***Jane Eyre***

***Chapter 15***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Summary:***

* One day, while Rochester and Jane are walking in the garden outside Thornfield, Rochester explains his relationship to Adèle’s mother, Céline Varens, more explicitly. It’s a pretty exciting story, so sit back as Rochester begins his tale:
* Céline was a French opera-dancer with whom Rochester fell in love—and he *thought* she loved him, too.
* Rochester became Céline’s sugar daddy: he paid for her to live in an expensive hotel and have lots of servants and every possible luxury. In fact, all this was almost too expensive even for the wealthy Rochester, and he was well on his way to spending his whole fortune on her.
* One evening, Rochester went to Céline’s place and she was out, so he sat on the balcony waiting for her. He saw her come back to the hotel in the carriage he was paying for... with another guy.
* Rochester breaks into his own story to comment on the way jealousy poisons everything—for a long time he even hated being at Thornfield because… he stops before telling us why.
* There’s a long pause while Rochester and Jane stroll along the path and Rochester seems to be wrestling with himself. He tells Jane that he is fighting with a witchy specter of his destiny, and that now he’s defying her and daring to enjoy being at Thornfield.
* Adèle comes close to Rochester and Jane as she’s playing, and Rochester orders her away. Jane prompts him to continue his story.
* Before Rochester continues, he notes again how strange it is that he’s telling all this to Jane—what kind of guy tells his eighteen-year-old employee about his sordid affair with a French mistress? But he knows, he says, that Jane is made to be a confidante, and that what he’s telling her won’t hurt her and may help him. Then he continues the story:
* Rochester stayed hidden on the balcony behind the curtains, waiting for Céline and her lover to come in.
* Céline and the other guy entered, and Rochester stopped being jealous, because the guy was a cruel idiot Rochester had met before. Rochester decided right away that Céline wasn’t worth his time if she would have an affair with such a loser.
* Rochester continued to hide and listen to them, but was mostly bored by their lame conversation. He was a bit irritated when they started insulting him behind his back, especially because Céline used to compliment him to his face constantly. (That’s why he was so glad Jane was honest about his looks.)
* Adèle runs up and interrupts the story, saying that someone has come to see Mr. Rochester. Rochester quickly finishes the story for Jane:
* Rochester walked in, turned Céline out in the street with a little money to see her through the next few days, and arranged a duel with the lover the next day, at which he shot the guy in the arm. And that was that.
* But Rochester couldn’t just wash his hands of the whole thing because, six months earlier, Céline had given birth to Adèle. She claimed that Adèle was Rochester’s daughter. He doesn’t think so, but she could be.
* Several years later, Céline abandoned Adèle and ran off to Italy with another guy.
* Rochester still didn’t think Adèle was his daughter (or so he claims to Jane), but he felt sorry for her and brought her back to England to grow up under better circumstances.
* Having finished the story, Rochester asks Jane if now she feels differently about her job as Adèle’s governess. Jane answers that she cares even more about the girl now that she knows Adèle is practically an orphan.
* Rochester goes in, and Jane stays outside playing with her pupil and the dog. She is more tender to Adèle after hearing the story.
* That evening, as she’s going to sleep, Jane thinks about what Rochester told her. Most of the story, she decides, is common enough, but the moment where Rochester freaked out while thinking about Thornfield still seems weird. Still, she can’t explain it, so she starts thinking about something else—how Rochester treats her.
* Jane’s glad that Rochester trusts her so much and that he always seems pleased to see her. He still does most of the talking when they’re together, but she likes to learn from him and respond to his thoughts. She feels like they’re family, not master and servant.
* Jane decides that Rochester has it in him to be a good person and hopes that she can help him deal with his past, whatever it might be.
* And Jane wonders—a bit ominously, we think—how long he’ll be able to stay at Thornfield before whatever it is that he hates about the place crops up again. She knows she’ll really regret it if he leaves.
* Lying awake in bed worrying, Jane hears something strange. She tries to tell herself that it’s nothing, but then she hears the demonic laugh that usually comes from the attic. Someone is outside her bedroom door!
* Jane gets up, locks the door, and demands to know who’s there. There’s no answer, but she hears footsteps walking away.
* Determined to talk to Mrs. Fairfax, Jane unbolts the door and leaves the room—only to discover a lit candle sitting outside her door and the hallway filled with smoke. The door to Mr. Rochester’s room is open, and the smoke is billowing out of it.
* Hardly thinking, Jane runs into Rochester’s room, where she finds the bed curtains on fire. She tries to shake Rochester awake, but he’s already half unconscious from inhaling the smoke, so she’s forced to throw a nearby basin of water over him. She manages to put out most of the fire and wake him up.
* Rochester’s first reaction is to swear, and his second one is to call Jane a fairy and a sorceress.
* Jane runs to get the candle from the hall, and she and Rochester look at the wet, scorched bed. She tells him about the laugh she heard and how she came to find him there.
* Strangely, Rochester’s not surprised—just worried. Jane asks if she should call Mrs. Fairfax or someone else, but Rochester instructs her to stay in his room alone while he goes up to the third floor with the candle.
* After a long time, while Jane sits in the dark waiting for him, Rochester comes back and says that it’s just what he thought happened... but he doesn’t explain this thought to Jane.
* Rochester makes sure that Jane didn’t see anything, and then accepts her theory that it is the seamstress Grace Poole who caused the damage. He tells Jane to say nothing about the whole incident.
* When Jane starts to leave, Rochester stops her, takes her hand, and thanks her for saving his life. He seems to want to say something else, but he doesn’t... and he won’t let go of her hand.
* Eventually, Jane convinces Rochester that she has to leave before Mrs. Fairfax comes, and he releases her. Jane goes back to bed, but, unsurprisingly, she can’t sleep.

***Short Summary:***

Rochester tells Jane that Adèle's mother was his mistress until he found she was cheating on him. He asks Jane if she has ever experienced jealousy. He changes the subject, saying he chooses to accept the challenge of liking Thornfield. Jane brings him back to the subject of Celine, Adèle's mother. Rochester describes walking in on Celine with her lover. He tells Celine to move out and later shoots the lover in the arm. Celine abandons Adèle, whom she had claimed was Rochester's child. Rochester asks if Jane will now leave knowing Adèle's history, to which Jane says it only endears Adèle to her more. Rochester and Jane talk often and Jane begins to see him as handsome.

Jane is awakened by demonic laughter and discovers smoke coming from Mr. Rochester's room. She enters his room and finds him fast asleep and his bedclothes on fire. She cannot awaken him, so dumps water on the flames, which then wakes him. She tells him what she heard and assumes it was Grace. He leaves and returns shortly, saying to himself, "It is as I thought." He thanks her deeply for her saving his life and asks that she not talk of this to anyone.

***Short Analysis:***

Here the mystery surrounding the person of Grace deepens. She has been portrayed as being odd, but here it appears that she attempts to murder Mr. Rochester. Mr. Rochester does not seem to be angered by her actions, only saddened. He also does not share with Jane why exactly Grace might have set the fire. The secrecy deepens as he also asks Jane not to tell anyone about the events of the fire.

***Summary in detail:***

A while later, Rochester fulfills his promise to Jane to tell her about his and Adèle’s pasts. He had a long affair with Adèle’s mother, the French singer and dancer named Celine Varens. When he discovered that Celine was engaged in relations with another man, Rochester ended the relationship. Rochester has always denied Celine’s claim that Adèle is his daughter, noting that the child looks utterly unlike him. Even so, when Celine abandoned her daughter, Rochester brought Adèle to England so that she would be properly cared for.

Jane lies awake brooding about the strange insights she has gained into her employer’s past. She hears what sound like fingers brushing against the walls, and an eerie laugh soon emanates from the hallway. She hears a door opening and hurries out of her room to see smoke coming from Rochester’s door. Jane dashes into his room and finds his bed curtains ablaze. She douses the bed with water, saving Rochester’s life. Strangely, Rochester’s reaction is to visit the third floor of the house. When he returns, he says mysteriously, “I have found it all out, it is just as I thought.” He inquires whether Jane has ever heard the eerie laughter before, and she answers that she has heard Grace Poole laugh in the same way. “Just so. Grace Poole—you have guessed it,” Rochester confirms. He thanks Jane for saving his life and cautions her to tell no one about the details of the night’s events. He sleeps on the library sofa for the remainder of the night.

***Analysis in Detail:***

Mr. Rochester Explains

At the start of the chapter, Mr. Rochester explains more about his connection to Adele and her mother, Celine Varens. He tells Jane that Celine was a beautiful French dancer with whom he had an affair. He fell in love with her and she persuaded him that she returned his affection. He provided her with a luxurious apartment, a carriage, silks, furs, and jewels. In his recounting to Jane, Mr. Rochester curses himself for being an idiot for following such an unoriginal pattern of stupidity because, as is often the case, Celine loved only his money. He discovers her one evening with a lover, which ends their affair.

Adele was six months old when Mr. Rochester breaks his relationship with Celine. He had believed Adele to be his daughter, but of course now he can't be sure. She looks nothing like him, which increases his suspicions. (Indeed, he declares that his dog looks more like him than she does!) Celine eventually abandons the child, at which point Mr. Rochester takes her to live with him even though Adele reminds him of the pain of his relationship and its ugly end. This may explain his lack of affection for the child.

More than Meets the Eye

Despite all he tells Jane about his past, it seems there is still more lurking within Mr. Rochester's mind. In the midst of recounting this tale of woe, he pauses and looks up at Thornfield Hall. In his face at this moment, Jane sees internal conflict and strife. Afterward, Mr. Rochester declares with energy, 'I will break obstacles to happiness, to goodness - yes, goodness; I wish to be a better man than I have been; than I am.' What could it be that haunts him so? Will we find out soon?

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| Thornfield Hall |

Romance Brewing??

No Victorian novel would be complete without some romantic element to its plot, and Jane Eyre is no exception. Mr. Rochester has been at Thornfield now for some weeks, and Jane is beginning to say things about him like 'his presence in a room was more cheering than the brightest fire.' It is even suggested that Mr. Rochester may share in these warm feelings, as he seems always happy to meet her in the hall and is glad to speak with her and offer a smile.

The Conflagration

Conflagration is an excellent word that refers to a particularly big fire that causes much damage, which is precisely what happens in this chapter. Late one night, Jane hears movement near her bedroom door. At first she thinks it might just be the dog, Pilot, but then she hears very loud, very clear, and very close the eerie laughter that she had heard before in the third floor hall. Alarmed, Jane decides she must find Mrs. Fairfax. Upon entering the hallway, however, she finds it filled with smoke, which is coming from Mr. Rochester's room. Running there, she finds him fast asleep on his bed while his bed curtains burn all around him. She shakes him and shouts but is unable to wake him. Thinking quickly, she dumps all the water from his washbasin on the flames and then runs to her room to get that washbasin too.

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| Flames |

The timely dousing succeeds in both extinguishing the flames and reviving Mr. Rochester. Despite the darkness, Jane could tell he was awake because she hears him 'fulminating strange anathemas at finding himself lying in a pool of water.' In other words, he is swearing up a storm again. Jane, as ever, remains cool and sensible as she reports: 'There has been a fire: get up, do, you are drenched now. I will fetch you a candle.'

***Critical Study(Ch14-15):***

At first, Jane sees little of Rochester. During their brief encounters, she notices his moodiness, but it doesn't upset her. Finally, one evening, he summons Adèle and Jane, offering Adèle her long-awaited present. Jane notices that Rochester is in a friendlier mood than usual, probably due to his dinner wine. Rochester enjoys Jane's frank, sincere manner, and confesses that he hasn't lived the purest, most innocent life. They discuss sin, remorse, and reformation. Finding Jane a good listener, Rochester speaks to her as freely as if he were writing his thoughts in a diary. He says he has given up his shameful lifestyle, and is ready to begin a new, pure life. Rochester tells Jane he is rearing Adèle in order to expiate the sins of his youth.

In Chapter 15, Rochester tells Jane about his passion for Céline Varens, a French opera-dancer whom he naively believed loved him. One night, however, Céline arrived home with another man and they mocked Rochester's "deformities"; Rochester overheard the conversation and immediately ended the relationship. Céline told Rochester that Adèle was his daughter, but he isn't sure because she doesn't look anything like him. Several years later, Céline abandoned her daughter and ran away to Italy with a musician. Although he refuses to recognize Adèle as his daughter, Rochester took pity on the abandoned and destitute child and brought her to England.

At two o'clock one morning, Jane hears a demoniac laugh outside of her bedroom door and the sound of fingers brushing against the panels. She thinks it might be Pilot, Rochester's dog, wandering the hallways, but then she hears a door opening. Going into the hallway, she sees smoke billowing from Rochester's room. She rushes into his chamber and discovers the curtains on fire and his bed surrounded by tongues of flame. Unable to wake him, she deluges the bed with water. Rochester won't let Jane call for help; instead, he says that he must pay a visit to the third floor. He tells Jane that Grace Poole was the culprit and then thanks her warmly for saving his life. He asks Jane to keep the incident a secret.

Early critics of the novel, such as Elizabeth Rigby, objected to Rochester's character, finding him "coarse and brutal." In her opinion, the novel as a whole showed an unwholesome "coarseness of language and laxity of tone." The conversation between Jane and Rochester in these chapters was shocking to a Victorian audience; as Rochester himself admits, telling the story of his affair with an opera-dancer to an inexperienced girl seems odd. He justifies his action by arguing that Jane's strong character is not likely to "take infection" from this tale of immorality; indeed, he claims that he cannot "blight" Jane, but she might "refresh" him. Again, Rochester hopes that his relationship with Jane will bring innocence and freshness back into his life.

Just as women need to lead active lives, Brontë argues, they should not be sheltered from life's seamier side. Not only does the Rochester's past reveal his growing faith in Jane, it also shows the Byronic side of his nature. Like Lord Byron, a romantic, passionate, and cynical poet of the early nineteenth century, Rochester let himself be ruled by his "grande passion" for Céline, despite its immorality. Rochester is not afraid to flout social conventions. This is also apparent in his developing relationship with Jane; rather than maintaining the proper class boundaries, Rochester makes Jane feel "as if he were my relation rather than my master."

Rochester's responses to Adèle provide insights on his past life, which help identity the reasons for his attraction to Jane. Adèle Varens provides Rochester with a daily reminder of his past indiscretions. Attracted to luxury, to satin robes and silk stockings, Adèle displays a materialism Rochester dislikes primarily because it reminds him of her mother, Céline Varens, who charmed the "English gold" out of his "British breeches." Emphasizing his British innocence, Rochester's comments are ethnocentric, but they also show that he dislikes the "artificiality" and the materialism of women who, like Céline, are pleased with "nothing but gold dust."

Rochester continues to create a contrast between Céline's superficiality and Jane's sincerity. While Céline pretended to admire his physical appearance, for example, Jane honestly tells him that she doesn't find him handsome. Céline presents an unsavory model of femininity, but also an image of unattractive foreignness. Jane's comment implies that the English, unlike their French neighbors, are deep, rather than superficial, spiritual rather than materialistic. Not only does the novel question class and gender roles, but it also develops a specific ideal of Britishness. Jane provides a prototype of the proper English woman, who is frank, sincere, and lacking in personal vanity. Rochester is intrigued by the honesty of Jane's conversation and the spirituality of her drawings, which clearly contrast with the values of the women with whom he has previously consorted. Honestly admitting that his life hasn't been admirable, Rochester is now looking for happiness, for "sweet, fresh pleasure." Rochester's goal is self-transformation, a reformation to be enacted through his relationships with women.

The end of Chapter 15 takes a strange, almost supernatural turn. Beginning with Rochester's revelation of his illicit passion for Céline Varens, the chapter, not insignificantly, ends with an image of "tongues of flame" darting around his bed. Rochester's sexual indiscretions have become literalized in the vision of his burning bed, an excess that Jane douses. The scene foreshadows Jane's role in channeling Rochester's sexual profligacy into a properly domestic, reproductive passion. Jane's final dream also foreshadows the direction of her relationship with Rochester: She is "tossed on a buoyant but unquiet sea, where billows of trouble rolled under surges of joy." Unable to reach the "sweet hills" that await her, Jane must remain for awhile in the unquiet sea. Recognizing her growing love for Rochester, Jane's unconscious warns her that their relationship will be a rocky one. Rather than letting herself be blown around by the chaos of passion and delirium, she should maintain her sense and judgment. In this novel, the bounds of reality continually expand, so that dreams and visions have as much validity as reason.

Glossary

Rencontre a meeting.

petit coffre a small trunk.

Ma boîte my box.

Tiens-toi tranquille, enfant; comprends-tu? Be quiet, child; do you understand?

Oh, ciel! Que c'est beau! Oh, heaven! Isn't it beautiful!

tête-à-tête in private conversation.

nonnette nun.

et j'y tiens and I firmly believe it.

Il faut que je l'essaie! et à l'instant même! I must try it on! right now!

Est-ce que ma robe . . . vais danser! Do you like my dress? and my shoes? and my stockings? Watch, I'm going to dance!

Monsieur, je vous . . . monsieur? Sir, I thank you a million times for your generosity. Mother did it like this, didn't she, Sir?

comme cela like that.

grande passion a great love.

taille d'athlète athletic build.

Mon ange my angel.

croquant devouring.

voiture a carriage.

porte cochère a carriage entranceway.

vicomte a viscount.

beauté mâle male beauty.

fillette a little girl.

hâuteur arrogance.

***Critical Analysis(Ch14-15):***

One evening Mr. Rochester invites Jane and Adèle to the dining room after dinner. After giving Adèle a present, he invites Mrs. Fairfax to join them and asks her to amuse Adèle while he talks with Jane. After he and Jane discuss beauty and appearance, Rochester mentions that "Fortune has knocked [him] about" so much that he's as "tough as an India-rubber ball," but he hopes to be transformed "back to flesh." They speak of class and equality, and the words *command* and *subordinate* appear in their conversation. Jane reminds him he pays her a salary, signaling the distance between them. He says he regrets having given in to a life of "dissipations." Something is preventing him from reforming his life, but he hopes to have the help of an "inspiration," something that "is no devil" but "has put on the robes of an angel of light." Jane, seeing in his face the idea troubles him, warns him to "distrust" the false angel. She advises him to simply become the person he would respect. Although Jane enjoys their conversation, she doesn't completely understand what troubles him. Jane tries to end the conversation by saying it is time to put Adèle to bed and is relieved when the girl becomes the center of attention by doing an impromptu brief dance in a new dress that Rochester has given her.

Later on Rochester tells Jane "one afternoon" how Adèle came to be his ward. He'd had an affair with Céline Varens, a French opera-dancer, which he broke off when he discovered she'd been unfaithful. Céline claimed that Adèle was his child. He knew this was probably untrue—"I see no proofs of such grim paternity written in her countenance," he tells Jane—but he took Adèle in when Céline "abandoned" the girl in Paris.

Jane thinks about how she and Rochester have begun to have more frequent evening conversations and developed an ease with each other. Jane looks forward to the time they spend together. She sees a lot of good qualities in him, although he can sometimes be proud or harsh. He seems to be nursing a secret grief that prevents him from being completely happy.

At two in the morning, unable to sleep, Jane is disturbed by a "demoniac laugh" outside her door and hears footsteps going up the third-floor staircase. She cautiously opens her door and sees smoke coming from Rochester's room. He's asleep, with his bed curtains and sheets in flames. Jane douses the fire and tells him about the laugh. Rochester goes to the third floor and returns to explain that Grace Poole was responsible for the fire. He instructs Jane to "say nothing about" the fire: he will explain what happened to the servants. Rochester emotionally thanks Jane for saving his life with "strange energy ... in his voice, strange fire in his look."

In Chapter 14 Jane can be seen as embodying the "inspiration" or "notion" of the "angel of light" that Rochester believes will transform his life, through her honesty and good character. Jane instinctively feels that Rochester's plans for his future are somehow outside the bounds of conventional morality. His mention of new "unheard-of rules" reinforces this feeling. His strange talk also adds to the sense of him as a gothic hero, a dark but attractive figure who has a mysterious past the heroine must uncover.

While many young women of the time would be shocked to hear about Rochester's affair with Céline Varens (described in Chapter 15), Jane takes it in stride. Rochester's rash actions are somewhat redeemed by his kind and responsible actions toward Adèle, and his contrition helps her swallow the news as well. She is glad that he feels comfortable enough with her to share the story, and her own passionate nature helps her to sympathize with Rochester's jealousy. Her growing comfort with him brings her some peace of mind: "so happy, so gratified did I become with this new interest added to life, that I ceased to pine after kindred."

The incident of the fire deepens the sense of gothic mystery about Thornfield, as well as foreshadowing the fire that eventually destroys the mansion and injures Rochester. Jane's physical rescue of him in this scene also foreshadows her emotional rescue of him in the book's resolution.

***Significance:***

One afternoon, while Adèle plays elsewhere, Mr. Rochester takes the opportunity to fulfill his promise to Jane and explain his relationship to Adèle. He was once passionately devoted to her mother, a French opera-dancer named [Céline Varens](https://www.gradesaver.com/jane-eyre/study-guide/character-list#c%C3%A9line-varens), and despite her superior beauty, she seemed to return his ardor. He spent a fortune treating her to a luxurious lifestyle in Paris until he discovered that he was being cuckolded in a rather humiliating fashion. Mr. Rochester shot the other man in his arm and ended his relationship with Céline, believing that he was entirely done with the affair. However, Céline claimed that the six-month-old Adèle was his daughter and then abandoned her a few years later so that she could run off with an Italian musician. Mr. Rochester was certain that the child was not his, but took responsibility for Adèle anyway and brought her to live as his ward at Thornfield.

Mr. Rochester expects that Jane will be appalled at the prospect of tutoring an illegitimate child, but Jane actually has more sympathy and affection for Adèle after learning of her background. As for Mr. Rochester, these revelations and his confidence in Jane make him seem handsomer and more amiable to her, and she is worried that he will soon leave Thornfield, as Mrs. Fairfax says he always does. That night, as Jane lays awake thinking about everything that Mr. Rochester has told her, she thinks the she hears movement outside her door, then hears a "demoniac" laugh. When she leaves her bedroom, she finds a candle burning in the hallway, sees that Mr. Rochester's door is open, and finds his curtains on fire. He is stupefied by the smoky air, but she wakes him by extinguishing the flames and dousing him with water. She relates what she knows, and he goes into the attic. He returns a few minutes later and says the cause of the fire was Grace Poole, as Jane suspected from the laugh. Mr. Rochester tells her not to speak about the matter to anyone, and then thanks her sincerely for saving his life; he is reluctant for her to leave him. Jane is unable to sleep that night, thinking instead pleasurably of the "hills of Beulah" which, unfortunately, she is not able to reach.

This extended discussion about Céline Varens reveals more of Mr. Rochester’s inner character and personality. Significantly, it is this description of Mr. Rochester’s flaws that make him seem more attractive to Jane; the jealous anger and desire that he describes mirror Jane’s passionate interior and are a welcome contrast from Mr. Brocklehurst’s evangelical purity. Even though the discussion of a mistress and an illegitimate child would be deemed inappropriate for a young woman during the time, Mr. Rochester’s confidence in Jane heightens the sense of their intellectual (and growing emotional) equality. The fact that Adèle is essentially an orphan is also particularly appealing to Jane; she hopes to take on the same role as surrogate mother that Bessie and [Miss Temple](https://www.gradesaver.com/jane-eyre/study-guide/character-list#miss-temple) had performed for her.

When Jane douses the fire in Mr. Rochester’s bedroom, he is again placed in a position of vulnerability that allows her to seize control and independence in the situation. This is also another example of the positive nature of fire; although the fire is potentially destructive, the incident ultimately brings Mr. Rochester and Jane much closer together. However, Jane still recognizes something mysterious about Mr. Rochester: he is quick to blame Grace Poole for causing the fire, and his desire to pin it on her comes across as disingenuous.

However, there is nothing disingenuous about Mr. Rochester’s gratitude for Jane having saved his life, and his reluctance for her to leave tells something about his wounded heart. After his bitter betrayal by Céline, he is yearning for a constant love based on more than mere physical attraction, and Jane seems to provide that. Interestingly, when Jane is unable to sleep after saving Mr. Rochester, she is preoccupied by the hills of “Beulah,” a term which means “marriage” in Hebrew. Bronte suggests that Jane is already subconsciously thinking of marriage to Mr. Rochester. However, Jane still feels that there is a “counteracting breeze” that would make such a union impossible.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

One afternoon, [Rochester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/edward-fairfax-rochester) takes [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) aside and explains his history with Adèle. Years ago in Paris, Rochester fell for [Céline Varens](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters), a French singer. Rochester caught Céline with another man, ended the relationship, and wounded the man in a duel. Céline claimed that Adèle was Rochester's daughter, which Rochester doubts based on her looks. Even so, when Céline abandoned Adèle, Rochester brought her back to England to insure her a good upbringing.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Rochester raises and educates Adèle as a way of trying to repent for his past. To 19-century readers, it would seem inappropriate for Rochester to walk alone with Jane and talk about his morally questionable history. Jane seems to walk a fine line between being an equal and a servant.

***Summary Part 2:***

That night, [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) thinks over [Rochester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/edward-fairfax-rochester)'s story and realizes that she really likes speaking with him now that he no longer acts like such a haughty aristocrat around her.

***Analysis Part 2:***

The connection between Jane and Rochester deepens when Rochester abandons his secrecy and aristocratic formality.

***Summary Part 3:***

Later, when trying to sleep, [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) is disturbed by strange noises in the hallway, a demonic laugh at her door, and footsteps retreating to the third floor. She runs into the hallway and sees smoke coming from [Rochester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/edward-fairfax-rochester)'s bedroom—Rochester is asleep, but his bed curtains are on [fire](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/symbols/fire-and-ice). She douses the curtains with water, putting out the fire and saving his life.

***Analysis Part 3:***

The Gothic mystery in Thornfield deepens, and becomes more dangerous. A fire in the bedroom suggests that the raging passion symbolized by the fire is connected to love, sex, and marriage.

***Summary Part 4:***

[Rochester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/edward-fairfax-rochester), now awake, rushes up to the third floor. He returns and asks Jane if she's ever heard the demonic laughter before. When Jane responds that she has heard [Grace Poole](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters)'s laugh, Rochester quickly says, "Just so. Grace Poole—you have guessed it." He makes [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) promise to keep quiet about the events of the night. Emotionally moved, Rochester confesses his deep gratitude to Jane and goes to sleep on the sofa in the library. Jane spends a wakeful night contemplating her new emotions.

***Analysis Part 5:***

Jane again saves Rochester, just as she did when his horse slipped in Chapter 12. Though deeply grateful to Jane and seemingly on the verge of telling her that he loves her, Rochester continues to keep secrets and does not treat Jane as an equal. Jane's own feelings for Rochester become passionate.

***Quotations:***

***Quotation 1:***

And was Mr. Rochester now ugly in my eyes? No, reader: gratitude, and many associations, all pleasurable and genial, made his face the object I best liked to see; his presence in a room was more cheering than the brightest fire. Yet I had not forgotten his faults: indeed, I could not, for he brought them frequently before me. (1.15.28)

***Explanation:***

Rochester’s actual appearance seems to transform as Jane’s opinion of him changes (and as she starts to fall in love with him). We’ve got to be on the lookout with this novel for moments when someone’s exterior seems to physically change—but what’s really changing is the attitude of the person looking at them. In this passage, Jane admits that it’s her feelings that make Rochester look different, but at other moments she’s a little less obvious.