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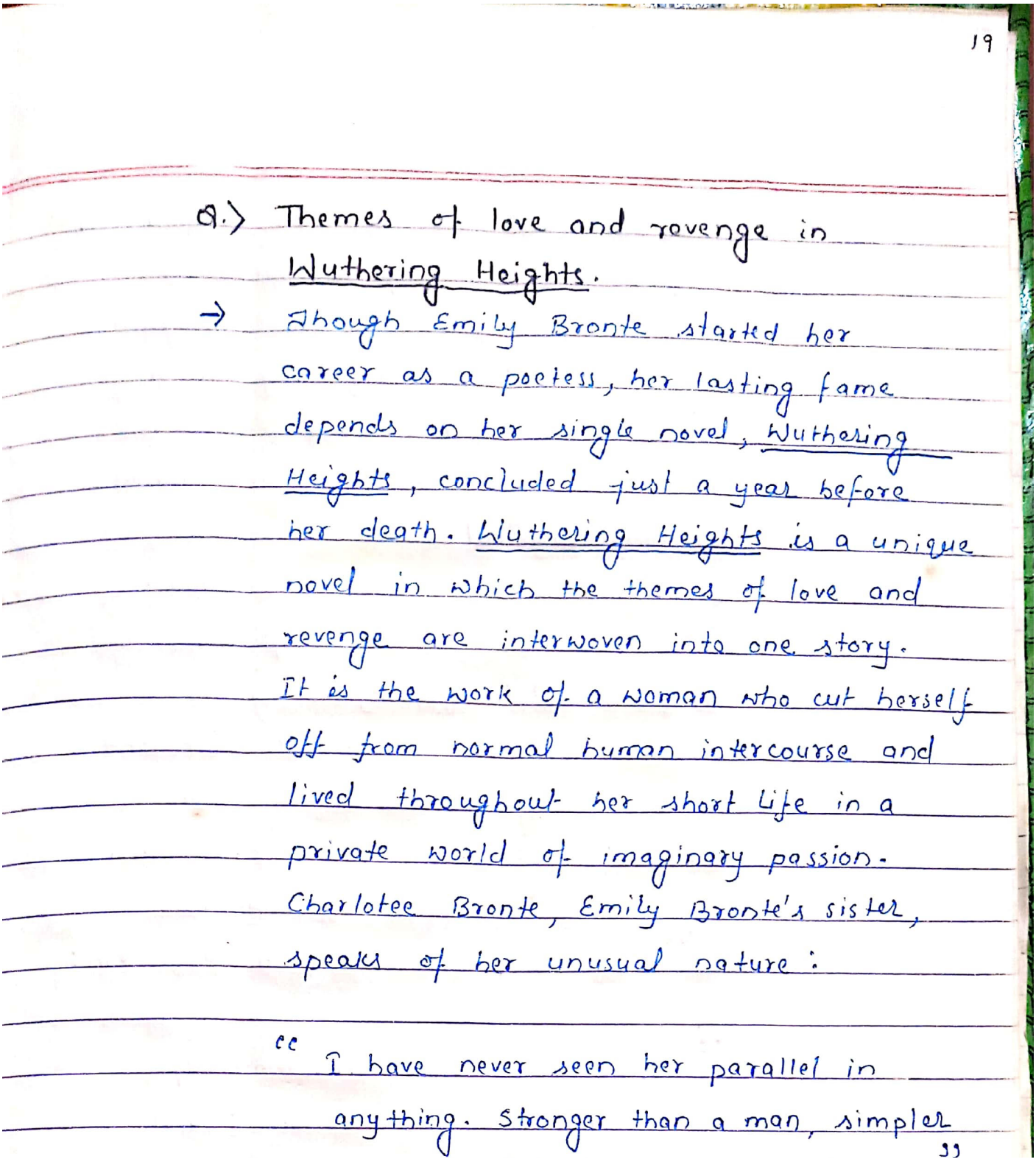

19

Q.) Themes of love and revenge in Wuthering Heights.

→ Though Emily Bronte started her career as a poetess, her lasting fame depends on her single novel, Wuthering Heights, concluded just a year before her death. Wuthering Heights is a unique novel in which the themes of love and revenge are interwoven into one story. It is the work of a woman who cut herself off from normal human intercourse and lived throughout her short life in a private world of imaginary passion. Charlotee Bronte, Emily Bronte's sister, speaks of her unusual nature:

"I have never seen her parallel in anything. Stronger than a man, simpler"

than a child, her nature stood alone.

Wuthering Heights is a singular Victorian novel. The treatment of love and revenge in it is quite different from their usual treatment in other novels of the Victorian age. The central love situation in the novel is the love of Heathcliff and Catherine. Heathcliff, rough as heath and hard as cliff, is a gypsy orphan brought up in the family of Mr. Earnshaw. Both Heathcliff and Catherine live together in Wuthering Heights, the name of Mr. Earnshaw's dwelling. They play together and grow together; and gradually they fall in love with each other. Their love is not the love at first sight; nor is it based on any physical charm or sexual passion. Love between Heathcliff and Catherine is rather based on their spiritual and temperamental affinity. It grows between them like a natural plant and derives strong sustenance from their intimate emotional relationship. Catherine

suggests her spiritual affinity for Heathcliff in conversation with Nelly Dean:

"Whatever our souls are made of, his and mine are the same; and Linton's is as different as a moonbeam from lightening or frost from fire."

Though Catherine loves Heathcliff, she marries Edgar Linton. Her marriage to Linton is prompted by her worldly considerations. Edgar Linton is young and handsome and comes of a respectable family. On the other hand, Heathcliff ~~Hindley~~ is a dark skinned gypsy degraded by Hindley to the level of a domestic servant. Catherine expresses to

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