



Wuthering Heights

Emily Brontë (1818 - 1848)

Read by:	Ruth Golding	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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Wuthering Heights by Emily Brontë was written between October 1845 and June 1846 and published in 1847 under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. It was her first and only published novel: she died the following year, at age 30. The decision to publish came after the success of her sister Charlotte's novel, *Jane Eyre*. After Emily's death, Charlotte edited the manuscript of *Wuthering Heights*, and arranged for the edited version to be published as a posthumous second edition in 1850. *Wuthering Heights* is the name of the farmhouse on the Yorkshire moors where the story unfolds. The book's core theme is the destructive effect that jealousy and vengefulness have, both on the jealous or vengeful individuals and on their communities. Although *Wuthering Heights* is now widely regarded as a classic of English literature, it received mixed re-

views when first published, and was considered controversial because its depiction of mental and physical cruelty was unusually stark, and it challenged strict Victorian ideals of the day, including religious hypocrisy, morality, social classes and gender inequality. The English poet and painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti referred to it as a "fiend of a book — an incredible monster."

Emily Brontë (July 30, 1818 – December 19, 1848) was the younger sister of Charlotte Brontë and the fifth of six children in the noted family of Patrick Brontë, an Irish Anglican curate, and his wife Maria Branwell. Her mother died when she was three, and she was educated at the family home in Naworth, Yorkshire by her father and aunt Elizabeth Branwell after a brief period at the Clergy Daughter's School. A typhoid epidemic at the school prompted the removal of the girls and claimed the lives of her two oldest sisters. The remaining children were exposed to a wide range of literature of the day and spent much of their leisure time enacting imaginary adventures and writing fiction. At seventeen Emily attended Roe Head's girl's school, where her sister Charlotte was a teacher, but stayed only a few months. At twenty she taught school in Halifax but lasted less than a year under the demands of the seventeen-hour workdays. The sisters had an ambition to open a small school, and traveled to Brussels in 1842 to perfect their French and German, but were forced to return to England following the death of their aunt. Emily was a solitary, shy person and seemed to have had no friends outside her family. She was an ardent lover of nature, a keen observer of others, a kind and warm listener, but volunteered little of her own thoughts and feelings. She was described by Eva Hope in *Queens of Literature of the Victorian Era* as having "a peculiar mixture of timidity and Spartan-like courage". *Wuthering Heights* was published in 1847 under a masculine pseudonym and she was never recognized as its author during her lifetime. She died three months after the death of her brother Branwell in 1848 of tuberculosis that developed after catching a severe cold at his funeral and refusing medical treatment.