

PART FOURTEEN

'It isn't a dream. I'm here and I love you, and I'll never leave you again.'

I kissed his blind eyes. 'I've come back to you, sir, as an independent woman.'

'What do you mean, Jane?'

'My uncle in Madeira died and left me five thousand pounds.'

'Ah! This is real! I would never dream of five thousand pounds!' he cried. His face was full of joy, but suddenly the sadness and anger returned to it. He frowned and said, 'I'm free, Jane. There's no mad wife to come between us now, but you won't want to marry a blind man with one hand! Look,' he said, showing me his mutilated arm. 'Isn't it disgusting?'

'Not at all. Seeing you like this only makes me love you more.'

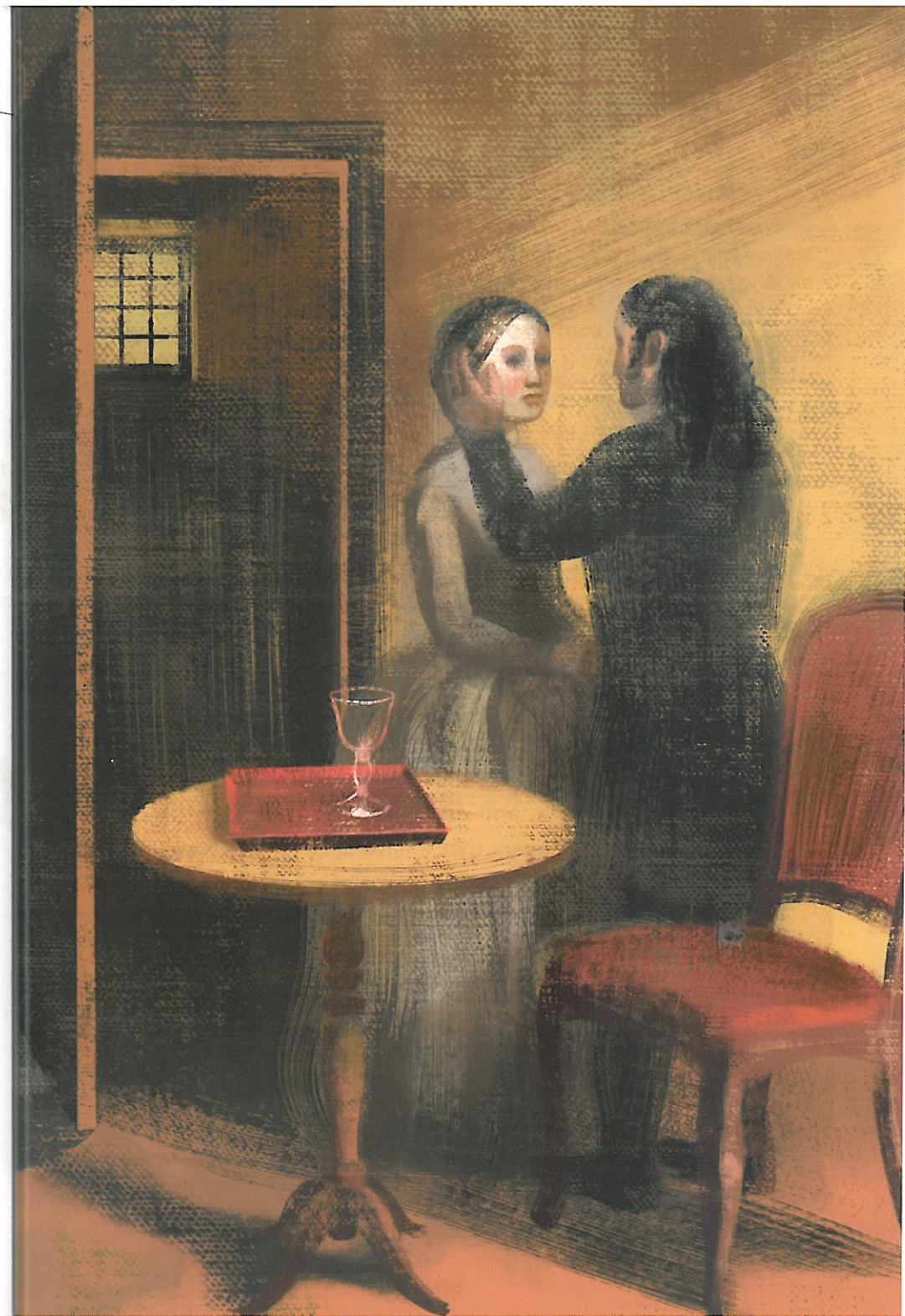
'But you must think I'm very ugly now, Jane.'

'You were never handsome, sir,' I said with a smile.

I called Leah and asked her to prepare a room for me and then bring us some supper. Slowly my master relaxed as we talked, and his face shone with happiness.

'You know, Jane, I've had a lot of time to think in these long lonely months. I thought about God and prayed to Him for the first time in many years. I realised that God had taken you away from me, and He was right to do so. I didn't deserve you. He punished me for my sins. He blinded and crippled me, but He was right to do so. I'd tried to spoil your innocence, Jane. I had no right to do that. One night — it was last Monday, near midnight — I finally understood it all, and I cried out to you aloud. "Jane!", and I imagined I heard your voice reply, "I'm coming!" What do you think it means?'

Reader, it was on Monday night around midnight that I had heard my master's voice and replied with those very words!



'Where have you been all this time?' he asked, when we had finished supper.

'Far away, staying with good people.'

'Who were they?'

'I'll tell you tomorrow, sir. Tonight I'm tired. I've been travelling for three days.'

'But, before you go, just tell me — were they all ladies, these good people?'

I laughed and kissed him, then I went to my room.

Reader, I married him. Our wedding was a quiet one. When we came home from church, I went into the kitchen and said to Leah and John, 'This morning Mr Rochester and I were married.'

Leah looked up from her work and said, 'Did you, Miss?'

John smiled and said, 'I knew it! Congratulations, Miss!'

I wrote to my three cousins to say what I had done. Diana and Mary both wrote back with warm congratulations. St John never answered my letter. Six months later he wrote to me from India. He didn't mention my marriage or Mr Rochester, but told me about his life in India, and expressed the hope that I hadn't forgotten God. In the years that followed, he wrote to me often. He never married, but dedicated his whole life to God's work. Diana and Mary were both happily married, and often came to see us with their husbands.

I've now been married for ten years. I've been very happy all that time, because I'm my husband's life and he's mine. For the first two years of our marriage my Edward was blind, but gradually his sight came back. When our son was born, he could see that the boy had inherited his own large, brilliant, black eyes. We then both prayed to God, to thank Him for His infinite mercy.

The text and beyond

1 Comprehension check

Who said what and why? Match the quotes with the character who said them and then match the quotes with the reason why they said them. Some characters may say more than one quote. There is an example at the beginning.

Who

The inkeeper (I) John (Jo) Mr Rochester (R) Jane (J)

What

- 1 'I was the late Mr Rochester's butler.'
- 2 'Please tell me about the fire.'
- 3 'I'm coming to that, Miss.'
- 4 'Good God!'
- 5 'He's blind now and he lost one hand.'
- 6 'Am I going mad?'
- 7 'This is real!'
- 8 'Isn't it disgusting?'
- 9 'I knew it!'
- 10 'Were they all ladies, these good people?'

Why

- A He has just heard that Mr Rochester has married Jane.
- B He is showing Jane his hand.
- C He is a little annoyed at being interrupted.
- D He can't believe that Jane has actually come back to him.
- E He is jealous.
- F She has just heard about the death of her love's wife.
- G He has learned that Jane has a fair amount of money.
- H She doesn't want to hear her own sad love story.
- I He is saying why he is familiar with Thornfield Hall.
- J He is describing Mr Rochester's present condition.

2 Plain Jane and the Beast

Many literary critics have noticed the references in *Jane Eyre* to fairy tales, particularly *Beauty and the Beast*, *Bluebeard* and *Cinderella*. However, the only direct reference is to *Bluebeard* – the story of a violent aristocrat who kills his wives and hides their bodies in his castle. Jane thinks about *Bluebeard* as she explores Thornfield. Obviously, Mr Rochester who hides his mad wife in a room has something in common with the evil aristocrat Bluebeard.

Read the short adaptation of the fairy tale *Beauty and the Beast*. Say which of the aspects of *Jane Eyre* listed below (A-L) correspond to the underlined parts of the tale. There are four sentences you do not need to use.

A merchant with three daughters lost all his money, and then he decided to return to the city to see if he could make it back again.

(1) Two of the daughters told him to bring them expensive dresses and jewellery from the city. The third sister, whose name was Beauty, said, 'I don't want anything, father.' 'But you must want something, dear,' said her father. 'Well, since you insist, I would like one beautiful rose,' said Beauty. The father left them and went to the city. His business went badly again. On his way home, he got lost in a large wood. He was hungry and cold.

(2) Fortunately, he came upon an isolated castle. He entered. He found food and a place to sleep. The next morning, when he woke, he found clean clothes. (3) As he was leaving he saw a beautiful rose garden. He picked a rose for Beauty. Just then a Beast appeared. The Beast told him that he would be punished for taking the rose. 'But I picked the rose for my daughter,' said the man. 'I have three beautiful daughters.' 'Oh,' said the Beast. 'If you send me one of your daughters, I will not kill you. Go then and send one of them here to me.' The man did not intend to send one of his daughters, but he wanted to see them again. When Beauty heard what had happened, she insisted on going herself. She went to the castle and expected to be killed. Instead, the Beast treated her very well. (4) They talked every evening, and she enjoyed his intelligent talk and company. Then one day Beauty saw in a Magic Mirror that her father was very ill. She begged the Beast to let her go and see him again. 'You may go,' he said, 'but you must return in

a week.' So, Beauty returned home. When her sisters heard how much Beauty liked her life in the Beast's castle, they tried to keep her from returning. (5) But one night Beauty dreamed that she found the Beast dead. (6) She was very upset, because, despite his ugliness, Beauty had begun to love the Beast. She hurried back to the Castle and found him lying on the ground. He was dead. 'Oh, Beast!' she cried, 'I really love you!' (7) Just then the Beast came magically back to life, and turned into a handsome Prince. Beauty and the Beast, now a prince, married and were happy. (8) A magic fairy came and told Beauty that she was being rewarded because she preferred virtue to beauty and superficial pleasantness.

- A When Jane returned to Thornfield and saw the ruins of the house, she thought that Rochester was dead; and she learned from the innkeeper that he was alive, but only after being confused when the innkeeper spoke of the 'late Mr Rochester'.
- B Jane did not love Mr Rochester for his money and did not want an expensive wedding dress.
- C Thornfield was a large, lonely house in the English countryside.
- D Jane walked around the moors for a long time before she came to the house of St John and his sisters.
- E Thornfield had many trees near it and also a rose garden.
- F Jane stayed with Rochester even though he was blind and his face was deformed after the fire.
- G Jane refused the easy way of staying with Mr Rochester, a wealthy man, after she learned that he was married, but she became wealthy anyway from a great inheritance.
- H Jane lived with her wealthy aunt but her cousins did not like her.
- I Rochester proposes to Jane in the rose garden and immediately afterwards, the chestnut tree there was struck by lightning.
- J Jane and Mr Rochester found each other's conversation stimulating; they spent time together as intellectual equals.
- K Jane and Mr Rochester first met when Mr Rochester fell off his horse.
- L Jane left St John and his sister when she heard Rochester's voice and knew that he needed her help.

Jane as Romantic *Revolutionary*

Although *Jane Eyre* was published in 1847, its values are very much those of the Romantic period, inspired by the new visions of the American and French revolutions. The ideas and values of Jean Jacques Rousseau's *Social Contract* (1762), the *Declaration of Independence* by Thomas Jefferson (1776), Thomas Paine's *The Rights of Man* (1791-92) and Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* (1792) are all influences in the formation of Jane's character.

Rousseau's *Social Contract* begins with the famous line, 'Man was born free, and everywhere he is in chains'. Jane echoes this in her statement '... no one born free would ever accept rudeness, not even for thirty pounds a year' (Part Three), to which Rochester replies, 'Nonsense! Many people would accept anything for thirty pounds a year!'

Rochester's idea is perhaps more realistic and mature, but the passionate idealism of Jane's assertion¹ is admirable and refreshing: Victorian readers were not used to women characters speaking like this.

An even clearer example occurs towards the end of Part Six. Rochester addresses Jane with the traditional language of love, which tends to see the beloved woman as something other than human: 'Jane, be still, don't struggle like a little bird trying to escape'. Jane responds by asserting her free and independent

1. **assertion** : something that you say that you strongly believe.



Charlotte Gainsbourg as Jane in the film *Jane Eyre* (1996) by Franco Zeffirelli.

humanity: 'I'm not a bird: I'm a free human being with an independent will, and I'm now using that will to leave you'. The use of the words 'free' and 'will' in close proximity suggests that Jane's freedom was given to her by God and therefore cannot be taken away by man. But the inclusion of the word 'independent' echoes the American *Declaration of Independence* by Thomas Jefferson.

Earlier in this scene, Jane insists that she and Rochester are equals, despite differences in age, social class and gender. She makes her claim of equality on the basis of religious belief: her point is that, though she and Rochester are not

equals in the eyes of society, they are equals in the eyes of God: '... it's my spirit that addresses your spirit, just as if both had passed through death and stood at God's feet, equal as we are!'

Again, the ideas and the diction remind us of the American *Declaration of Independence*, in which the fact that 'all men are created equal and independent' is the basis of the belief that everyone has the right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

The relationship between Rochester and Jane is a revolutionary one, and it is placed in contrast with the very conventional relationship between Rochester and Blanche. Rochester's apparent interest in



A scene from the film *Jane Eyre* (1996) by Franco Zeffirelli.

Blanche is based on her beauty, her social class and flirtation; his love for Jane is based on mutual need, sympathy and respect. Although, as we have seen, Rochester approaches Jane with conventional love language in Part Six, by Part Nine he has learned a new way of loving: 'I look into her eyes and know that I can never break her spirit that resolute, wild, free thing looking out at me. It is your spirit I want, Jane'.

In Part Fourteen, when Jane returns to Rochester, she says, 'I've come back to you, sir, as an independent woman'. Here the word 'independent' is not used in the sense that Thomas Jefferson gave it but rather in the financial sense: Jane now has her own fortune;

when she marries Rochester, she will bring money to the marriage. If she had been able to marry him in Part Eight, she would have been entirely dependent upon him financially. Feminist writers from Mary Wollstonecraft to Virginia Woolf insisted on the importance of financial independence as the first step in the liberation of women. In *The Rights of Man*, Thomas Paine wrote: 'Men are born, and always continue, free and equal in respect of their rights'. If we change the first word to 'people', we can see *Jane Eyre*, on one level, as case study demonstrating the truth of Paine's assertion.

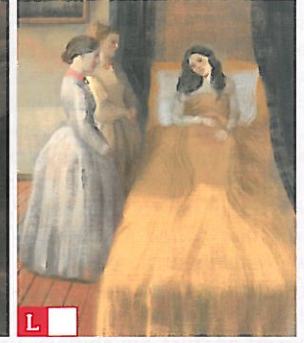
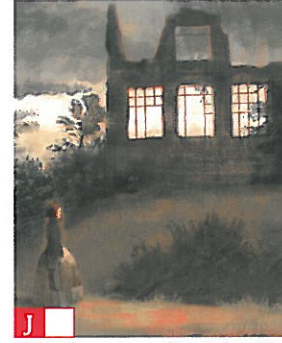
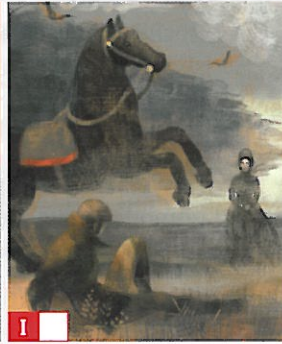
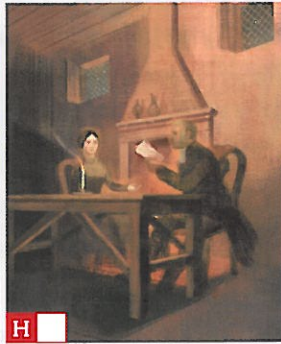
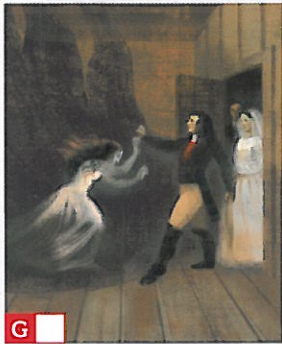
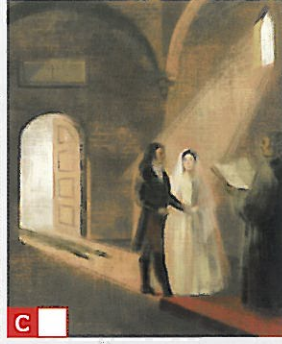
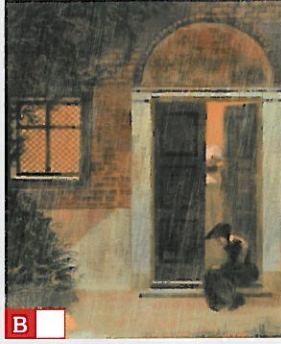
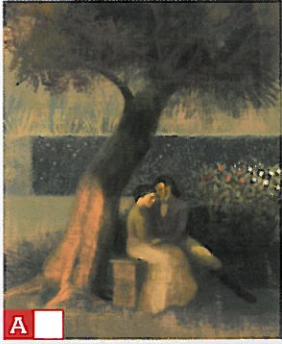
1 Comprehension check

Read the following statements and say whether they are true (T) or false (F). Then correct the false ones.

- | | T | F |
|---|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Thomas Jefferson helped form Jane's character. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2 Jane is a very realistic and practical person. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3 Jane surprised her first readers. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4 Rochester always treats Jane as his equal. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5 Jane's ideas about equality among people of different social classes are religious in nature. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 6 Rochester and Blanche's relationship must have shocked Victorian readers. | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7 Rochester never really understands what Jane's real nature is. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8 Feminist writers ignored the importance of money in women's lives. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

1 Picture summary

Look at the pictures. Put them in the order in which they appear in the novel.



2 A graphic novel

Photocopy these two pages, cut out the pictures and stick them on paper in the right order. Think of words to put in the balloons when the characters are speaking or thinking. Do not use the words that were used in this book! Then write at least a sentence under each picture to narrate what is happening.

- These are the heroines of the following novels:
- Moll Flanders by Daniel Defoe (1722)
 - Pride and Prejudice by Jane Austen (1813)
 - Madame Bovary by Gustave Flaubert (1856)
 - Middlemarch by George Eliot (1872)
 - Anna Karenina by Lev Tolstoy (1873-77)
 - Tess of the D'Urbervilles by Thomas Hardy (1891).

Footnote on page 40

Britain had its first woman doctor in 1870 and its first policewoman in 1914. Female chefs were unknown then. Women could be nurses, but it was not considered a respectable profession. It was Florence Nightingale (1820-1910) who made nursing into a respectable profession. Women could also be seamstresses, which was an extremely hard and poorly paid job. The office secretary did not start to become a typically female profession until the 1880s with the arrival of the typewriter.

From page 52

This reader uses the **EXPANSIVE READING** approach, where the text becomes a springboard to improve language skills and to explore historical background, cultural connections and other topics suggested by the text.

The new structures introduced in this step of our **READING & TRAINING** series are listed below. Naturally, structures from lower steps are included too. For a complete list of structures used over all the six steps, see *The Black Cat Guide to Graded Readers*, which is also downloadable at no cost from our website, www.blackcat-cideb.com or www.cideb.it.

The vocabulary used at each step is carefully checked against vocabulary lists used for internationally recognised examinations.

Step Five B2.2

All the structures used in the previous levels, plus the following:

Verb tenses

Present Perfect and Past Perfect Simple:

negative duration (*haven't ... for ages*)

Present Perfect Continuous: recent activities

leading to present situation

Past Perfect Continuous

Verb forms and patterns

Passive forms: Past Perfect Simple;

with modal verbs

Reported speech introduced by more examples

of precise reporting verbs (e.g. *threaten,*

insist, complain)

Wish and *if only* + past tense

It's time + past tense

Modal verbs

Should(n't) have, ought (not) to have:

duty in the past

Must have, can't have, may have, might have,

could have: deduction and probability in the past

Types of clause

3rd conditionals with *unless*

Mixed conditional sentences

Complex sentences with more than one subordinate clause

Available at **Step Five:**

- **The Age of Innocence** Edith Wharton
- **Emma** Jane Austen
- **Frankenstein** Mary Shelley
- **Gothic Short Stories**
- **The Grapes of Wrath** John Steinbeck
- **Great Expectations** Charles Dickens
- **The Great Gatsby** F. Scott Fitzgerald
- **Heart of Darkness** Joseph Conrad
- **Jane Eyre** Charlotte Brontë
- **Middlemarch** George Eliot
- **The Murders in the Rue Morgue and The Purloined Letter** Edgar Allan Poe
- **Pamela** Samuel Richardson
- **A Passage to India** E. M. Forster
- **Persuasion** Jane Austen
- **The Picture of Dorian Gray** Oscar Wilde
- **The Portrait of a Lady** Henry James
- **Pride and Prejudice** Jane Austen
- **The Problem of Cell 13** Jacques Futrelle
- **Robinson Crusoe** Daniel Defoe
- **A Room with a View** E. M. Forster
- **The Scarlet Letter** Nathaniel Hawthorne
- **Sense and Sensibility** Jane Austen
- **Sons and Lovers** D. H. Lawrence
- **A Tale of Two Cities** Charles Dickens
- **The Taming of the Shrew** William Shakespeare
- **Tess of the D'Urbervilles** Thomas Hardy
- **Vanity Fair** William Thackeray
- **Wuthering Heights** Emily Brontë