**1.16.40**

**JANE:**You are to be married.

**ROCHESTER:** Indeed. I see Mrs. Fairfax hasintimated my intention to put myneck into the sacred noose.

**JANE:** Adele should go to school. And Imust seek another situation.

*She walks on. Then turns.*

**JANE:** Congratulations, sir.

*Rochester catches her up. He walks with her out of the garden and into the grounds beyond.*

**ROCHESTER:** Thornfield is a pleasant place insummer, isn't it?

**JANE:** Yes sir.

**ROCHESTER:** You’ll be sorry to part with it.It’s always the way with events inlife. No sooner have you got settledthan a voice cries ‘rise and moveon!’ I’ll find you a new situationJane, one I hope that you’ll accept.

**JANE:** I shall be ready when your order tomarch comes.

*Rochester blocks her path.*

**ROCHESTER:** Must I really lose a faithful paidsubordinate such as yourself?

**JANE:** You must.

*Jane turns and keeps on walking - into a wilder part of the estate.*

**ROCHESTER:** We've been good friends, haven't we?

**JANE:** Yes, sir.

**ROCHESTER:** I have a strange feeling with regardto you: as if I had a stringsomewhere under my left ribs, tightlyknotted to a similar string in you.And if you were to leave I’m afraidthat cord of communion would snap.And then I’ve a notion that I’d taketo bleeding inwardly. As for you -You’d forget me.

*Jane finally stops, her great distress escaping her.*

**JANE:** How? I've lived a full life here. Ihave known happiness. I’ve talkedface to face with what I reverenceand delight in - an original,expanded mind. I have known you Mr.Rochester -

**ROCHESTER:** Then why must you leave?

**JANE:** Because of your wife!

**ROCHESTER:** Jane... you must stay.

**JANE:** And become nothing to you? Am I amachine without feelings? Do youthink that because I am poor,obscure, plain and little that I amsoulless and heartless? I have asmuch soul as you and full as muchheart. And if God had blessed mewith beauty and wealth I could make

it as hard for you to leave me as it is for I to leave you.

*This comes as a revelation to Rochester.*

**JANE:** I’m not speaking to you throughmortal flesh. It's my spirit thataddresses your spirit as if we'dpassed through the grave and stoodat God's feet, equal - as we are.

*Rochester takes Jane in his arms.*

**ROCHESTER:** As we are.

*She struggles.*

**ROCHESTER:** Don’t struggle -

**JANE:** *(Freeing herself)*I am a free human being with anindependent will, which I now exert

to leave you.

*Rochester releases her.*

**ROCHESTER:** Then let your will decide yourdestiny. I offer you my hand, myheart and a share of all this.

*He gestures towards the house, the land. Jane is stunned.*

**ROCHESTER:** I ask you to pass through life at my side. Jane, you are my equal and my likeness. Will you marry me?

**JANE:** Are you mocking me?

**ROCHESTER:** Do you doubt me?

**JANE:** Entirely. Your bride is Miss Ingram -

**ROCHESTER:** Miss Ingram? She is the machinewithout feelings. It's you – yourare, unearthly thing. Poor andobscure as you are - please acceptme as your husband.

*Jane begins to believe him, she studies his face.*

**ROCHESTER:** I must have you for my own.

**JANE:** You wish me to be your wife?

**ROCHESTER:** I swear it.

**JANE:** You love me?

**ROCHESTER:** I do.

**JANE:** Then sir, I will marry you.