

TWENTIETH CENTURY-FOX
PRESENTS

JANE EYRE

By
CHARLOTTE BRONTË

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MV-41

Author Biography

Charlotte Brontë was born on April 21st 1816 at Thornton, Bradford in Yorkshire. Charlotte was raised in a strict Anglican home by her clergyman father and a religious aunt after her mother and two eldest siblings died. She and her sister Emily attended the Clergy Daughter's School at Cowan Bridge, but were largely educated at home. Though she tried to earn a living as both a governess and a teacher. Charlotte missed her sisters and eventually returned home. Charlotte published her first novel, ***Jane Eyre***, in 1847 under the manly pseudonym Currer Bell. Though controversial in its criticism of society's treatment of impoverished women, the book was an immediate hit. She followed the success with ***Shirley*** in 1848 and ***Villette*** in 1853. In 1854, Charlotte married Arthur Bell Nicholls, but died the following year during her pregnancy. The first novel she ever wrote, ***The Professor***, was published posthumously in 1857.



Introduction to Jane Eyre



Characters

- Jane Eyre** – The protagonist of the novel.
- Mrs. Sarah Reed** – Widow of Jane's uncle.
- Eliza Reed** – Oldest daughter in the Reed family.
- Georgiana Reed** – Youngest daughter in the Reed family.
- John Reed** – Only son in the Reed family, a bully, Jane's cousin.
- Bessie Lee** – Servant at Gateshead Hall.
- Mrs. Temple** – Kind teacher at Lowood School.
- Helen Burns** – Jane's best friend at Lowood school.
- Mr. Brocklehurst** – Headmaster at Lowood School.
- Edward Fairfax Rochester** – Master of Thornfield Hall.
- Bertha Rochester** - Mad wife of Edward Rochester.
- Adèle** – Ward of Mr. Edward Rochester, Jane's Pupil at Thornfield.
- Mrs. Alice Fairfax** – Housekeeper at Thornfield Hall.
- St. John Eyre Rivers** – Minister of the parish at Morton.
- Diana & Mary Rivers** - Sisters of St. John Rivers.

Jane Eyre

The protagonist and narrator of the novel Jane is an intelligent, honest, plain-featured young girl that has to face oppression, inequality, and hardship. Although she meets a series of people who threaten her autonomy, Jane repeatedly succeeds at preserving herself and maintains her principles of justice, human dignity, and morality. She also values intellectual and emotional fulfillment. Her strong belief in social equality, challenging the Victorian prejudices against women and poor.



Edward Rochester

Jane's employer and the master of Thornfield. He is a wealthy, passionate man with a dark secret that gives the reader much of the novel's suspense. He is unconventional, ready to go against polite manners, propriety, and consideration of social class, in order to interact with Jane frankly and directly. He is rude, impetuous, and has spent much of his life roaming about Europe trying to avoid the consequences of his youthful past. His problems are partly the result of his own recklessness, but he is a sympathetic figure, and has been described as a suffering character because of his early marriage to Bertha.



Bertha

She is a complex presence. She obstacles Jane's happiness, but she also increases the growth of Jane's self-understanding. The mystery surrounding Bertha establishes suspense and terror to the plot and the atmosphere. Bertha serves as a reminder of Rochester's youthful libertinism. She can also be interpreted as a symbol: she could represents Britain's fear that psychologically "locked away" the other cultures during the period of imperialism; Bertha was in fact from Jamaica. She also could be seen as the typical Victorian wife who is expected never to travel or work outside the house. She's definitely is linked to the figure of social inequality of women in 19th century.



St. John Rivers

With his sisters, Mary and Diana He is described as Jane's benefactor after she runs away from Thornfield, giving her food and shelter. He is a well-mannered man, fair, blue-eyed, with a Grecian profile, but cold and reserved, often controlled in his interactions with others. Because he is entirely alienated from his feelings and devoted solely to an austere ambition, he could be seen as a foil to Edward Rochester.



The novel goes through five distinct stages (plot)

1. Jane's childhood at Gateshead, where she is abused by her aunt and cousins.
2. Her education at Lowood school, where she acquires friends and role models, but also suffers privations.
3. Her time as governess at Thornfield, where she falls in love with her Byronic employer Edward Rochester.
4. Her time with the Rivers family at Morton, where her cold cousin St. John Rivers proposes to her.
5. Her reunion with her beloved Rochester at his house of Ferdean.

Themes

Social Position



Religion



Family



Love & Passion



External Beauty vs Internal Beauty





