

Jane Eyre

While he spoke my very conscience and reason turned traitors against me, and charged me with crime in resisting him. They spoke almost as loud as Feeling: and that clamored wildly. “Oh, comply!” it said.

5 “Think of his misery; think of his danger—look at his state when left alone; remember his headlong nature; consider the recklessness following on despair—soothe him; save him; love him; tell him you love him and will be his. Who in the world cares for you or who will be

10 injured by what you do?”

Still indomitable was the reply—“I care for myself. The more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself. I will keep the law given by God; sanctioned by man. I will

15 hold to the principles received by me when I was sane,
and not mad—as I am now. Laws and principles are
not for the times when there is no temptation: they are
for such moments as this, when body and soul rise in
mutiny against their rigor; stringent are they; inviolate
20 they shall be. If at my individual convenience I might
break them, what would be their worth? They have
a worth—so I have always believed; and if I cannot
believe it now, it is because I am insane—quite insane:
with my veins running fire, and my heart beating faster
25 than I can count its throbs. Preconceived opinions,
foregone determinations, are all I have at this hour to
stand by: there I plant my foot.”

I did. Mr. Rochester, reading my countenance, saw
I had done so. His fury was wrought to the highest:
30 he must yield to it for a moment, whatever followed;
he crossed the floor and seized my arm and grasped
my waist. He seemed to devour me with his flaming
glance: physically, I felt, at the moment, powerless as
stubble exposed to the draught and glow of a furnace:

35 mentally, I still possessed my soul, and with it the
certainty of ultimate safety. The soul, fortunately,
has an interpreter—often an unconscious, but still a
truthful interpreter—in the eye. My eye rose to his; and
while I looked in his fierce face I gave an involuntary
40 sigh; his gripe was painful, and my over-taxed strength
almost exhausted.

“Never,” said he, as he ground his teeth, “never was
anything at once so frail and so indomitable. A mere
reed she feels in my hand!” And he shook me with
45 the force of his hold. “I could bend her with my finger
and thumb: and what good would it do if I bent, if I
uptore, if I crushed her? Consider that eye: consider
the resolute, wild, free thing looking out of it, defying
me, with more than courage—with a stern triumph.
50 Whatever I do with its cage, I cannot get at it—the
savage, beautiful creature! If I tear, if I rend the slight
prison, my outrage will only let the captive loose.
Conqueror I might be of the house; but the inmate
would escape to heaven before I could call myself

55 possessor of its clay dwelling-place. And it is you,
spirit—with will and energy, and virtue and purity—
that I want: not alone your brittle frame. Of yourself
you could come with soft flight and nestle against my
heart, if you would: seized against your will, you will
60 elude the grasp like an essence—you will vanish ere I
inhale your fragrance. Oh! Come, Jane, come!”

As he said this, he released me from his clutch, and
only looked at me. The look was far worse to resist
than the frantic strain: only an idiot, however, would
65 have succumbed now. I had dared and baffled his fury;
I must elude his sorrow: I retired to the door.

“You are going, Jane?”

“I am going, sir.”

“You are leaving me?”

70 “Yes.”

“You will not come? You will not be my comforter,
my rescuer? My deep love, my wild woe, my frantic
prayer, are all nothing to you?”

What unutterable pathos was in his voice! How

75 hard it was to reiterate firmly, “I am going.”

1. Jane's attitude toward Mr. Rochester is best characterized as

- A. sympathetic.
- B. uncaring.
- C. despising.
- D. reckless.

2. Based on the information in the passage, it can be inferred that Jane refuses Rochester's advances because

- A. she does not love him as much as he loves her.
- B. it would violate her personal ideals.
- C. he thinks that she is weak and frail.
- D. she wishes to cause him injury.

3. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A. Lines 1-3 ("While...him")
- B. Lines 13-16 ("I will...now")
- C. Lines 36-38 ("The soul...eye")
- D. Lines 50-51 ("Whatever...creature")

4. In context, the phrase "I am insane—quite insane" in line 23 refers chiefly to

- A. a severe mental illness that Jane suffers from.
- B. a mental state brought on by God's law.
- C. a feeling that currently urges Jane to reject Rochester.
- D. a reduction of judgment due to emotion.

5. As used in line 29, "wrought" most nearly means

- A. hammered.
- B. made.
- C. excited.
- D. wrung.

6. The fourth paragraph (lines 42-61) provides a contrast between

- A. Jane's body and her will.
- B. Rochester's love and anger toward Jane.
- C. a bird and its cage.
- D. Jane's purity and impurity.

7. The inmate Rochester mentions in line 53 refers to

- A. a criminal locked away in jail.
- B. Rochester trapped in his emotions.
- C. Jane stuck in the traditions of her time.
- D. the possible behavior of Jane's spirit.

8. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A. Lines 38-41 ("My eye...exhausted")
- B. Lines 45-47 ("I could...her")
- C. Lines 55-57 ("And it...frame")
- D. Lines 63-65 ("The look...now")

9. As used in line 63, "worse" most nearly means

- A. less desirable.
- B. more difficult.
- C. of lower quality.
- D. unskillful.

10. Based on the information in the final paragraph, it can be reasonably inferred that Jane values

- A. her emotions over her reason.
- B. freedom over social convention.
- C. her principles over her feelings.
- D. true love above all else