

Jane Eyre

Charlotte Brontë

Bildungsroman

The psychological and moral growth of the protagonist from youth to adulthood

Unusual heroine

She cannot rely on beauty as she is unattractive. Plain Jane. She defies the standards of womanhood of the time. Feminist icon.



Youth

- Jane is an orphan and lives at Gateshead Hall with her relations : the Reeds
- Emarginated and bullied by her aunt and cousins, she is soon punished when she reacts to violence
- She is relegated to the red room where she believes to see her uncle's ghost
- She is sent to Lowood, a charity school for girls, as she manifests a «tendency for deceit»
- Lowood is run by Mr Brockelhurst.



LOWOOD

- Harsh life
- Befriends Helen Burns
- Punished for dropping her slate.
- She is obliged to stand on a stool, as she is a sinner and a liar.
- She is defended by Miss Temple
- Helen and Miss Temple become the role model of her growth.
- Typhus epidemic strikes
- Helen dies of consumption in Jane's arms
- Brockelhurst's maltreatment of the girls is found and a new building is erected thanks to some benefactors and conditions improve.
- Leaves after 8 years to be governess at Thornfield



Mr Rochester as Byronic hero

- *A Byronic hero is a romantic literary character who also possesses dark, mysterious, and villainous traits. The term "Byronic hero" originated from Lord Byron's narrative poem Childe Harold's Pilgrimage.*
- **Rude and cold** . *From their first meeting Rochester teases Jane.*
- **Power of seduction and attraction** . *Described as ugly and «old» (35), he is very sympathetic.*
- **Mysterious, magnetic.**
- **Social and sexual dominance**
- **Troubled past**
- **Emotionally conflicted, bipolar tendencies or moodiness.**
- **Cynical**
- **Liar**



Thornfield

the field of thorns (pain , sorrows)

- Jane takes the position of governess teaching Adèle Varens a French young girl, who lives at Thornfield.
- Jane and Rochester meet after a while, because of a horse accident she is blamed for.
- She finds him old, ugly, rude.
- Only at Thornfield she learns that the man is the master.
- They soon start to enjoy each other's company and mutual feelings and understanding grow.
- Odd things happens in the house: screams, ghosts, Mr Rochester's room is set on fire.
- He wants to make her jealous , inviting beautiful Blanche Ingram and a party of friends at Thornfield.
- She leaves to attend her dying aunt, who confesses to have wronged her as she had said to her living uncle, that Jane had died.
- Jane comes back and love blossoms
- Jane accepts Mr Rochester's proposal of marriage.
- Wait a minute.....



Is this a respectable match according to Victorian standards?

Mr Rochester has:

- Breed
- Connections
- Money

Jane Eyre is:

- an orphan
- Unrelated
- Below his station

Hence.....

