



# Learn English Through Stories

A Series

A42

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# Jane Eyre

## Chapter 4: Mr Rochester

Three months passed. I had not met the owner of Thornfield Hall. Mr Rochester had not come home.

One January afternoon, I went out and I walked towards the road. I was going to the village of Hay. I was going to post a letter in the village. Hay was two miles from Thornfield Hall. The day was fine but it was very cold. I walked quickly and soon I was near the village.

Suddenly, a big black-and-white dog ran past me. A moment later, a man on a black horse followed the dog.

Then, I heard an angry shout. The dog ran past me again. It was barking loudly. I turned round. The horse had fallen on the icy ground and the man had fallen from the horse. I walked towards them.

'Can I help you, sir?' I asked.

'My horse fell. I've hurt my foot,' the man said.

The horse stood up. The man tried to stand up too. But he could not stand. He fell onto the ground again.

The man was about thirty-five years old. He was not handsome but he had a strong face. He had dark eyes and black hair. He was not very tall but his body was powerful.

'I'll bring somebody from Thornfield Hall,' I said.

'Do you live at Thornfield?' the man asked.

'I am the governess,' I replied.

'Ah, yes. The governess,' the man said. 'Help me, please.'

The man stood up very slowly, and he put his hand on my shoulder. He walked slowly towards his horse. I helped him. He pulled himself onto the horse.

'Thank you. Now go home quickly,' the man said. And he rode away.

I walked on to the village and I posted my letter. Then I returned to Thornfield Hall. Bright lights were shining in the big house. I went inside.

A big black-and-white dog walked towards me. It came from the dining-room. I had seen the dog before.

‘Whose dog is that?’ I asked a servant.

‘It’s Mr Rochester’s dog,’ the servant replied. ‘Mr Rochester has come home. But he has hurt his foot. His horse fell on some ice.’

I smiled. The owner of Thornfield Hall had returned! But I did not see Mr Rochester again that day.

I saw Mr Rochester the next day. He sent for me in the evening. I put on a clean dress. I brushed my hair carefully.

Mr Rochester was in the large sitting-room. He was sitting in a big chair. His right foot was on a small chair. Mrs Fairfax and Adele were sitting with him.

‘This is Miss Eyre, sir,’ Mrs Fairfax said.

Mr Rochester looked at me. He did not smile.

‘Sit by the fire, Miss Eyre,’ he said. ‘Where have you come from?’

‘From Lowood School,’ I replied. ‘I was there for eight years.’ ‘Eight years!’ Mr Rochester said. ‘That is a long time! Who are your parents?’

‘I have no parents, sir,’ I answered. ‘They are dead.’

‘But where is your home, Miss Eyre?’ Mr Rochester asked.

‘I have no home, sir. I have no family,’ I said.

‘Why did you come to Thornfield Hall?’ Mr Rochester asked.

‘I wanted to leave Lowood, sir,’ I replied. ‘I put an advertisement in a newspaper. Mrs Fairfax replied to my advertisement.’

‘Yes, I did,’ Mrs Fairfax said. ‘Miss Eyre is a good teacher, Mr Rochester.’

Mr Rochester smiled for the first time.

‘You are very young, Miss Eyre,’ he said.

‘I am eighteen, sir,’ I replied.

Mr Rochester smiled again. He did not ask me more questions.

After that evening, I did not see Mr Rochester for a few days. Then, one night, he sent for me again.

‘Sit near me, Miss Eyre,’ he said. ‘Mrs Fairfax will talk to Adele.’

I sat down quietly, but I did not speak. The fire was very bright. I saw Mr Rochester's face clearly. I saw his large, dark eyes. He was smiling. He was happy.

After a minute, Mr Rochester spoke.

'Miss Eyre,' he said. 'You are looking at me very carefully. Am I a handsome man?'

'No, sir,' I said.

'You speak the truth, Miss Eyre!' Mr Rochester said. 'Look at me again. Am I a kind man?'

'No, sir,' I said again. 'You are smiling now. But you are not always kind.'

'That is true,' Mr Rochester replied. 'I have had a difficult life. I have met bad people. I have been a bad person myself. Now Thornfield Hall is my home. But I hate this house. You are very young, Miss Eyre. You cannot understand me.'

'You are right. I don't understand you, sir,' I said. I stood up.

'Where are you going?' Mr Rochester asked.

'It is late. Adele must go to bed,' I said.

'Are you frightened of me, Miss Eyre?' Mr Rochester asked. 'No, sir,' I replied. 'But you say strange things, sir.'

Mr Rochester smiled.

'Take Adele to her bedroom now, Miss Eyre,' he said. 'We will talk again tomorrow.'

After that night, we talked together many times. Mr Rochester was an interesting man. But he was a strange man too. I often thought about him.

'Why does Mr Rochester hate Thornfield?' I asked myself. 'Thornfield Hall is a beautiful place. But Mr Rochester is not happy.'

## Chapter 5: Fire!

It was March. One night, I was in bed. But I was not asleep. The house was quiet. Suddenly, I heard a sound in the corridor outside my room.

'Who's there?' I said. Nobody answered. Then I heard a strange laugh.

I got out of my bed and I went quietly to the door. I listened. I heard another sound. Somebody was walking up the stairs to the top corridor. Then I heard somebody close a door.

'Was that Grace Poole?' I said to myself. 'Yes, it was Grace. Why was she laughing? And why is she walking in the house at night? Is she mad? I must tell Mrs Fairfax about this. I will speak to her now.'

I put on some clothes and I opened the door. There was a candle on the floor outside my room. The candle was burning.

There was thick smoke in the corridor. I went into the corridor.

I looked around me. The door of Mr Rochester's bedroom was open. And the smoke was coming from Mr Rochester's room!

I sat in a chair by the window. Time passed. At last, Mr Rochester returned.

'Please don't worry, Jane,' he said. 'Grace Poole is a strange woman. But she won't hurt anybody tonight.'

I stood up. 'Goodnight, sir,' I said.

Mr Rochester held my hand. He looked at me and he smiled. 'Thank you, my dear friend,' he said. 'You saved my life tonight, Jane.'

'Goodnight, sir,' I said again.

I went back to my bed. I was very tired. But at first, I could not sleep. Suddenly, I understood something. I loved Mr Rochester! He had smiled at me. He had held my hand. Did he love me? I did not know. But I thought about Mr Rochester for a long time.

I did not see Mr Rochester the next day. He did not send for me.

In the evening, I went down to Mrs Fairfax's sitting-room. The housekeeper was looking out of the window.

'The weather has been good today,' Mrs Fairfax said. 'Mr Rochester had a good day for his journey.'

'His journey? Where has he gone?' I asked. I was surprised.

'He has gone to Ingram Park,' Mrs Fairfax replied. 'Mr Rochester will stay there for a week or more. He has many friends. All his friends will be at Ingram Park this week.'

'Will there be any ladies at Ingram Park?' I asked.

'Yes,' Mrs Fairfax said. 'There will be many ladies there. Miss Blanche Ingram will be there. Mr Rochester has known her for many years.'

'Is Miss Ingram beautiful?' I asked.

'She is very beautiful,' Mrs Fairfax said.

'Will Mr Rochester marry her?' I asked.

Mrs Fairfax smiled. 'I don't know, Miss Eyre,' she replied. 'I don't know.'

I was very unhappy. I went up to my bedroom. I looked in my mirror.

'Jane Eyre,' I said to myself. 'You are not pretty. And you are poor. Mr Rochester will never marry you. He will marry Miss Blanche Ingram. She is a rich lady. You are a poor governess. Forget Mr Rochester, Jane Eyre! Forget him!'

## Chapter 6: Guests at Thornfield Hall

Two weeks later, a letter arrived for Mrs Fairfax.

‘Mr Rochester will return on Thursday,’ Mrs Fairfax said. ‘Some of his friends will come here with him. There will be many guests at Thornfield Hall.’

On Thursday evening, Mrs Fairfax, Adele and I were in Adele’s bedroom. Mrs Fairfax was looking out of the window.

‘The guests are arriving now!’ Mrs Fairfax said.

I went to the window and I looked out. There were three carriages. Two people were riding horses. Mr Rochester was riding his big black horse. A beautiful young woman was riding a white horse.

Mrs Fairfax pointed to the young woman.

‘That is Miss Ingram,’ the housekeeper said. Then she went downstairs.

Adele wanted to go downstairs too.

‘No, Adele,’ I said. ‘We cannot go downstairs tonight. Mr Rochester is talking to his guests.’

The next day, Mrs Fairfax came into the schoolroom.

‘Mr Rochester wants you to meet his guests tonight, Miss Eyre,’ she said. ‘Adele must meet them too.’

Later, Adele and I went quietly into the sitting-room. And soon, eight ladies came into the room. One of them was tall, dark and very beautiful. She was Blanche Ingram. Adele ran towards her.

‘Good evening, beautiful lady,’ she said in French.

‘What a pretty little girl!’ Blanche Ingram said. Miss Ingram spoke to the other ladies. And she spoke to Adele. But she did not speak to me.

Half an hour later, the gentlemen came into the room. I looked at Mr Rochester. He saw me, but he did not speak to me.

Miss Ingram pointed at Adele. ‘Why doesn’t this little girl live at a school, Mr Rochester?’ she asked.

‘Adele learns her lessons at home,’ Mr Rochester replied. ‘She has a governess.’



‘Oh, yes. That small woman by the window,’ Miss Ingram said. ‘I had many governesses. I hated all of them. They were all ugly and stupid!’

Later, Miss Ingram and Mr Rochester sang some songs together, Mr Rochester had a fine voice. I listened to the songs, then I left the room. Mr Rochester followed me.

‘What is wrong, Jane?’ he asked.

‘Nothing is wrong, sir,’ I said. ‘But I am tired. I am going to my room. Goodnight, sir.’

‘You are tired. And you are unhappy too,’ Mr Rochester replied. ‘There are tears in your eyes. Rest now, Jane. But please come and meet my guests tomorrow evening. Don’t forget, my —, don’t forget, Jane.’

The guests stayed at Thornfield Hall for two weeks. Every evening, I went to the sitting-room with Adele. Nobody spoke to me. Mr Rochester and Miss Ingram were always together.

One afternoon, Mr Rochester went to Millcote. He returned late in the evening. I met him at the front door.

‘Another guest has arrived, sir,’ I told him. ‘His name is Mr Mason. He has come from the West Indies.’

Suddenly, Mr Rochester’s face was pale. He held my hand tightly.

‘Mason. The West Indies. Mason —’ he said.

‘Are you ill, sir?’ I asked.

‘Jane, my little friend, I’ve had a shock,’ he said. ‘Bring me a glass of wine, please.’

I went quickly to the dining-room. I returned with a glass of wine and I gave it to Mr Rochester.

‘What are my guests doing?’ he asked.

‘They are eating and laughing, sir,’ I replied. ‘Mr Mason is talking to the other guests.’

‘One day, they will all hate me,’ Mr Rochester said. ‘Now go into the dining-room again. Tell Mason to meet me in the library.’

I gave Mr Mason the message. Then I went to my bedroom. I got into my bed.

Later, I heard Mr Rochester coming up the stairs with Mr Mason. They were laughing and talking. Soon, I was asleep.