

In Anne Brontë's novel *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, the epistolary narrative created by Gilbert Markham seen in this extract serves to put the reader in the position of his friend and unseen character Jack Halford, building suspense and interest in the story that has yet to unfold.

A tone of urgency and excitement is conveyed through the interjections seen throughout the letter, drawing the reader in by creating intrigue. Gilbert interrupts himself while writing the letter, often correcting and adding onto his elaborate tale. This can most prominently be seen with his interjection of '-no not a sketch-', as it is here that we see inside the character of Gilbert, though his name is unknown to us at this point. It is important to note the latter, as it is through this opening letter that Anne Brontë introduces him as the possessor of an intriguing tale. The structural choice of ending this letter with a further interjection at the end of saying 'it shall be a tale of many chapters.-', leads the reader onto the first chapter fluidly, leaving no chance to collect oneself or prepare. It therefore plunges the reader into the tale, instead of using the staggered introductory process that a reader is often subjected to. In this way, the reader is put into the same position as Halford, exacerbated by the direct address intended for the receiver, as neither person knows where the story will go.

The complex sentences used to compose the letter mimic the fact that the tale will be one 'of many chapters', again building interest in the story for both Halford, and the reader. The sentences, filled with interjections and clauses, instil impatience in the reader, making them desire the details that Gilbert promises he 'will not spare' them from. The length of the sentences is teasing, a most-likely intentional choice from the character of Gilbert, who is clearly already in trouble for not 'being in a story-telling humour' when the two last met. Anne Brontë effectively uses the length of the sentences to intrigue the reader, making them 'like a long story' just like Halford.

In addition, Gilbert's language can be seen to turn Romantic and hyperbolic, mocking Halford, and by default the reader, further. His change of tone when mentioning how 'it is as soaking, rainy day' and how he is 'alone in [his] library', creates an almost Gothic atmosphere, with the 'musty old letters and papers' of his past. This is telling of Gilbert, clearly playing the story up to please the recipient. The mention of the 'rainy day' is suggestive of pathetic fallacy, and the reader is therefore left to assume that the future story will be riddled with tumultuous events.

In conclusion, Anne Brontë places the reader in the position of Halford through literary techniques embedded in the epistolary narrative of the novel. This creates an air of intrigue, and effectively draws the reader in before they have the chance to leave.