***Jane Eyre***

***Vol-3 Chapter 3***

***Chapter 29***

***Summary and Analysis***

***Summary:***

* For three days, Jane lies in the bed mostly unconscious while Diana, Mary, and Hannah take care of her. She does hear and understand some of the things that are said around her, and she hears the ladies discussing her and figuring out that she must be educated based on her accent, clothes, and facial features.
* St. John only comes into Jane’s room once to look at her; he decides that she doesn’t need a doctor, just rest, and analyzes her facial features a little more. (Once again, people are judging each other based on phrenology!)
* On the fourth day, Jane is able to sit up, talk, and even get dressed and go downstairs. She finds Hannah baking bread in the kitchen.
* Hannah is still suspicious of Jane and asks whether she’s been a beggar before. Jane tells Hannah that, even though she doesn’t have money or a home at the moment, she is educated and able to earn her keep, and plans to work again.
* Jane insists on helping Hannah with her work in the kitchen and asks Hannah questions about the family who has taken her in. She discovers that Diana, Mary, and St. John are siblings; their last name is Rivers; their mother has been dead for a long time; and their father died three weeks ago. Hannah has been the family’s servant for thirty years and nursed all the children when they were young. Their house is called Moor House (or sometimes Marsh End).
* Once they’re a little more comfortable with each other, Jane rebukes Hannah for thinking badly of her just because she’s poor. She reminds Hannah that Christians don’t consider poverty a crime, and they agree to be friends.
* Jane learns even more about the Rivers family from Hannah: they were once wealthy; Mrs. Rivers was highly educated and taught all her children to love learning; and St. John is going to be a clergyman while his sisters are going to be governesses, since their father lost all his money.
* St. John, Diana, and Mary come home from their walk. The ladies insist that Jane come and sit with them in the parlor and have tea with them.
* While Diana and Mary get the tea, Jane is briefly left alone with St. John, who strikes her as an intense, harsh person.
* During tea, St. John cross-examines Jane about her background, even though his sisters object to his attitude. Jane tells him that she has no home, friends, or family, that she’s never been married, and that she won’t tell him where she last lived.
* St. John asks how he can help Jane if he doesn’t know her story, and she tells him that all she really wants is work. He agrees to help her try to find a job.
* Jane decides to tell the Rivers siblings as much as possible about her life without giving away that she was at Thornfield or knew Mr. Rochester, so she tells them the short version of her autobiography. You know, school at Lowood as a pupil and a teacher, and then a position as a governess. She still won’t tell them why she left her last job, although she says that she isn’t at fault.
* Jane’s almost home free when one of the sisters calls her "Miss Elliott," and her reaction proves that’s not her real name. St. John notices, and Jane admits that it’s a pseudonym.
* Diana and Mary are ready to pretty much adopt Jane into the family, but St. John is more interested in empowering her to earn her own living. For the moment, though, they agree that Jane can live with them.

***Synopsis:***

After she is taken in by the Rivers siblings, Jane spends three days recuperating in bed. On the fourth day, she feels well again and follows the smell of baking bread into the kitchen, where she finds Hannah. Jane criticizes Hannah for judging her unfairly when she asked for help, and Hannah apologizes. Hannah tells the story of Mr. Rivers, the siblings’ father, who lost most of the family fortune in a bad business deal. In turn, Diana and Mary were forced to work as governesses—they are only at Marsh End (or Moor House) now because their father died three weeks ago. Jane then relates some of her own story and admits that Jane Elliott is not her real name. St. John promises to find her a job.***Analysis:***

In several days, Jane is strong enough to move about and she learns she is at Moor House or Marsh End. The man's name is St. John Rivers, a clergyman in the nearby village of Morton. He is home only to be with his sisters, Diana and Mary, at the recent death of their father. The three siblings arrive and insist Jane join them in the parlor for tea. Jane refuses to give many details of her life and says she wishes to find work. The sisters insist that she stay with them until then. St. John agrees to help her find work.

Things are looking better for Jane in this chapter. She has found the sympathy of caring people who promise to help her find work and a means of caring for herself. She is at last strong enough to explain her situation to the family more fully. She leaves out only the part of her heartbreak caused by Mr. Rochester.

***Short study(Ch28-29):***

Two days later, the coachman drops Jane off in Whitcross. He couldn't take her any further because she has run out of money. Accidentally, Jane leaves her packet in the coach and is now destitute. Nature is Jane's only relative, the "universal mother" who will lodge her without money, so Jane spends the night sleeping on the heath. Too hurt by memories of her broken heart to sleep, Jane rises, kneeling in the night, and prays to God. The next morning, she follows the road past Whitcross. Walking to the point of fatigue, she finally finds a town and enters a bakery to beg for bread or a job. No one will help her, and even the parson is away, at Marsh End, due to the sudden death of his father. Finally, she finds a farmer who gives her a slice of brown bread.

That night, Jane is unable to sleep peacefully in the woods. The only food she eats the next day is a pot of cold porridge that a little girl was about to throw into a pig trough. Across the moors, she suddenly sees the light of a house. Jane follows a road leading to the house, and enters its gate, peering in the lighted window. Inside she sees a well-kept house, a rough-looking elderly woman, and two graceful ladies dressed in mourning. The women are waiting for their brother, St. John, to return home. These cultivated young women, named Diana and Mary Rivers, are practicing their German. Jane knocks on the door, but the old servant, Hannah, turns her away. St. John overhears the conversation and offers Jane shelter because he thinks she's "a peculiar case." The Rivers offer her bread and milk and allow her to stay for the night. Jane tells them her name is "Jane Elliott."

Jane spends three days and nights in bed. Diana and Mary are happy to have taken her in, believing she would have died if they had left her outside. Looking at Jane, they conclude that she is well educated, because nothing in her appearance indicates "vulgarity or degradation." On the fourth day, Jane rises and dresses in her freshly washed clothes; she is once again clean and respectable, with no traces of dirt or disorder in her appearance. Jane goes downstairs and works in the kitchen with Hannah, from whom she learns that the house is called Marsh End or Moor House and is owned by the Rivers. Jane lectures Hannah for unfairly judging the poor, and Hannah begs Jane's forgiveness for initially denying her entrance to the house; the two women slowly become friends. From Hannah, Jane discovers that the Rivers are an "ancient" family. Several years ago, their father lost much money when a man he trusted went bankrupt, so Diana and Mary were forced to find work as governesses. Mr. Rivers died three weeks earlier of a stroke.

Jane tells the Rivers some of her history. The reason for her departure from her governess position she doesn't reveal, but assures them that she was blameless in the situation. She tells them Jane Elliott isn't her real name. Knowing Jane won't want to accept their charity for long, St. John promises to find her some unglamorous job.

Jane has reached the dark night of her soul. Leaving the carriage that has brought her to Whitcross, Jane has nothing but the clothes she's wearing. Before beginning the final section of her journey of self-discovery, Jane must strip herself of all connections with humanity and rediscover her spiritual self. In some ways, this separation from society may be her punishment for the passion that elevated Rochester above God in her imagination and for her near participation in a bigamous relationship. Nature becomes Jane's mother, and she seeks repose at this great mother's breast. For her, nature is "benign and good," a safe mother who loves Jane, even though she's an outcast. Closely aligned with nature is God, whom Jane realizes is everywhere: At those moments when closest to nature, "we read clearest His infinitude, His omnipotence, His omnipresence." Like nature, Jane's God is filled with bounty, compassion, and forgiveness. The difference between Jane's loving God, and the malicious, demanding Christ of Mr. Brocklehurst or Eliza Reed is apparent. Nor is Jane's God similar to Helen Burns.' While Helen's God taught her to savor heaven over earth, Jane's God is closer to a pagan spirit, who offers both spirituality and material comfort. Jane wishes she could live in and on the natural world, but she can't. Instead, she must return to the company of humans to find food and permanent shelter. But her experience in the wilderness has begun to repair her damaged spirit.

Jane's return to the human world is difficult. Penniless and dirty, she discovers that beggars are often objects of suspicion, and "a well-dressed beggar inevitably so." Because she doesn't fit into any class, neither a "real" beggar nor a "real" lady, Jane is outside of society's pre-ordained categories, and therefore, is viewed with mistrust and rejection. As Hannah says, "You are not what you ought to be, or you wouldn't make such a noise." Hannah implies that moral transgression is the only answer for the question of Jane's destitute position. In some sense, she's right. By placing her love for Rochester above all spiritual concerns, Jane has in some ways transgressed, and her present journey charts the process of her atonement. Washed of all sins by her night on the dewy moors, Jane is now ready to reenter human community. Peering through the window of the house on the moors, Jane sees an idyllic world. Unlike the stateliness of Thornfield, in which Jane felt inferior, the rustic simplicity of this cottage is comforting. Diana and Mary, serene, intelligent, and graceful, are the models of femininity that Jane seeks, and Jane is comforted by their "power and goodness." Similarly, St. John's willingness to allow an unknown beggar into his home suggests compassion, something Jane hasn't often known. As she crosses the threshold of his house, Jane no longer feels an "outcast, vagrant, and disowned by the wide world." She is able to put aside the character of mendicant and resume her "natural manner and character"; she says, "I began once more to know myself." Jane's dark night has ended: She lost herself on the moors but has rediscovered herself in the comfort of the Rivers' home.

Jane has reached the final destination on her journey of discover; significantly, the house is called Marsh End, as Jane has reached the end of her march. This chapter develops the personalities of the residents at Marsh End. The housekeeper, Hannah, has been with the family for thirty years and works hard to protect Diana and Mary. Hannah admits she has no respect for Jane, because she has neither money nor a home. This class prejudice angers Jane, who reminds Hannah that poverty is no sin; in fact, many of the best people, such as Christ, lived destitute, and a good Christian shouldn't reject the poor. In this section, Jane recognizes the spiritual value of her experience of absolute poverty, which has stripped her of all markings of class. Now, however, she rejects the label of "beggar," showing that she, like Hannah, has prejudices against those who beg for a living. Jane has been careful to erase all signs of dirt and "disorder" from her appearance, so she can resume her proper identity. Similarly, the record she provides of Diana and Mary's conversations about her as she slept emphasizes her ladylike appearance: she is educated, her accent is pure, and her appearance doesn't indicate decadence. While Jane warns Hannah not to judge the poor, Jane is careful to erase all marks of poverty from her own appearance.

From Hannah, Jane discovers that the Rivers are ancient gentry, class-related information that will be important to Jane later in the novel. Their superiority is evident in Diana's and Mary's appearances and manners. Both women are charming, pretty, and intelligent, although Mary is more reserved than the more willful Diana. Like Miss Temple, these women provide Jane with a model of compassionate, refined, intellectually stimulating, and morally superior femininity that contrasts with the capriciousness of the Reeds and the self-centeredness of Blanche Ingram. St. John River's appearance also indicates a moral and intellectual superiority. According to Jane, his face's pure outline is Greek, and he has "a straight, classic nose; quite an Athenian mouth and chin." St. John's classic, handsome features contrast with Rochester's rugged appearance. The two men are like ice and fire. While St. John's blue eyes and ivory skin align him with ice, Rochester's dark hair and passionate nature connect him with fire. Jane immediately detects a restlessness or hardness under St. John's seemingly placid face, however. The differences between the two men will be further developed as the novel progresses.

Da trat hervor Einer, anzusehen wie sie Sternen Nacht. Only one person came forward, to be watched like a crystal clear night.

Ich wäge . . . Grimms. I weigh my thoughts on a small scale, my temper and behavior with weights the size of my outburst.

Deutsch German.

bairn a child.

alias an assumed name.

***Critical Study:***

The Rivers siblings nurse Jane back to health at their home (called both Marsh End and Moor House). Hannah tells her about the Rivers siblings: St. John is the parson at a parish in Morton, a nearby village. Mary and Diana are governesses on leave after the death of their father. Jane tells her rescuers as much of her history as she can, without revealing anything about Thornfield. St. John offers to try to find work for her.

On her first night on the heath, Jane feels God's presence in nature. She echoes [Helen Burns](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Jane-Eyre/character-analysis/#Helen_Burns) when she says, "Sure was I of His efficiency to save what He had made: convinced I grew that neither earth should perish, nor one of the souls it treasured." Although Jane has always been interested in religion, she has never embraced it as wholeheartedly as she begins to do now. She has made a major life decision because of the laws of religion, and now she is alone in the world. She clings to that religion in the hope that it will help her heal. Her resolve is bolstered by the vision she had in [Chapter 27](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Jane-Eyre/chapter-27-summary/).

Jane's welcome by the Rivers siblings contrasts with the treatment she experienced from her own family at Gateshead. That this trio is later revealed to be her cousins does not diminish the charity they show when she is a stranger to them.

Jane's taking of the false name Jane Elliott parallels [Brontë](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Jane-Eyre/author/)'s own adoption of a pseudonym in writing the book. It also sets up the surprise when her true identity is learned. The name *Marsh End* signifies that the end of her emotional journey is near in this place.

***Significance:***

Jane spends the next three days in bed at the house, attended by Hannah and occasionally seeing Diana and Mary. On the fourth day, Jane gets out of bed and goes downstairs to the kitchen. She assures Hannah that she is not a beggar and discovers that the house is called Marsh End or Moor House, and that the ladies' brother, the parson [St. John Rivers](https://www.gradesaver.com/jane-eyre/study-guide/character-list#st-john-rivers), lives in his parish in nearby Morton. Jane reprimands Hannah for passing judgment on her for her poverty, and Hannah apologizes. She then tells Jane the history of Marsh End, which has been in the Rivers family for generations. Although the family used to be wealthy, the late Mr. Rivers lost the family fortune in a business deal, and Diana and Mary were forced to work as governesses to make ends meet. Because of Mr. Rivers’ recent death, the ladies have returned to the house for a few weeks.

Diana, Mary, and St. John soon return, and the sisters direct Jane to keep out of the kitchen and sit into the parlor. St. John is there, and Jane examines his classically handsome face. Jane tells them that she has no home or friends and refuses to reveal her last residence. Instead, she provides a bare-bones history of her life, admitting that the name "Jane Elliott" is not her real name. She asks to stay with them until she is able to find work, and St. John promises to find her a job.

Brontë draws an obvious contrast between the altruistic and kindly Rivers children - Diana, Mary, and St. John - and the spoiled and cruel Reed children - Eliza, Georgiana, and the far from holy John. Although she does not reveal Jane’s true relationship with the Rivers’ siblings, Brontë does provide another model of family and familial connection for Jane to aspire toward.

The fact that St. John is a parson also suggests that Jane's view of religion will undergo further revision in the following chapters. At this point in the text, she is still searching for a model of Christianity that is applicable to her own life; the Christianity of both [Mr. Brocklehurst](https://www.gradesaver.com/jane-eyre/study-guide/character-list#mr-brocklehurst) and [Helen Burns](https://www.gradesaver.com/jane-eyre/study-guide/character-list#helen-burns) was incompatible with Jane’s passionate nature.

Interestingly, Jane is once again in a financially difficult position, compared to those around her. Whereas before she was consistently a poor figure in a rich environment (in the Reed house and at Thornfield), she is here identified as a beggar. The Rivers siblings are in the midst of financial difficulties themselves, but Jane is still inferior to them in terms of her economic stability. Moreover, although she has indeed been begging, Jane resists this definition, seeking an identity that is divorced from money.***Notes:***

This lesson provides an overview of Chapter 29 of Charlotte Bronte's ''Jane Eyre,'' in which Jane begins to recover from her shock and hardship in the care of strangers.

## In a Stupor

After being homeless for several days and finally finding refuge with a brother and two sisters, Jane lies in her borrowed bed for three days and three nights, unable to move or talk. During this time, the housekeeper, Hannah, attends Jane, but her actions are laced with distrust. Diana and Mary, the two sisters, often look in on Jane with kindness and concern. Their brother, St. John, comes in only once and remains aloof and cold.

## Recovery

On the fourth day, Jane finds she can finally sit up, talk, and eat. Hannah brings her a meal, and she feels strong enough to get out of bed afterward. Jane sees all of her clothing carefully cleaned, dried, pressed, and laid out ready for her. With some effort and a break to rest every five minutes, Jane succeeds in washing and dressing herself. Her clothes hang on her much thinner frame, and she has to support herself on the stair rail as she descends. After this arduous labor, Jane finds Hannah in the kitchen who offers her a chair by the fire.

## Conquering Hannah

While Hannah seems to like Jane a little better now that she is clean and presentable, she is still very mistrustful of the newcomer. She opens conversation by asking Jane how long she has been a beggar. Jane asserts that she is not a beggar at all but a lady who has fallen on hard times. Hannah is surprised and a little chagrined to learn that Jane spent eight years at a boarding school and is well educated and capable.

Jane offers to help Hannah prepare gooseberries for pies and proceeds to take her to task over the way she has treated her. Jane says, 'you wished to turn me from the door, on a night when you should not have shut out a dog.' Gradually, Jane extracts an apology from Hannah, they shake hands, and Jane tells us, 'From that moment, we were friends.'

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| Gooseberries |
| Gooseberries for Pies |

## Moor House and Its Residents

As Jane prepares berries in the kitchen with Hannah, she asks her about the house and the people who live there. The building, Hannah explains, is called Moor House by most, but it is also sometimes known as Marsh End. The Rivers family has lived there for nearly 200 years. St. John, Diana, and Mary are there now because their father died three weeks before. Their mother passed away several years before that. Hannah has lived and served in the home for nearly thirty years.

The late Mr. Rivers and his family before him were of the wealthy landed gentry. Jane learns that Mr. Rivers lost his fortune somehow in connection with a business deal gone wrong between friends. Consequently, the three children are obliged to work to support themselves. St. John is a parson at a church in a nearby town--the very church, it turns out, where Jane appealed for aid in her homeless wanderings. Diana and Mary are both governesses in fine homes at greater distances. Each will return to his or her position after the mourning period has elapsed for their father.

## St. John's Inquiries

Diana, Mary, and St. John return from their walk. Diana insists Jane behave as their guest and join them in the parlor for tea. St. John retains something of the cold aloofness Jane observed in him during her illness. He stares fixedly at his book without speaking while his sisters are kind to Jane and solicitous of her wellbeing.

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| Afternoon Tea |
| Afternoon Tea |

After finishing with his book, St. John tries to extract information from Jane. He wants to know her past, her friends, and how she came to where she is now. Jane is openly grateful for his help and offers a history of herself, including the loss of her parents and her schooling, as well as her subsequent employment as a governess. She won't say where or for whom she worked as governess or why she left there in such haste. When she is asked if she was ever married, she blushes deeply and becomes uncomfortable, recalling her thwarted marriage to Mr. Rochester. She admits that her name is not really 'Jane Elliot' as she originally told them, but she declines to give her real name, saying she would like to retain some anonymity.

## Next Steps

Jane tells St. John, 'I trust I shall not eat long at your expense, sir,' and she expresses her intentions to regain employment as soon as possible. Mary and Diana intervene here, insisting Jane stay with them a while longer as she continues to recover. St. John, however, says to Jane, 'I feel more inclination to put you in the way of keeping yourself.' Mary and Diana prevail, scolding St. John for his treatment of Jane, calling him 'crusty.' After all this sitting up and talking, Jane is quite worn out again and returns to bed.

## Lesson Summary

In this chapter, we see Jane begin to recover from her shock and fatigue under the care of the Rivers family and their servant. We learn that Mr. Rivers has recently passed, leaving his three children with whom Jane now stays. Jane learns more about the Rivers family and their home, and she in turn gives an account of herself, carefully leaving out certain sensitive information. Maria and Diana prevail on their brother, St. John to allow Jane to stay with them as she makes a full recovery and prepares to enter some new occupation.

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

***Summary Part 1:***

[Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) is semi-conscious for three days. On waking on the fourth day, she finds her clothes cleaned and gets a hot [meal](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/symbols/food). She criticizes Hannah for turning her away the night before. Hannah apologizes, then tells Jane about the Rivers family. Their father lost his fortune in a business deal and died just three weeks ago. [Mary](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) and [Diana](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) are still in school and afterwards will look for governess jobs. [St. John](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/st-john-rivers) is a poor parson.

***Analysis Part 1:***

There's a Christian allegory in Jane rising again after three days, just as Christ did after the crucifixion. And just as Christ was in a sense reborn, Jane is metaphorically born into a new family. The family also seems to be of her class, with two sisters in school and a parson who, like her father, works with the poor.

***Summary Part 2:***

Later, [Jane](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters/jane-eyre) gives the Rivers a brief personal history, but refuses to reveal her real name or any details about her former employer. She claims to have no ties and no connections in England, and asks for help looking for work of any kind. St. John is firm but charitable, and promises to help. [Mary](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters) and [Diana](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/jane-eyre/characters), much warmer personalities than their brother, assure Jane that she can stay with them.

***Analysis Part 2:***

Like Rochester, Jane disguises her own identity and hides her past, as if she could make a new start. She wants to be self-supporting and free of her previous life, but this is an illusion. St. John, like Rochester, is a commanding male character.