***Jane Eyre***

***Vol-2 Chapter 7***

***Chapter 22***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Summary:***

* Jane stays at Gateshead for several weeks after Mrs. Reed dies, first to keep Georgiana company until she goes back to London, then to take care of the house while Eliza gets ready to move to a nunnery in France. (There are no nunneries in England at this point because it’s not a Catholic country.)
* While traveling back to Thornfield, Jane realizes that she’s never felt happy to go back to a place that has been her home—returning to Lowood or to Gateshead wasn’t much fun.
* She wonders if returning to Thornfield might be nicer, but she’s not sure how long she’ll live there if Mr. Rochester is marrying Blanche Ingram. Still, at least she’ll get to see the man she loves for a few weeks. She knows he won’t be there when she arrives; Mrs. Fairfax told her in a letter that he had gone to London to get things for his wedding.
* Jane walks the last few miles to Thornfield, and, coming around a corner, sees Mr. Rochester sitting on a stile (a set of steps you use to climb over a fence) writing in a book. She freezes and trembles, and then he sees her and calls her over to him.
* Rochester scolds Jane for staying away from him for so long and accuses her of forgetting him. Then he tells her about the carriage he bought for the soon-to-be Mrs. Rochester, and asks if she can’t use her fairy magic to make him handsome. Jane insists that his ugliness is impossible to cure, but the way she’s looking at him suggests otherwise.
* Rochester moves a little and lets her cross over the stile, and before she keeps going she thanks him for his kindness and tells him that wherever he is, that’s her true home. Then she walks away really fast before he can answer her.
* When Jane arrives at Thornfield, everyone is glad to see her. After dinner, Mr. Rochester, Jane, Mrs. Fairfax, and Adèle almost seem like a family.
* Interestingly, Blanche Ingram isn’t around anymore; Rochester doesn’t visit her, she doesn’t visit him, and nobody’s talking about marriage. Jane secretly hopes that the engagement is off.

***Synopsis:***

Jane remains at Gateshead for a month because Georgiana dreads being left alone with Eliza, with whom she does not get along. Eventually, Georgiana goes to London to live with her uncle, and Eliza joins a convent in France. Jane tells us that Eliza eventually becomes the Mother Superior of her convent, while Georgiana marries a wealthy man. At Gateshead, Jane receives a letter from Mrs. Fairfax, which says that Rochester’s guests have departed and that Rochester has gone to London to buy a new carriage—a sure sign of his intention to marry Blanche. As Jane travels toward Thornfield, she anxiously anticipates seeing Rochester again, and yet she worries about what will become of her after his marriage. To her surprise, as she walks from the station at Millcote, Jane encounters Rochester. When he asks her why she has stayed away from Thornfield so long, she replies, still a bit bewildered, “I have been with my aunt, sir, who is dead.” Rochester asks Jane whether she has heard about his new carriage, and he tells her: “You must see the carriage, Jane, and tell me if you don’t think it will suit Mrs. Rochester exactly.” After a few more words together, Jane surprises herself by expressing the happiness she feels in Rochester’s presence: “I am strangely glad to get back again to you; and wherever you are is my home—my only home.” Back at the manor, Mrs. Fairfax, Adèle, and the servants greet Jane warmly.

***Analysis:***

Jane helps her two cousins for a month and finally leaves for Thornfield. She hears rumors that Blanche and Rochester will marry soon and Jane wonders about her fate. As she walks to the house, she sees Mr. Rochester sitting on a stone writing. He is pleased Jane has returned and lets Jane know that fact. Jane also admits she is glad to be back at home with Mr. Rochester. Later that evening Mr. Rochester seems strangely pleased at seeing Jane, Adèle and Mrs. Fairfax together. During the next two weeks, there are no signs of an upcoming marriage.

Here Jane transitions from Gateshead back to Thornfield. This peaceful, happy chapter is tinged only with the possiblity that the peace of Thornfield will be broken up by the marriage of Mr. Rochester to the hateful but beautiful Blanche.

***Short study:***

Jane remains at Gateshead for a month, helping Georgiana and Eliza prepare for their departures: Georgiana to her uncle in London, and Eliza to a nunnery in Lisle, France. Eliza compliments Jane on her independence and hard work. The older Jane interrupts the narrative, telling Eliza's and Georgiana's futures: Eliza becomes the Mother Superior of a convent while Georgiana marries a wealthy, worn-out man of fashion. Mrs. Fairfax writes to Jane while she is at the Reeds, informing her that the house party has ended and that Rochester has gone to London to buy a new carriage, supposedly in anticipation of his upcoming marriage to Blanche.

Returning to Thornfield feels odd to Jane. She wonders where she'll go after Rochester marries and is impatient to see him again. Unexpectedly, she sees him sitting on a narrow stone stile, with a book and pencil in his hand. He teases her about sneaking up on him, like a "dream or shade." Almost against her will, Jane tells him that her only home is with him. At the house, Jane is warmly greeted by Mrs. Fairfax, Adèle, Sophie, and Leah, declaring there is no happiness like being loved. Over the next two weeks, Jane is surprised that no wedding preparations are being made, nor does Rochester journey to Ingram Park to visit Blanche. Never has she seen Rochester so happy; never has Jane loved him so well.

In this chapter, Jane is again described as a magical creature. Indeed, the entire setting has become invested with magic. Walking on the road to Thornfield, Jane notices that the sky seems lit by fire, a spiritual "altar burning behind its screen of marbled vapour." When he sees her coming down the lane, Rochester wonders why she hasn't called a carriage "like a common mortal," but instead, steals home at twilight like a "dream or a shade." Similarly, when she declares she is returning from visiting her dead aunt, Rochester interprets her as saying she comes from the "other world — from the abode of people who are dead." If he had the courage, he would touch her to be sure she isn't "a substance or shadow" or elf. Touching her would be like touching one of the blue ignis fatuus lights in the marsh, a deceptive light that can't be found. In the same way, when she asks him whether he has been to London, Rochester wonders if she "found that out by second sight." Rochester wishes he could be more beautiful for his future bride, and asks fairy Jane for "a charm, or a philter" that would make him handsome, just as he earlier provided Richard Mason with a potion to make him fearless. In her admiration for Rochester, Jane believes a "loving eye is all the charm needed." That evening, Jane sits with Mrs. Fairfax and Adèle in the drawing room, and a "ring of golden peace" surrounds them. Their domestic happiness appears to be controlled by a magical power beyond their control, a magic circle of protection and repose, induced by Jane's prayers that they not be parted.

Jane isn't the only one with special powers. She reminds the reader of Rochester's ability to read her unspoken thoughts with incomprehensible acumen. In addition, his "wealth" of power for communicating happiness also seems magical. As she tries to leave him, an impulse holds her fast, "a force turned me round. I said — or something in me said for me, and in spite of me," wherever he is will be her home — her only home. In this instance, it's as if Rochester is compelling her to confess her feelings for him, and she can't possibly resist. Why is so much emphasis placed on both lover's otherworldly powers? The supernatural elements add to the gothic feel of the tale, and also make their love seem special, magical, like something existing outside of ordinary time and space.

Yet Jane isn't secure in her relationship with Rochester. Despite their obvious closeness, Jane still hears "a voice" warning her of near separation and grief. Her magical, psychic powers don't reveal a painless future. Similarly, she dreams of Miss Ingram closing the gates of Thornfield against her and sending her away, while Rochester smiles sardonically. As Rochester suggests, Jane seems to have a second sight, warning her of impending danger and separation from her beloved.

Glossary

bon soir good evening.

prête à croquer sa petite maman Anglaise ready to devour her little English mother.

***Critical Analysis***:

After her aunt's funeral, Jane stays two more weeks to help her cousins until Georgiana departs to live with an uncle in London and Eliza leaves for a convent. Back at Thornfield after a month, Jane (who dreamed about Miss Ingram during her journey back) encounters Rochester in the garden. He greets her joyfully, teasing her about her elfish, fairy ways, and welcoming her home. Impulsively, before quickly walking past him, Jane blurts out, "I am strangely glad to get back again to you: and wherever you are is my home—my only home."

Two weeks go by and there is no evidence of Miss Ingram's and Rochester's marriage plans. Rochester spends more time than ever with Jane. She sometimes becomes dejected at thoughts of the pending marriage, but at such times Rochester's spirits seem to improve even more.

Rochester's frequent references to Jane's connection with the "elfish" or "fairy" reinforce his view of Jane as an agent of change in his life. Elves and fairies often cast spells or grant wishes that change people's lives, and Rochester hopes that Jane will change his life for the better.

Jane's impulsive admission about home being wherever Rochester is seems rather bold, for her. This may be why Rochester's mood improves and why he spends so much time with her. Blanche Ingram seems to have receded into the background, but Rochester still doesn't deny that the marriage will take place.

Jane conveys her and Rochester's conversation in the garden in the present tense, once again heightening the emotional intensity with this switch.

***Critical Study:***

Jane stays at Gateshead for a month in order to help Georgiana and Eliza. Jane tells us that after her departure, Georgiana moves back to the London and marries a wealthy man, while Eliza enters a convent in France and eventually becomes Mother Superior. Jane returns to Thornfield and is surprised to see Mr. Rochester, who has just returned from London, where he bought a new carriage - most likely to prepare for his wedding. Mr. Rochester is in an infectiously good mood, but Jane worries that he will no longer need her services after his marriage to Miss Ingram. However, the wedding is never mentioned and no preparations are made, and Jane hopes it has been called off.

Jane’s time at Gateshead reminds her how important Thornfield and Mr. Rochester have become to her. While Gateshead was her original home, she realizes that now only Thornfield will feel as a home to her, primarily because of her feelings for Mr. Rochester. Jane’s interactions with Eliza and Georgiana also remind her how much she has grown over the past nine years. No longer an angry child, resentful of her cruel relatives, Jane is the clear superior in the Reed household and ultimately serves as the peace-keeping mediator between her unhappy cousins.

Upon Jane’s return to Thornfield, there are many questions about Mr. Rochester’s true intentions with Miss Ingram. Although he purchases a carriage, Mr. Rochester makes no other mention of his impending marriage. Moreover, he refuses to answer any questions about it, and only says that his carriage "will suit Mrs. Rochester exactly." The name could apply to any woman who marries him and, as such, leaves open the possibility that he intends to marry Jane.

***Notes:***

This lesson provides a summary of ''Jane Eyre's'' Chapter 22, where we see Jane wrapping up her stay at Gateshead. Jane's return to Thornfield and to Mr. Rochester is fraught with emotion and uncertainty.

The Despicable Cousins

Jane, displaying indefatigable forbearance, prolongs her stay at Gateshead past the death of her aunt to help her cousins Georgiana and Eliza with their individual preparations. Georgiana is leaving for London, and Jane tells us she 'bore with her feeble-minded quailings, and selfish lamentations' while helping her pack and prepare for this journey. The definition of 'helping' here is open for interpretation, however, as Jane admits, 'It is true, that while I worked, she would idle.'

Eliza was easier to tolerate, as she locked herself in her room to perform her own preparations and simply ordered Jane to take care of the house and manage callers and correspondence. At parting, she was even so gracious as to pay Jane the compliment of, 'Good-bye cousin Jane Eyre; I wish you well: you have some sense.'

After departing for London, Georgiana makes an advantageous marriage, which was always her fondest desire. Eliza, as per her carefully laid plans, travels to France, becomes a nun in a Roman Catholic convent, and progresses admirably in her chosen vocation. Thus summing up her cousins' lives, Jane tells her readers that they will not be mentioned again in this story, and so we leave them for good. What a shame.

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| --- |
| Eliza becomes a nun. |
| Eliza Becomes a Nun |

Returning 'Home'

Recalling her unfortunate history to the reader's mind, as Jane prepares to return to Thornfield she tells us, 'How people feel when they are returning home from an absence, long or short, I did not know.' She had never looked forward to returning to Gateshead or to Lowood, but in returning to Thornfield, she feels differently. She knows it is not truly her 'home,' and indeed, she expects to leave it soon, as Mr. Rochester seems likely to marry Miss Ingram. Still, she decides, 'it was pleasure enough to have the privilege of again looking on Mr. Rochester, whether he looked on me or not.' And so it is that Jane looks forward to returning to Thornfield.

Reunited with Mr. Rochester

Jane doesn't tell Mrs. Fairfax or anyone at Thornfield when she will arrive, as she prefers to walk there from Millcote rather than be fetched in a carriage. Mr. Rochester happens to be outside when she arrives, and thus she encounters him somewhat unexpectedly. 'I did not think I should tremble in this way when I saw him,' she tells us.

Mr. Rochester also seems quite happy to see Jane. He talks with her and teases her in their old, affectionate way. 'Absent from me a whole month: and forgetting me quite, I'll be sworn!' he chides her. The thought that Mr. Rochester would care whether or not she forgot him brings Jane considerable pleasure.

Jane Makes Some Bold Moves

The reader must remember that 'bold moves' are to be judged relative to the extreme discretion which characterized Victorian era novels. 'Bold' Victorian moves would be considered very restrained today! Therefore, when Mr. Rochester talks to Jane of wishing he were more attractive and she replies, 'a loving eye is all the charm needed: to such you are handsome enough; or rather, your sternness has a power beyond beauty,' this is really quite forward, indeed--especially coming from a woman.

Even bolder are Jane's words as she leaves Mr. Rochester to head toward the house: 'I am strangely glad to get back again to you; and wherever you are is my home--my only home.' The reader is reminded of the words of the gypsy (who was actually Mr. Rochester in disguise) who told Jane that 'Chance has meted you a measure of happiness...it depends on yourself to stretch out your hand and take it up.' Is she stretching out her hand? Will she be able to 'take it up'?

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

***Summary Part 1:***

Jane stays at Gateshead for a month to settle the affairs of the Mrs. Reed's estate. [Georgiana](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) soon goes to London and eventually marries a rich gentleman. [Eliza](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) decides to enter a French convent where she eventually becomes Mother Superior.

***Analysis Part 1:***

Brontë criticizes Georgiana as just another rich aristocrat and portrays Eliza as a strict unfeeling nun in order to criticize Roman Catholicism.

***Summary Part 2:***

While at Gateshead, [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) gets a letter from [Mrs. Fairfax](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) that says [Rochester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/edward-fairfax-rochester) has gone to London to buy a carriage, presumably in preparation for his marriage to [Blanche](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters). Jane fears that her days at Thornfield are numbered.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Everyone assumes Rochester will marry Blanche because she is a member of his class. Blanche, living at Thornfield, would surely send Jane away.

***Summary Part 3:***

On the road, [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) unexpectedly meets [Rochester](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/edward-fairfax-rochester), who's out driving his new carriage. Rochester begs her to look at the carriage and to tell him "if you don't think it will suit Mrs. Rochester exactly." Jane is so excited to see Rochester that she exclaims how glad she is to return to him, and adds that "wherever you are is my home—my only home."

***Analysis Part 3:***

Jane's feelings for Rochester are now on full display. Yet her passionate declaration seems excessive and inappropriate since Rochester will most likely marry another woman...