‘An faa tellt ye tae dee fit she said?’ he addit, turnin tae Hareton.

The latter cwidnae spikk; his cousin reponit ‘Ye shidnae grudge a feow yairds o muck fer me tae makk bonny, fan ye hiv taen aa ma laan!’

‘Yer laan, impidint besom! Ye nivver hidd ony,’ quo Heathcliff.

‘An ma siller,’ she wint on; giein back his turk gaak, files bitin a bittie o crust, fit wis left o her brakkfaist.

‘Wheesht!’ he skraiched. ‘Feenish thon, an gang oot!’

‘An Hareton’s laan, an his siller,’ wint on the haiveless thing. ‘Hareton an I are friens noo; an I will lat him ken aa aboot ye!’

The maister seemit bumbazit fer a meenit: he growit fite, an heistit up, eyein her aa the file, wi a luik o deidly hate.

‘Gin ye dird me, Hareton will dird ye,’ she said; ‘sae ye may as weel sit doon.’

‘Gin Hareton daesnae turn ye oot o the room, I’ll dird him tae heel,’ thunnert Heathcliff. ‘Dammit carlin! Daur ye makk on tae kittle him agin me? Aff wi her! Div ye heer? Cassen her intae the kitchie! I’ll kill her, Ellen Dean, gin ye lat her cam intae ma sicht again!’

Hareton seyit, aneth his breath, tae prig wi her tae gang.

‘Trail her awaa!’ he skirlit, breetishly. ‘Are ye bidin tae spikk?’ An he cam narrer tae cairry oot his ain command.

‘He’ll nae dee fit ye say ye, wickit chiel, ony mair,’ said Kitty; ‘an seen he winna thole ye as muckle as I div.’

‘Wheesht! wheesht!’ mummlit the halflin, disapreevinly; ‘I willnae heer ye spikk tae him sae. Hiv deen.’

‘But ye winna lat him dird me?’ she skirled.

‘Cam syne,’ he fuspert eernistly.

It wis ower late: Heathcliff hidd caatchit haud o her.

‘Noo, *ye gang*!’ he said tae Earnshaw. ‘Accursit carlin! this time she his kittlit me fan I cwidnae thole it; an I’ll makk her regreet it fer ivver!’

He hidd his haun in her hair; Hareton seyit tae lat lowse her locks, entraitin him nae tae hairm her that aince. Heathcliff’s blaik een glistert; he seemit riddy tae rive Kitty tae bits, an I wis jist wirkin up tae risk camin tae the rescue, fan instanter his fingers lowsit; he meevit his rivin fae her heid tae her airm, an gaakit richt in her face. Syne he draait his haun ower his een, steed a meenit tae colleck himsel appairintly, an turnin anew tae Kitty said, wi pit on cweelness ‘Ye maun larn tae nae pit me in a feerich, or I will shairly murther ye ilky time! Gang wi Mrs. Dean, an bide wi her; an kep yer impidince fer her lugs. As tae Hareton Earnshaw, gin I see him list tae ye, I’ll sen him sikkin his breid faar he cin fun it! Yer luvv will makk him an ootcast an a gaberlunzie. Nelly, takk her; an gang awaa, aa o ye! Gang awaa!’

I taen ma young leddy oot: she wis ower glaid o her flicht tae objick; the idder follied, an Mr. Heathcliff hidd the room tae himsel tull denner. I hidd coonselled Kitty tae ait up e stairs; but, as seen as he saa her teem seat, he sint me tae cry her doon. He spikkit tae neen o us, ait a gey smaa amoont, an wint oot direckly aifterwirds, lattin us ken that he shidnae cam back afore evenin.

The twa new friens settlit themsels in the hoose files he wis oot; faar I heerd Hareton giein his cousin a richt tellin-aff, on her spikkin aboot her faither-in-laa’s traitmint o his faither. He said he widdnae alloo a wird tae be uddert agin him: gin he were the divvil, it didnae maitter; he widd staun bi him; an he’d raither she widd faa oot wi him, as she eesed til, than begood on Mr. Heathcliff. Kitty wis growin ill-naitert at yon; but he fun a wey tae makk her haud her tongue, bi spierin foo she widd like *him* tae spikk ull o her faither? Syne she cwid unnerstaun that Earnshaw taen the maister’s staunnin hame tae himsel; an wis haudit bi ties stranger than raison cwid brakk—cheyns, makkit bi haibit, which it widd be coorse tae sey tae lowse. She shawit a guid hert, fae then on, in keppin awaa fae baith girnin an gaan on aboot nae tholin Heathcliff; an tellt me her sorra that she hidd seyit tae heist an ull speerit atween him an Hareton: indaid, I dinna believe she his ivver spikkit a wird, in the latter’s heerin, agin her termenter syne.

Fan yon slicht faain oot wis ower, they were friens again, an as eident as they cwid be in their pucklie jots o scholar an dominie. I cam in tae reist wi them, aifter I hidd deen ma wirk; an I felt sae aisit tae watch them, that I didnae takk tent o foo time wis gaan. Ye ken, they baith appearit, in a wey, ma bairns: I hidd lang bin prood o een; an noo, I wis shair, the idder widd gie mi saitisfackshun an aa. His straachtforrit, waarm, an clivver naiter faist shakkit aff the cloods o ignorance an affa weys o deein in which it hidd bin bred; an Kitty’s hertfelt reezes ackit as a brod tae his haird wirk. His brichtenin myn brichtent his features, an gied speerit an guidness tae the wey he luikit: I cwid hairdly funcy it the same body I hidd saait on the day I fun ma wee leddy at Whudderin Heichts, aifter her traivel tae the Crags. Files I appreevit an they wirked, gloamin draait on, an wi it cam back the maister. He cam apon us wi nae warnin, camin in bi the front wey, an hidd a grand sicht o the hale three, afore we cwid heist oor heids tae takk a luik at him. Weel, I thocht, there wis nivver a mair lichtsome, or mair hairmless sicht; an it will be an affa begeck tae rage them. The reid fire-licht a-lowe on their twa bonny heids, an shawed their phizogs bricht wi the ettlin intairist o bairns; fer, though he wis twinty-three an she achteen, it wis still nyow tae ilky een tae feel an larn, that nedder wint throu nor shawit the sintimints that cam wi growin auler an mair eesed tae disappintmint.

They liftit their een thegither, tae encoonter Mr. Heathcliff: mebbe ye hivv nivver saait that their een are fair lickent, an they are thon o Kirsty Earnshaw. Kitty his nae idder likeness tae her, excep a braid foreheid, an yon airch o the nostril that makks her luik raither heich-heidit, fither she will or nae. Wi Hareton the lickent is cairriet farrer: it is by-ordinaar at aa times, *syne* it wis fair ootstaunnen; because his sinses were knief, an his mind wakkened tae nae eesual on-gyaans. I jalouse this lickent won ower Mr. Heathcliff: he wakkit tae the ingle in a richt feerich; but it wint doon faist as he luikit at the halflin: or, I shid say, cheyngit its naiter; fer it wis aye there. He taen the buik fae his haun, an luikit at the apen page, syne gied it back withoot spikkin; jist waggin Kitty awaa: her companion didna dachle lang ahin her, an I wis aboot tae gang an aa, but he tellt me tae bide faar I wis.

‘It is a peer eynin, is it nae?’ quo he, hivvin broodit a filie on fit he hidd jist saait: ‘an unco eynin tae aa ma hard wirk? I get levers an spaads tae ding deen the twa hooses, an larn masel tae hae the capaacity o wirkin like Hercules, an fan aathin is riddy an in ma pooer, I fun the weel tae heist a slate aff edder reef his gaen! Ma aul faes hivnae dirdit me; noo widd be the exack time tae get ma ain back on their faimlies: I cwid dee it; an neen cwid hinner me. But faar is the eese? I dinna carna doit fer dingin doon: I canna takk the tribble tae heist ma haun! Thon souns as gin I hidd bin wirkin haird the hale time ainly tae shaw a rare kwaalitie o heich-mynedness. It is far fae bein thon: I hiv tynt the wey o takkin pleeshure in their wrack, an I am ower sweir tae connach fer naethin.

‘Nelly, there is an unco cheynge camin; I’m in its shadda at preesint. I takk sae smaa tent in ma daily darg that I hairdly mine tae ait an sup. Yon twa faa hiv gaen oot o the room are the ainly objicks which are rale tae me; an the wey they luik caases me pyne, naar tae agony. Aboot *her* I winna spikk; an I dinna wiss tae think; but I eernistly wiss she were oot o sicht: her preesince makks me gang wud. *He* meeves me in an idder wey: an syne gin I cwid dee it withoot seemin wud, I’d nivver see him again! Ye’ll mebbe think me raither fain tae becam sae,’ he addit, seyin tae smile, ‘gin I sey tae spikk aboot the thoosan kines o conneckshuns tae the past an adayas he awakkens or hauds in himsel. But ye’ll nae spikk o fit I tell ye; an ma myn is sae catcht up in itsel, it is timptin at laist tae turn it oot tae anidder.

‘Five meenits syne Hareton seemit jist like me, nae anidder human bein; I felt tae him in sae mony weys, that it widd hae bin able tae hiv traited him wi raison. In the furst place, he is richt likkent tae Kirsty an conneckit him muckle wi her. Thon, hooivver, which ye may jalouse the maist pooerfu tae takk haud o ma imaiginashun, is ralely the smaaest: fer fit isnae conneckit wi her tae me? an fit disnae mind me o her? I canna luik doon tae this fleer, but her features are makkit oot on the flags! In ivvery clood, in ivvery tree—fullin the air at nicht, an catcht bi glimshes in ivvery objick bi day—I am ringit wi her eemage! The maist ordinaar faces o chiels an wummen—ma ain features—geck me wi lickent. The hale warld is an orra gaitherin o things that mine me she wis here, an that I hiv tynt her! Weel, Hareton’s luik wis the ghaist o ma nivver eynin luvv; o ma roch attimpts tae haud ma richt; ma degraadit weys, ma proodness, ma seeliness, an ma meesiry—

‘But it is wud tae spikk these thochts tae ye: ainly it will lat ye ken fit wey, wi nae wintin tae be ayewis aa ma leen, bein wi him is nae eese; raither makks waur terment I aye pit up wi: an it pairtly makks me nae care avaa foo he an his cousin gang on thegither. I cin takk tent o them nae mair.’

‘But fit div ye mean bi a *cheynge*, Mr. Heathcliff?’ I said, feart at his menner: though he wis nedder gaan tae tynt his sinses, nor deein, as far as I cwid see: he wis fair strang an sonsy; an, as tae his raison, fae a bairn he hidd a delicht in finnin oot aboot mirky on-gyaans, an thinkin o unco funcies. He micht nae hae stappit gaan on aboot his deid luuv; but on ivvery idder pint his wits were as soun as mine.

‘I winna ken thon tull it cams,’ quo he; ‘I’m ainly hauf shair o it noo.’

‘Ye arenae nae weel, are ye?’ I spiered.

‘Na, Nelly, I’m nae,’ he answert.

‘Syne ye arenae feart o deith?’ I wint on.

‘Feart? Na!’ he reponit. ‘I hiv nedder a fricht, nor a foreshaida, nor a howp o deith. Fit wey shid I? Wi ma strang body an canny wey o livin, an saff wirk, I ocht tae, an mair like *will*, bide abune grun tull there is hairdly a blaik hair on ma heid. An syne I canna gang on this wey! I hiv tae mine masel tae braith—aamaist tae mine ma hert tae baet! An it is likent bennin back a ticht spring: it is bi garrin that I dee the slichtest ack nae brocht aboot bi ae thocht; an bi garrin that I takk tent o onythin alist or deid, which isnae conneckit wi ae warldwide adaya. I hiv but ae wiss, an ma hale bein an pooers are ettlin tae win tae it. They hiv ettlit taewirds it sae lang, an sae steedfaistly, that I’m shair it *will* be won tae—an *seen*—because it his aiten up ma hale bein I am swallied up in the howp o its camin. Ma spikkin oot hisnae hilpit me; but they may accoont fer a feow idderwise unaccoontable meenits o guid naiter which I shaw. Och God! It is a sair fecht; I wiss it were ower!’

He begood tae spaad roon the room, mummlin affa things tae himsel, tull I wis fain tae trow, as he said Joseph deed, that inner vyce hidd turnit his hert tae an airthly heal. I winnert muckle foo it widd eyn. Though nae aften afore hidd he shawn this wey o thinkin, even bi luiks, it wis his eesual teen, I hidd nae doot: he widd say it himsel; but nae a sowel, fae the wey he luikit eesually, widd hae jaloused the fack. Ye didnae fan ye saa him, Mr. Lockwood: an at the period o which I spikk, he wis jist the same syne; ainly fonter o bein aa his leen, an mebbe aye a chiel wi feow wirds fan fowk wis aboot.

CHAPTER FOWER AN THIRTY

JYNIN THEGITHER

Fer a feow days aifter thon evenin Mr. Heathcliff didnae tryst wi us at mait; yet he widdnae gree richt tae pittin oot Hareton an Kitty. He cwidnae thole tae giein himself up tae his feelins, insteed bade awaa himsel; an aitin eence in twinty-fower ooers seemit eneuch fer him.

Ae nicht, aifter the faimly were beddit, I heerd him gang doon e stairs, an oot at the front door. I didnae heer him cam back, an in the mornin I fun he wis still awaa. We were in April syne: the wither wis swate an waarm, the girse as green as shooers an sun cwid makk it, an the twa dwarf aipple-trees naar the sudderin waa in full bleem. Aifter braakfast, Kitty insistit on ma fessin a cheer an reistin wi ma wirk aneth the fir-trees at the eyn o the hoose; an she got roon Hareton, faa hidd weel gotten ower his mishanter, tae howk an set oot her wee gairden, which wis shiftit tae thon neuk aifter Joseph’s girnin. I wis fair thirlt wi the spring guff aa aroon, an the bonny saft blae owerheid, fan ma young leddy, faa hidd rin doon naar the yett to fess some primrose reets fer a border, cam back ainly hauf laden, an tellt us that Mr. Heathcliff wis camin in. ‘An he spikkit tae me,’ she wint on, wi a bumbazit coontenance.

‘Fit did he say?’ spiered Hareton.

‘He tellt me tae gang awaa as faist as I cwid,’ she answert. ‘But he luikit sae antrin fae his eesual luik that I stappit a meenit tae gaak at him.’

‘Foo?’ he spiered.

‘Ach aamaist bricht an lichtsome. Na, *aamaist* naethin—*gey* kittelt up, an gallus, an glaid!’ she reponit.

‘Nicht-wakkin ameeses him, syne,’ quo I, in a haiveless menner: but as teen aback as she wis, an worriet tae fun oot the trowth o fit she’d said; fer to see the maister luikin glaid widdnae be summin ye saa ivery day. I makkit an affcome tae gang in. Heathcliff steed at the apen door; he wis fite, an he chittert: yit, shairly, he hidd an unco joyfu glister in his een, that cheyngit the hale luik o his face.

‘Will ye hae a suppie brakkfist?’ quo I. ‘You maun be stairvin, stravaigin aboot aa nicht!’ I wintit tae fun oot faar he hidd bin, but I didnae like jist tae spier.

‘Na, I’m nae hungert,’ he reponit, turnin awaa his heid, an spikkin raither wi scadden, as gin he jaloused I wis seyin tae fun oot fit wey he wis in a guid takkin.

I wis bumbazit: I didnae ken fither it widd be richt at thon pint tae gie a bittie o an owergae.

‘I dinnae think it richt tae wanner oot o doors,’ I observit, ‘insteed o bein in bed: it isnae wyce, at ony rate yon dump time o eer. I daursay ye’ll catcht an affa caul or a fivver: ye hivv summin the maitter wi ye noo!’

‘Naethin but fit I cin thole,’ he reponit; ‘an wi the grytest pleeshure, gin ye’ll leave me aa ma leen: gang in, an dinna kittle me up.’

I deed fit I wis tellt: an, as I wint bi, I taen tent that he wis braithin as faist as a cat.

‘Aye!’ I refleckit tae masel, ‘he’ll eyn up nae weel. I canna think fit he his bin deein.’

Thon neen he sat doon tae denner wi us, an taen a muckle plate fae ma hauns, as gin he wintit tae makk up fer faistin afore.

‘I’ve nedder a caul nor a fivver, Nelly,’ quo he, referrin back tae fit I said in the mornin; ‘an I’m riddy tae sup up aathin ye’ve gien me.’

He taen his knife an fork, an wis gaun tae stairt aitin, fan instanter he tynt the wiss tae. He pit them on the table, gied a gleg luik taewirds the windae, syne rasit an wint oot. We saa him wakkin tae an fro in the gairden files we feenisht oor mait, an Earnshaw said he’d gang an spier fit wey he widdnae ait: he thocht we hidd kittlet him ilky wey.

‘Weel, is he camin?’ skirled Kitty, fan her cousin cam back.

‘Na,’ he answert; ‘but he’s nae ragin: he seemit plaised fer a cheynge indaid; ainly I makkit him sanshach bi spikkin tae him twice; an syne he tellt me tae gang aff tae ye: he winnert foo I cwid wint tae be wi onybody else.’

I pit his plate tae kep waarm on the fender; an aifter an ooer or twa he cam back in, fan the room wis teem, nae ony calmer: the samen unnaiteral—it wis unnaiteral – luik o joy aneth his blaik broos; the samen bleedless hue, an his teeth shawin, files, in a kyne o smile; his body shakkin, nae as een shakks wi the caul or waikness, but as a ticht-streekit tow shakks—a strang thirlin, raither than shakkin.

I will spier fit is the maitter, I thocht; or faa shid? An I skirled ‘Hiv ye heerd ony guid claik, Mr. Heathcliff? Ye luik bi-ordinaar lichtsome.’

‘Faar shid guid claik cam fae tae me?’ quo he. ‘I’m makkit lichtsome wi hunger; an, appairintly, I maunna ait.’

‘Yer denner is here,’ I reponit; ‘fit wey winna ye takk it?’

‘I dinna wint it noo,’ he mummlit, ramsh: ‘I’ll weyt tull tae. An, Nelly, aince an fer aa, lat me prig wi ye to tell Hareton an the idder tae kep awaa fae me. I wiss tae be bathert bi naebody: I wiss tae hae this place tae masel.’

‘Is there ilky new raison fer us bein pit oot?’ I spiered. ‘Tell me fit wey ye are sae unco, Mr. Heathcliff? Faar were ye last nicht? I’m nae spierin throu orra keeriosity, but—’

‘Ye *are* spierin throu gey orra keeriosity,’ he interruptit, wi a lach. ‘Yet I’ll repone tae it. Last nicht I was on the doorcheek o hell. The day, I hae sicht o ma hivven. I hiv ma een on it: hairdly three feet tae kep me apairt! An noo ye’d better gang! Ye’ll nedder see nor heer onythin tae frichten ye, gin ye kep awaa fae pittin yer neb in.’

Hivin swypit the ingle an dichtit the table, I wint awaa; mair bumbazit than ivver.

He didnae gang oot o the hoose again thon aifterneen, an he wis left aa his leen; tull, at acht o’clock, I thocht it richt, though nae cried fer, tae cairry a caunnel an his tae fer him. He wis leanin agin the ledge o an apen windae, but nae luikin oot: his face wis turnt tae the mirky chaumer. The lowe hidd brunt tae aiss; the room wis fu o the dump, saft air o the cloody evenin; an sae lown, that nae ainly the chirm o the burn doon Gimmerton cwid be heerd, but its pirlin an its gurglin ower the stanes, or throu the muckle stanes which it cwidnae hap. I uddert an ootcry o discontint at seein the drumly ingle, an begood caain tee the windaes, een aifter anidder, tull I cam tae his.

‘Maun I caa this tee?’ I spiered, in order tae wakken him; fer he widdnae steer.

The licht blintert on his features as I spikkit. Och, Mr. Lockwood, I canna pit intae wirds fit an affa begeck I hidd fae thon meenit’s sicht! Yon deep blaik een! Yon smile, an ugsome fiteness! It appearit tae me, nae Mr. Heathcliff, but a goblin; an, in ma fricht, I lat the caunnel benn taewirds the waa, an it left me in the mirk.

‘Aye, caa it tee,’ he reponit, in his eesual vyce. ‘There, thon is fair gaakitness! Fit wey deed ye haud the caunnel like yon? Gang faist, an fess anidder.’

I breengit oot in a dozent state o dreid, an said tae Joseph ‘The maister wisses ye tae takk him a licht an steer up the lowe.’ Fer I daured nae gang in masel again jist noo.

Joseph tirlit a suppie lowe intae the shovel, an wint: but he brocht it back instanter, wi the supper-tray in his idder haun, lattin me ken that Mr. Heathcliff wis gaun tae bed, an he wintit naethin tae ait tull the morn. We heerd him climmin the stairs richt awaa; he didnae gang tull his eesual chaumer, but turnt intae thon een wi the panelled bed: its windae, as I spikkit aboot afore, is wide eneuch fer onybody tae get throu; an it cam tae me that he wis thinkin o anidder midnicht traivel, o which he hidd raither we hidd nae adaya.

‘Is he a bogle or a vampire?’ I thocht tae masel. I hidd read o sic ugsome divvils. An then I set masel tae refleck foo I hidd luikit aifter him fan he wis a bairn, an saait him grow tae a halflin, an follied him aamaist throu his hale coorse; an fit affa nonsinse it wis tae gie in tae thon sinse o horror. ‘But faar did he cam fae, the wee dairk thing, taen in an luikit aifter bi a guid chiel tae his bane?’ mummlit Superstition, as I dovert intae naethinness. An I begood, hauf dwaumin, tae caa masel deen wi imaiginin ilky richt backgrun fer him; an, gaan ower ma wakkin thochts, I wint ower his bein ower again, wi dreich odds; at laist, picterin his deith an funeral: o which, aa I cin mine is, bein gey kittlit at haein the darg o cammin up wi wirds fer his heidstane, an spikkin tae the sexton aboot it; an, as he hidd nae faimly name, an we didnae ken foo aul he wis, we hidd tae contint oorsels wi the ae wird, ‘Heathcliff’. Thon cam true: we were. Gin ye gang intae the kirkyaird, ye’ll read, on his heidstane, jist thon, an the date fan he deeit.

The skreek o day brocht me back tae common sinse. I rase, an went intae the gairden, as seen as I cwid see, to makk shair gin there were ony fitmairks aneth his windae. There were neen. ‘He his bade at hame,’ I thocht, ‘an he’ll be aa richt the day.’ I makkit brakkfist fer the hoosehold, as wis ma eesual wey, but tellt Hareton an Kitty tae fess theirs afore the maister cam doon, fer he lay langer. They aye wintit tae takk it ootside aneth the trees, an I pit oot a wee table fer them.

Fan I wint back in, I fun Mr. Heathcliff alow. He an Joseph were spikkin aboot fairmin buzness; he gied aisy tae unnerstaun, detailt direckshuns aboot the maitter, but he spikkit faist, an turnt his heid aside aa the time, an hidd thon verra excitit luik, but aiven waur. Fan Joseph wint oot o the room he taen his seat faar he eesually deed, an I pit a basin o coffee afore him. He draait it narrer, an syne ristit his airms on the table, an luikit at the conter waa, as I jalousit, luikin ower ae particklar bittie, up an doon, wi blinterin, ristless een, an wi sic gleg intairist that he stappit braithin durin hauf a meenit thegither.

‘Cam noo,’ I skirlit, pittin a suppie breid agin his haun, ‘ait an sup thon, files it is het: it his bin weytin naar an ooer.’

He didnae takk tent o me, an yit he smilit. I’d raither hae seen him scryaap his teeth than smile like yon.

‘Mr. Heathcliff! maister!’ I skirlit, ‘dinna, fer God’s sake, gaak as gin ye saa an eldritch sicht.’

‘Dinnae fer God’s sake, skraich sae lood,’ he reponit. ‘Birl aroon, an tell me, are we bi oorsels?’

‘O coorse,’ wis ma repone; ‘o coorse we are.’

Still, withoot thinkin I deed fit he said, as gin I wisnae richt shair. Wi a swype o his haun he makkit a teem staa in front amang the braakfist things, an bennit forrit tae gaak mair at his aise.

Noo, I saa he wisnae luikin at the waa; fer fan I luikit at him aa his leen, it seemit exackly that he gaakit at summin within twa yairds’ awaa. An fitivver it wis, it impairtit, appairintly, baith pleeshure an pyne tae horrifeein linths: at laist the termentit, yit joyfu, luik on his coontenance gied me thon adeya. The funciet objick wisnae aye in ae staa, edder: his een folliet it aa the time, an, even fan spikkin tae me, were nivver meeved awaa. He didnae takk ony tent o me minin him aboot nae aitin: gin he meevit tae touch onythin fan I priggit wi him, gin he raxit oot his haun tae fess a suppie breid, his fingers steekit afore they won tae it, and bade on the table, feryitfu o fit they were deein.

I sat, as patient as I cwid, seyin tae takk his attenshun fae fit wis takkin up aa its jalousin; tull he growit ill-naitert, an rasit, spierin fit wey I widdnae alloo him to hae his ain time in takkin his mait? an sayin that on the neist occasion I nottnae weyt: I micht set the things doon an gang. Haein uddert yon wirds he wint oot o the hoose, daunnert doon the gairden path, an wint oot o sicht throu the yett.

The ooers crappit unaisily by: anidder evenin cam. I wisnae beddit tull late, an fan I deed, I cwidnae sleep. He cam back aifter midnicht, an, insteed o gaan tae bed, shut himsel intae the chaumer alow. I listit, and rivit aboot, an, in the hinner eyn, pit ma claes on an wint doon. It wis ower langsome tae bide there, batherin ma brain wi a hunner orra doots.

I makkit oot Mr. Heathcliff’s step, ristlessly gaun back an fore ower the fleer, an he aften brakkit the seelence bi a muckle braith, likent tae a grumph. He mummlit wirds an aa; the ainly een I cwid heer wis the name o Kirsty, alang wi ilky maroonjus wird o luuv or meesry; an spikkit as een widd spikk tae a body that wis there; laich an eernist, an vrang fae the boddom o his sowel. I didnae daur tae wakk stracht intae the chaumer; but I ettlit to takk him awaa fae his dwaum an syne faait oot on the kitchie lowe, steered it, an begood tae scryaap the shunner. It draait him furth seener than I expeckit. He apent the door instanter, an said ‘Nelly, cam here—is it mornin? Cam in wi yer licht.’

‘It is strikkin fower,’ I answert. ‘Ye wint a caunnel tae takk up e stairs: ye micht hae lichtit een at yon lowe.’

‘Na, I dinna wiss tae gang up e stairs,’ he said. ‘Cam in, an kinnel *me* a lowe, an dee onythin there is tae dee aboot the chaumer.’

‘I maun blaa the coals reid first, afore I cin cairry ony,’ I reponit, fessin a cheer an the bellaas

He wannert tae an fro, files, in a richt feerich; ilky hivvy souchs folliein the idder sae faist, he cwid hairdly braithe in atween.

‘Fan day brakks I’ll sen fer Green,’ he said; ‘I wiss tae spier o him aboot a feow legal buzness files I cin hae a thocht aboot yon maitters, an files I cin kep a calm souch. I hivnae scrievit ma will yit; an foo tae leave fit I ain I canna makk up ma myn. I wiss I cwid ding it aff the face o the airth.’

‘I widdnae spikk sae, Mr. Heathcliff,’ I buttit in. ‘Lat yer weell be a filie: ye’ll be makkit siccar tae ripint o yer mony wrangs yit! I nivver expeckit that yer nirves widd be in sic a mineer: they are, at preesint, gey likent yon, hooiver; an aamaist aa yer ain wyte. Fit ye’ve gaan throu in the laist days micht connach a Titan. Dee takk a suppie mait, an rist. Ye nott ainly luik at yersel in a gless tae see foo ye nott baith. Yer chikks are holla, an yer een bleed-shot, like a body stairvin wi hunger an gaun blin wi nae sleep.’

‘It isnae ma wyte that I canna ait or rist,’ he reponit. ‘I sweer tae ye it is throu nae plan o mine. I’ll dee baith, as seen as I cin. But ye micht as weel tell a chiel warslin in the watter tae rist within airms’ linth o the shore! I maun win tae it furst, an syne I’ll rist. Weel, nivver mine Mr. Green: as tae feelin sorra aboot aa the wrangs I’ve deen, I’ve deen nae wrang, an I hae sorra fer naethin. I’m ower seely; an yit I’m nae seely eneuch. Ma sowel’s delicht kills ma body, but daesnae satisfie itsel.’

‘Seely, maister?’ I skirlit. ‘Unco seeliness! Gin ye widd heer me withoot ragin, I micht gie some coonsel that widd makk ye seelier.’

‘Fit’s at?’ he spiered. ‘Gie it.’

‘Ye are awaar, Mr. Heathcliff,’ I said, ‘that fae the time ye were thirteen year aul ye hiv livit a sel-sikkin, unchreestian life; an maist like hairdly hidd a Bible in yer hauns aa thon time. Ye maun hae feryitten the contints o the buik, an ye may nae hivv a meenit tae luik throu it noo. Cwid it be hairmfu tae sen fer a body—ilky meenister o ony kine, it daesnae maitter fit een—to gang ower it, an shaw ye foo affa faar ye hivv gaan awaa fae its larnin; an foo oonfit ye will be fer its hivven, oonless a cheynge takks place afore ye dee?’

‘I’m raither obleegit than feerious, Nelly,’ he said, ‘fer ye mine me o the menner foo I ettle tae be beeriet. It is tae be cairriet tae the kirkyaird in the evenin. Ye an Hareton may, gin ye wint, cam wi me: an mine, abune aa, tae takk tent that the sexton daes fit I hivv tellt him aboot the twa coffins! Nae meenister nott cam; nor nott onythin be said ower me.—I tell you I hivv naarly won tae *ma* hivven; an thon o idders is aathegither nae wirth fer me an I am nae ettlin fer it.’

‘An jalousin ye gang on wi yer thrawn faist, an deid bi thon wey, an they winna beery ye in the kirk-yaird?’ I said, stookit at him gweedlessly nae carin ava. ‘Foo widd ye like it?’

‘They winna dee thon,’ he reponit: ‘gin they deed, ye maun hae me teen awaa stown-weys; an gin ye negleck it ye will pruv, ralely, that the deid are nae wipit oot!’

As seen as he heerd the idder fowk o the faimly rasin he wint tae his den, an I braithit aisier. But in the aifterneen, files Joseph an Hareton were at their wirk, he cam intae the kitchie again, an, wi a maroonjus luik, tellt me tae cam an reist in the hoose: he wintit a body wi him. I widna gang; tellin him richt oot that his unco spikk an menner frichtent me, an I hidd nedder the nirve nor the weell tae be his companion aleen.

‘I trow ye think me a divvil,’ quo he, wi his darksome lach: ‘summin ower ugsome tae bide aneth a daicent reef.’ Syne turnin tae Kitty, faa wis there, an faa draait ahin me fan he cam in, he addit, hauf jamphinly ‘Will *ye cam*, dearie? I’ll nae hairm ye. Na! tae ye I’ve makkit masel waur than the divvil. Weel, there is *een fa winna* coower fae ma company! Bi God! She nivver gies up. Och, dammit! It’s far ower muckle fer flesh an bleed tae thole—aiven mine.’

He didnae spier fer onybody tae cam wi him ony mair. At gloamin he wint intae his chaumer. Throu the hale nicht, an far intae the mornin, we heerd him gronachin an mummlin tae himsel. Hareton wis ettlin tae gang in; but I tellt him tae fess Mr. Kenneth, an he shid gang in an see him. Fan he cam, an I spiered tae be lat in an seyit tae apen the door, I fun it sneckit; an Heathcliff tellt us tae be dammit. He wis aaricht, an widd be lat aleen; sae the doctor wint awaa.

The folliein evenin wis affa weet: indaid, it poored doon tull day-dawn; an, as I taen ma mornin daunner roon the hoose, I saait the maister’s windae swingin apen, an the rain dreevin stracht in. He canna be in bed, I thocht: yon shoeers widd hae him sipin richt throu. He maun edder be up or oot. But I’ll makk nae mair adee, I’ll gang bauldly an luik.’

Hivvin got intae the chaumer wi anidder ky, I rinnit tae apen the panels, fer the chaumer wis teem; quickly shivvin them aside, I teetit in. Mr. Heathcliff wis there—layin on his back. His een met mine sae gleg an strang, I stertit; an syne he seemit tae smile. I cwidnae think him deid: but his phizog an haase were waashit wi rain; the bed-claes dreepit, an he wisnae meevin at aa. The windae, caain tae an fro, hidd scrattit ae haun that ristit on the sill; nae bleed treetlit fae the bark that wis brakkit, an fan I pit ma fingers tae it, I cwid doot nae mair: he wis deid an satteral!

I steekit the windae; I combit his blaik lang hair fae his foreheid; I seyit tae caa tee his een: tae pit awaa, gin I cwid, thon frichtfu, life-likent luik o delicht afore onybody else saa it. They widdnae steek: they seemit tae jamph at ma attimpts; an his pairtit lips an shairp fite teeth jamphit an aa! Taen wi anidder fit o cooardice, I skirled oot fer Joseph. Joseph shauchlit up an makkit a soun, but widdnae dee onythin tae middle wi him.

‘Th’ divil’s taen aff his sowel,’ he skraiched, ‘an he may hiv his carcass intae the bargin, fer ocht I care! Ach! Fit a wikkit een he luiks, girnin at deith!’ an the aul sinner grinnit in jamphin. I thocht he wis gaun tae birl roon the bed; but instanter cweelin doon, he faait tae his knees, an heistit his hauns, an gied thunks that the laafu maister an the richt faimly were giein back their richts.

I hidd a richt begeck at the affa on-gyaans; an cwidnae holp but mine aboot the wey things eesed tae be wi a kine o owerpooerin sorra. But peer Hareton, the maist wranged, wis the ainly een faa ralely wint throu muckle. He sat bi the corp aa nicht, greetin sairly. He haudit its haun, an bussed the jamphin, coorse face that aabody else haudit back fae luikin at; an bemained him wi thon intinse sorra which cams naiterally fae a couthie hert, though it be strang as timpirt steel.

Mr. Kenneth wis bumbazit aboot spikkin o fit ullness the maister deid. I hoddit the fack o his hivin swallied naethin fer fower days, feart it micht gang on tae tribble, an syne, I am shair, he didnae bide awaa fae mait deeleeberately: it wis fit cam o his unco ullness, nae the caase.

We beeriet him, tae the begeck o the hale neeborhood, as he wissed. Earnshaw an I, the sexton, an sax chiels tae cairry the coffin, were aa that were in the kirkyaird. The sax chiels wint awaa fan they hidd lat it doon intae the mools: we bade tae see it happit. Hareton, wi a begrutten face, howkit green sods, an pit them ower the broon airth himsel: if noo it is as smeeth an green as the idder mools—an I howp the body in it sleeps as soonly. But the cintra fowks, gin ye spier at them, widd sweer on the Bible that he *wakks*: there are ilky bodies faa spikk tae hivvin trystit wi him naar the kirk, an on the muir, an aiven within this hoose. Orra tales, ye’ll say, an sae say I. Yit thon aul mannie bi the kitchie ingle anoonces he his saait twa on ’em luikin oot o his chaumer windae on ivvery rainy nicht syne his deith: an an unco thing happent tae me aboot a month syne. I wis gaun tae the Grange ae evenin—a mirky evenin, threetenin thunner—an, jist at the turn o the Heichts, I encoontert a wee loonie wi a sheep an twa lambs afore him; he wis greetin sair; an I jalousit the lambs were cyaaperin aboot, an widdnae dee fit they were tellt.

‘Fit is the maitter, ma wee mannie?’ I spiered.

‘There’s Heathcliff and a wumman ower ere, aneth the knowe,’ he grat, ‘un’ I daurnae gang by them.’

I saa naethin; but nedder the sheep nor he widd gang on sae I tellt him takk the laich road. He mair likkly heistit the ghaists fae thunkin, as he wint ower the muirs aa his leen, on the nonsinse he hidd heerd his paarents an friens spikkin aboot. Yit, aye, I dinna like bein oot in the dairk noo; an I dinnae like bein left bi masel in this allagrooze hoose: I canna hep it; I will be glaid fan they leave it, an meeve tae the Grange.

‘They are gaun tae the Grange, syne?’ I said.

‘Aye,’ reponit Mrs. Dean, ‘as seen as they are mairriet, an thon will be on New Eer’s Day.’

‘An faa will bide here syne?’

‘Weel, Joseph will luik aifter the hoose, an, mebbe, a loon tae kep him company. They will bide in the kitchie, an the rist will be shut up.’

‘Fer the eese o sic ghaists as wint tae bide in it?’ I observit.

‘Na, Mr. Lockwood,’ quo Nelly, shakkin her heid. ‘I troo the deid rist quaet: but it isnae richt tae spikk o them in a licht-hertit wey.’

At thon meenit the gairden yett swung tae; the stravaigers were camin back.

‘*They* are feart o naethin,’ I grumphit, watchin them camin throu the windae. ‘Thegither, they widd staun up tae Aul Nick an aa his airmies.’

As they steppit on tae the door-stanes, an stappit tae takk a laist luik at the meen—or, mair correckly, at ilky idder bi her licht—I wis fair garred to ging awaa fae them again; an, pittin summin tae mine me bi intae the haun o Mrs. Dean, an takkin nae tent o her skirls at ma ull menners, I wint oot throu the kitchie as they apent the hoose-door; an sae shidd hae makkit Joseph think he wis richt aboot his fella-seervint’s lichtsome on-gyaans, hidd he nae lickily saa I wis a guid body bi the swate ring o a sovereign at his fit.

My daunner hame wis linthened bi gaan bi the kirk. Fan aneth its waas, I saa it hidd begood tae crummle, aiven in sivven months: mony a windae shawed blaik gaps wi nae gless; an slates owerhingin here an there, ayont the richt line o the reef, tae be bittie bi bittie wirkit aff fan the autumn storms cam.

I socht, an seen fun, the three heidstanes on the knowe neist the muir: the middle een grey, an hauf beeriet in the hidder; ainly Edgar Linton’s weel yokit by the girse an moss craapin up its fit; Heathcliff’s aye clair.

I dachlit roon them, aneth thon douce lift: watchit the mochs fleein amang the hidder an harebells, listed tae the saft win souchin throu the girse, an wunnert foo onybody cwid ivver imaigine unquaet slumbers fer the bodies ristin aneth thon quaet airth.

END