***Jane Eyre***

***Chapter 8***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Short Summary:***

Jane feels she will never achieve her goal of being liked and gaining her peers' respect. Helen brings Jane's bread and coffee from the refectory then sits down on the floor next to her. Helen says the other girls feel pity toward her because of Mr. Brocklehurst's actions. Jane is calmed by Helen's words, although she does not believe the parts about spirits watching over her from another realm. Miss Temple calls the two to her private room and asks Jane for her side of the story. Miss Temple says she believes Jane and will also write Mr. Lloyd for verification, so to make it more believable. The three talk, and Jane notices that Helen is quite lively and believes Helen's beauty reflects off that of Miss Temple. Helen is punished for being sloppy and has to wear a sign, which Jane burns later. Miss Temple reads the letter from Mr. Lloyd vindicating Jane and the school embraces her. Jane begins learning new things and feels content and secure.

***Short Analysis:***

This chapter is another turning point for Jane. She has been accused falsely by Mr. Brocklehurst and has been brought down, she believes, forever. With the help of friends Helen and Miss Temple, however, the injustice is righted and Jane begins her studies again with renewed energy and faith in the love of her fellow students and teachers.

Miss Temple seems to be the only one at Lowood, besides Jane, who understands and appreciates Helen for her beautiful nature. As Miss Temple and Helen talk, this inner beauty illuminates Helen's usually pale, lifeless face. Miss Temple also takes a special interest in Helen's cough. This cough is a sign or foreshadowing that Helen is becoming sick.

***Summary in detail(Chapt:***

Finally, at five o’clock, the students disperse, and Jane collapses to the floor. Deeply ashamed, she is certain that her reputation at Lowood has been ruined, but Helen assures her that most of the girls felt more pity for Jane than revulsion at her alleged deceitfulness. Jane tells Miss Temple that she is not a liar, and relates the story of her tormented childhood at Gateshead. Miss Temple seems to believe Jane and writes to Mr. Lloyd requesting confirmation of Jane’s account of events. Miss Temple offers Jane and Helen tea and seed cake, endearing herself even further to Jane. When Mr. Lloyd’s letter arrives and corroborates Jane’s story, Miss Temple publicly declares Jane to be innocent. Relieved and contented, Jane devotes herself to her studies. She excels at drawing and makes progress in French. When school is dismissed, Jane falls to the floor, filled with self-pity and shame that all of the students despise her because of Mr. Brocklehurst’s false accusations. Helen assures her that everyone actually sympathize with her maltreatment. Jane tells Helen of her aching need to have love from others to survive, but Helen tells her that she puts too much stock in love from others; the rewards of spirituality and the glorious afterlife should be our ballast. Miss Temple finds them and takes Helen and Jane to her room, where she asks Jane to tell her version of the story concerning Mrs. Reed. Jane does, strongly insisting upon her innocence, and also mentions [Mr. Lloyd](https://www.gradesaver.com/jane-eyre/study-guide/character-list#mr-lloyd)'s visit to her during her illness. Miss Temple believes her and promises to write Mr. Lloyd for corroboration; when he does, Jane's name will be cleared. She treats the girls to tea and cake and discusses intellectual matters with Helen.

The bedtime bell breaks the heavenly atmosphere, and Miss Scatcherd reprimands Helen for messiness as soon as the girls enter their bedroom. The next day Helen must wear the word "Slattern" on a paper crown around her forehead; at the end of the day, Jane tears it off for her and burns it. A week later Miss Temple announces to the school that Jane's name has been cleared of all of Mr. Brocklehurst’s charges, and she is officially reaccepted into the community. Jane is relieved to be cleared of blame and works harder in class, particularly in French and drawing. Despite its failings, Lowood is beginning to grow on her.

When her punishment is over, Jane crouches in a corner, overcome with grief because she's sure everyone will shun her. Helen arrives and tries to comfort Jane, pointing out that, because Mr. Brocklehurst is disliked, the other students are unlikely to believe him. She advises Jane not to worry about what others think of her as long as her conscience is without guilt. Jane says, "If others don't love [her, she'd] rather die." Helen tells Jane to focus less on "the love of human beings" and more on the "kingdom of spirits." Angels, Helen says, "recognize our innocence." Jane "calm[s]" but feels "concern" when Helen coughs.

Miss Temple invites Jane and Helen to her room, where they later have tea. At Miss Temple's prompting, Jane recounts the tale of her childhood with Mrs. Reed including Mr. Lloyd's visit after the incident in the red-room. Miss Temple, who knows Mr. Lloyd, says she'll write to him, and, should he confirm Jane's account, she'll tell the school of Jane's innocence. At her request a kitchen servant brings tea for her and the two girls, and she treats them to some seed cake. Afterward Miss Temple and [Helen Burns](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Jane-Eyre/character-analysis/#Helen_Burns) discuss several topics, including history and nature, in a conversation that dazzles Jane. That night Miss Scatcherd finds Helen's belongings in disarray, and the next day she punishes Helen for being disorganized. She tapes a paper with the word s*lattern* on it to Helen's head and makes her wear it all day. When Miss Scatcherd leaves for the day, Jane tears off the paper and throws it into the fire. A week later, having heard from Mr. Lloyd, Miss Temple announces that Jane has been completely cleared of the charges made against her. Jane plunges forward with her studies with renewed enthusiasm, happier at Lowood, despite its flaws and deprivations, than she ever was at Gateshead.

***Analysis in Detail:***

While Jane, Miss Temple, and Helen Burns become closer friends in this chapter, the differences in their personalities also become more obvious. Helen, for example, is not afraid of solitude; therefore, she believes that even if all the world hated her, but she approved of herself, she would not be without friends. For Jane, this is not true; she declares, "if others don't love me, I would rather die than live — I cannot bear to be solitary and hated." The promise of love and glory in a distant heaven does not appease Jane; she also requires human warmth and affections during her time on earth. When Helen declares that Jane thinks too much of the love of human beings and too little of the "kingdom of spirits," Jane recognizes an implicit sadness in Helen's statements. In some sense, Helen's longing for the afterlife reveals an obsession with death. Helen coughs after speaking, foreshadowing her early death, but also providing insight on her focus on heaven: Believing she will die young, Helen is preparing herself by romanticizing the afterworld.

Again, Jane's description of Helen emphasizes her spiritual nature. For example, the beauty in her eyes is not attributed to their color or long eyelashes, but to meaning and radiance; "her soul sat on her lips, and language flowed . . . [with] pure, full, fervid eloquence." Indeed, the sophistication of Helen's understanding of life and literature are astonishing for a fourteen-year-old. Perhaps, Jane thinks, knowledge of her impending death is leading her to live within a brief span as much as many people live in a longer life; like a candle in the wind, Helen burns brightly. Through her relationship with Helen, Jane learns to look beyond appearance and discover people's inner nature.

Miss Temple's moderate language, together with Helen's instructions against the overindulgence of anger, are evidently altering Jane's character. Rejecting "gall and wormwood," Jane tells Miss Temple a moderate version of her life with the Reeds and believes that "[t]hus restrained and simplified, it sounded more credible." Through Helen's instruction, and Miss Temple's example, Jane is learning to tell a realistic and reasonable narrative, lessons that have probably fed into her autobiography. Hysteria and raw emotion don't reveal the truth as effectively as a subdued, but honest tale. But Jane will never fully achieve the moderation of either of her friends. Upon seeing the pasteboard with the word "slattern" hanging around Helen's neck, Jane, her soul burning in her body, rips is off and throws it into the fire. Perhaps resignation is not always appropriate. Even if Miss Temple's and Helen's mild tempers never rub off completely on Jane, their impressive knowledge of literature inspires her quest for education. One day, she will create an ideal life, one that combines Miss Temple's refinement and Helen's spirituality with a spark of Jane's passion.

Helen tries to convince Jane that, in her single-minded focus on gaining the approval of others, she is neglecting the importance of self-approval. Jane's accomplishments should make her feel proud of herself and give her the confidence to make her own judgment about whether she is worthy to be loved, including self-love and self-respect. Helen wants Jane to understand that, if she relies on the judgment of others to define her worth, she won't be happy because she can never please everyone. Jane doesn't share or completely understand this attitude, or Helen's spirituality, but she respects it. Helen's frequent mention of the next life, her cough, and the concern that both Jane and Miss Temple feel for her foreshadow the possible loss of this gentle friend.

Mr. Brocklehurst's condemnation is an obstacle to Jane's goal of gaining love and respect. The intervention of Miss Temple, by writing to Mr. Lloyd, offers a solution to Jane's problem. Jane's delight and admiration as she listens to the deep intellectual conversation between Helen and Miss Temple inspire her to persevere in her pursuit of knowledge. Miss Temple's announcement about Jane's innocence gives Jane's confidence an additional boost.

***Summary and Analysis Part by Part:***

***Summary Part 1:***

After school is dismissed that evening, thinking that she is hated by everyone, [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) collapses into tears. [Helen Burns](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) reassures Jane that she is pitied, not hated, by her peers. Helen also promises that even if the whole world despised her, Jane would still find friendship and protecting love in her faith.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Almost above all things, Jane "cannot bear to be solitary and hated." She is searching for meaningful connections to others and to her own beliefs. Helen's faith appeals to orphans and the struggling poor.

***Summary Part 2:***

[Ms. Temple](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) brings the two girls to her office and treats them to tea and [cake](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/symbols/food). [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) tells Ms. Temple that she is not a liar, and relates her life story, trying hard to be moderate and humble. Ms. Temple and [Helen](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) talk of learned subjects, and Jane watches them in awe. To Jane, they seem radiant with intelligence and purity.

***Analysis Part 2:***

The three women share a sisterhood of humility, persistence, and honesty. Helen's intelligence and moral purity shine through her outward appearance. Jane hopes the same will be true for her.

***Summary Part 3:***

[Ms. Temple](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) promises to write to [Mr. Lloyd](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) to confirm that [Jane's](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) assertion that she is not a liar. Mr. Lloyd soon writes back to exonerate Jane, and Ms. Temple announces in front of the whole school that Jane is innocent of [Mr. Brocklehurst](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters)'s charges.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The public clearing of Jane's reputation makes the school a friendly place again. Ms. Temple takes back some of Brocklehurst's power to shape the girls' identities.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) returns to her studies with new vigor and excels in French and drawing. She now prefers the impoverished Lowood to the luxuries of Gateshead.

***Analysis Part 4:***

Money isn't everything. Even at Lowood, Jane feels enriched by her friends and studies.