



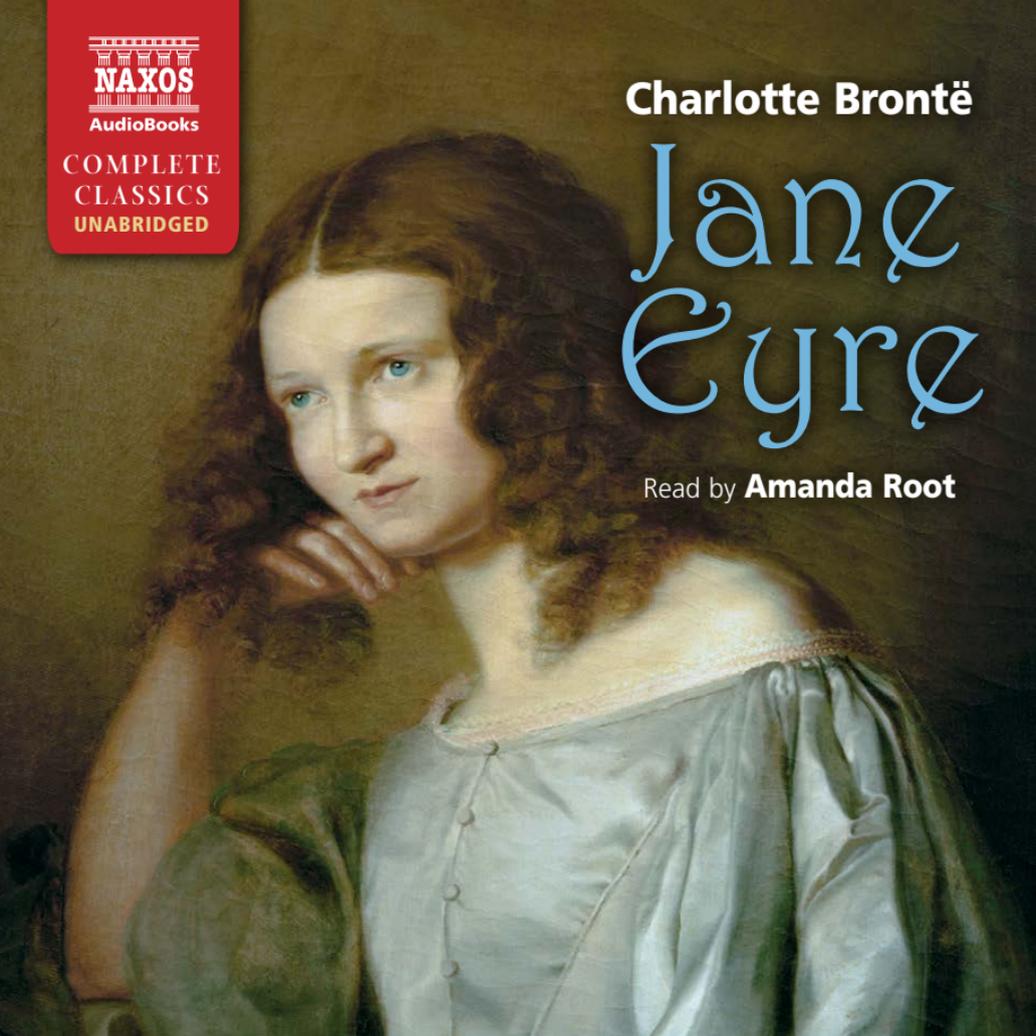
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COMPLETE
CLASSICS
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Charlotte Brontë

Jane Eyre

Read by **Amanda Root**



CD 1

1	Chapter 1	4:37
2	I cannot tell what sentiment haunted...	8:00
3	Chapter 2	5:38
4	Mr Reed had been dead nine years...	5:36
5	Daylight began to forsake the red-room...	6:22
6	Chapter 3	5:46
7	Bessie had been down into the kitchen...	5:24
8	'Oh! I daresay she is crying...'	4:50
9	'No; I should not like to belong to poor people...'	4:40
10	Chapter 4	4:01
11	November, December, and half of January passed away.	5:23
12	Georgiana sat on a high stool, dressing her hair...	4:55
13	'This is the little girl...'	5:11
14	Well might I dread...	4:54

Total time on CD 1: 75:27

CD 2

1	Mrs Reed and I were left alone...	6:40
2	I was left there alone...	7:14
3	Chapter 5	4:48
4	The afternoon came on wet and somewhat misty...	6:32
5	The night passed rapidly.	5:36
6	A clock in the schoolroom struck nine...	5:11
7	The garden was a wide enclosure...	4:38
8	'Can you tell me what the writing...'	6:09
9	Chapter 6	5:11
10	The play-hour in the evening I thought the pleasantest...	5:08
11	'Is Miss Temple as severe to you as Miss Scatcherd?'	5:06
12	In her turn, Helen Burns...	3:29
13	Chapter 7	4:49

Total time on CD 2: 70:38

CD 3

1	One afternoon (I had then been three weeks at Lowood)...	5:15
2	Mr Brocklehurst again paused...	5:41
3	'Let the child who broke her slate come forward!'	6:37
4	Chapter 8	5:59
5	I was silent...	6:03
6	Mrs Harden, be it observed, was the housekeeper...	8:06
7	Chapter 9	6:42
8	My favourite seat was a smooth and broad stone...	6:32
9	It might be two hours later...	8:27
10	Chapter 10	5:45
11	I went to my window, opened it, and looked out.	7:17

Total time on CD 3: 72:30

CD 4

1	The succeeding week seemed long...	5:59
2	This testimonial I accordingly received...	4:21
3	'And Mrs Reed?'	4:10
4	Chapter 11	5:01
5	The roads were heavy...	6:08
6	My heart really warmed to the worthy lady...	5:16
7	Everything appeared very stately and imposing to me...	6:19
8	'Ah!' cried she, in French...	4:49
9	After breakfast, Adele and I withdrew to the library...	5:39
10	When we left the dining-room...	7:08
11	Chapter 12	6:28
12	October, November, December passed away.	5:14
13	It was very near, but not yet in sight...	5:23
14	'You live just below...'	4:45

Total time on CD 4: 76:49

CD 5

1	I did not like re-entering Thornfield.	4:28
2	Chapter 13	6:24
3	I sat down quite disembarassed.	5:12
4	Mrs Fairfax had dropped her knitting...	5:40
5	He spread the pictures before him...	5:00
6	I had scarce tied the strings of the portfolio...	3:50
7	Chapter 14	5:39
8	Mr Rochester, as he sat in his damask-covered chair...	6:38
9	Instead of speaking, I smiled...	5:21
10	My eye met his as the idea crossed my mind...	6:10
11	He said this as if he spoke to a vision...	8:08

Total time on CD 5: 62:36

CD 6

1	Chapter 15	5:30
2	He ground his teeth and was silent...	6:45
3	Adele here came running up again.	5:35
4	The ease of his manner...	5:08
5	Ere long, steps retreated up the gallery...	5:21
6	He re-entered, pale and very gloomy.	4:50
7	Chapter 16	7:03
8	I still stood absolutely dumfounded...	6:07
9	A tread creaked on the stairs at last.	6:24
10	When once more alone...	5:22
11	Chapter 17	5:14
12	The party were expected to arrive on Thursday afternoon...	5:54

Total time on CD 6: 69:20

CD 7

1	The ten minutes John had given seemed very long...	5:48
2	I told her stories as long as she would listen to them...	6:58
3	A soft sound of rising now became audible...	5:07
4	Genius is said to be self-conscious.	5:50
5	Most true is it...	5:57
6	I feared – or should I say, hoped?	5:32
7	'I suppose, now,' said Miss Ingram...	7:48
8	Chapter 18	5:06
9	Seated on the carpet...	5:21
10	I have told you, reader...	6:38
11	I have not yet said anything condemnatory...	5:23

Total time on CD 7: 65:34

CD 8

1	It was verging on dusk...	6:03
2	I was pondering these things...	4:47
3	Miss Ingram rose solemnly...	5:47
4	Chapter 19	5:15
5	I knelt within half a yard of her.	4:47
6	'The eagerness of a listener...'	7:13
7	Rise, Miss Eyre...	3:59
8	Mr Rochester was standing near me...	4:47
9	Chapter 20	6:28
10	My slippers were thin...	5:49
11	According as the shifting obscurity...	6:57
12	I saw Mr Rochester shudder...	7:10

Total time on CD 8: 69:10

CD 9

1	He strayed down a walk edged with box...	4:56
2	'Now, my little friend...'	6:39
3	Chapter 21	4:44
4	I was silent: the things were frightful.	7:05
5	'Mr Rochester, I may as well mention another matter...'	6:53
6	In such conversation an hour was soon gone...	7:00
7	I did not need to be guided to the well-known room...	5:37
8	I hated it the first time I set my eyes on it...	5:49
9	'Is that a portrait of some one you know?'	6:34
10	Take this advice...	5:34
11	I now gently assured her...	4:11
12	Now act as you please...	3:43

Total time on CD 9: 68:53

CD 10

1	Chapter 22	3:56
2	How people feel when they are returning home...	6:11
3	'Hallo!' he cries; and he puts up his book and his pencil.	7:39
4	Chapter 23	5:38
5	It is one of my faults...	4:15
6	'In about a month...'	5:57
7	'I tell you I must go!'	4:41
8	You – you strange, you almost unearthly thing!	5:56
9	Chapter 24	6:21
10	'This very day I shall take you...'	4:54
11	'Don't send for the jewels...'	6:18
12	I was soon dressed...	6:28
13	Adele, when lifted in...	5:33

Total time on CD 10: 73:55

CD 11

1	The hour spent at Millcote was a somewhat harassing one to me.	5:36
2	We were now approaching Thornfield.	5:45
3	He rose and came towards me...	5:21
4	Chapter 25	5:42
5	The wind fell...	5:16
6	He landed me on the pavement.	5:04
7	I walked a little while on the pavement...	6:01
8	The disquietude of his air...	5:57
9	'Now, sir, proceed...'	6:07
10	Chapter 26	4:33
11	We entered the quiet and humble temple...	5:18
12	Mr Briggs calmly took a paper from his pocket...	5:33
13	'Bertha Mason is mad...'	4:42
14	The three gentlemen retreated simultaneously.	5:19

Total time on CD 11: 76:21

CD 12

1	The morning had been a quiet morning enough...	5:31
2	Chapter 27	4:35
3	'Will you ever forgive me?'	5:45
4	'Jane, you shall not stay here, nor will I.'	5:56
5	He recommenced his walk...	6:07
6	I did what human beings do instinctively...	7:29
7	'Jane, you don't like my narrative...'	5:46
8	From a flowery arch at the bottom of my garden...	5:09
9	'When you are inquisitive, Jane...'	5:13
10	Last January...	5:49
11	I was at once content...	5:39
12	'Jane, you understand what I want of you?'	5:08
13	He crossed the floor...	4:52

Total time on CD 12: 73:06

CD 13

1	That night I never thought to sleep...	4:39
2	Dim dawn glimmered in the yard.	4:54
3	Chapter 28	4:48
4	I saw ripe bilberries gleaming here and there...	4:56
5	I heard a bell chime...	6:33
6	I drew near houses...	5:00
7	But once did food pass my lips.	5:19
8	Having crossed the marsh...	5:52
9	'Is there any country where they talk i' that way?'	6:15
10	This was the climax.	7:37
11	Chapter 29	5:06
12	After a weary process...	5:16
13	I maintained a grave silence...	5:54

Total time on CD 13: 72:16

CD 14

1	The parlour was rather a small room...	4:45
2	Here I saw his glance directed to my hands...	4:10
3	I observed but two points in planning my departure...	4:26
4	Chapter 30	7:06
5	Incommunicative as he was...	6:14
6	St John said these words as he pronounced his sermons...	7:01
7	In this brief hour...	5:19
8	Chapter 31	4:57
9	Having brought my eventide musings to this point...	5:36
10	My powers heard a call from heaven to rise...	5:58
11	This then, I thought, is Miss Oliver, the heiress...	4:42
12	Chapter 32	4:21
13	Rosamond Oliver kept her word in coming to visit me.	4:36
14	One evening, while, with her usual child-like activity...	3:39

Total time on CD 14: 72:58

CD 15

1	It was the 5th of November, and a holiday.	6:15
2	Since I had ascertained that...	6:17
3	After a considerable pause...	6:39
4	Chapter 33	5:57
5	Again came the blank of a pause...	4:53
6	I felt cold and dismayed...	6:02
7	Mr Rivers rose now and put his cloak on.	4:51
8	I paused – he stood before me...	4:34
9	'Mr Rivers! you quite put me out of patience...'	6:43
10	Chapter 34	6:39
11	Happy at Moor House I was...	5:51
12	'They are coming! They are coming!'	5:11
13	St John had a book in his hand...	6:42

Total time on CD 15: 76:42

CD 16

1	St John was not a man to be lightly refused...	4:41
2	In the course of my necessary correspondence...	4:44
3	As we advanced and left the track...	5:00
4	He had calculated on these first objections...	4:53
5	'I CAN do what he wants me to do...'	6:13
6	I shuddered as he spoke...	5:32
7	'St John!' I exclaimed...	6:35
8	Chapter 35	6:41
9	I had finished the business now.	5:02
10	He opened the gate...	6:09
11	For the evening reading before prayers...	5:57
12	The Impossible – that is my marriage...	5:37
13	Chapter 36	5:28
14	It was a journey of six-and-thirty hours.	6:34

Total time on CD 16: 79:13

CD 17

1	I looked with timorous joy towards a stately house...	5:56
2	I feared now to hear my own story.	3:23
3	'What! did he not leave England?'	4:30
4	Chapter 37	5:22
5	He descended the one step...	4:46
6	'Who is this?'	5:14
7	I will be your neighbour, your nurse, your housekeeper.	5:06
8	Summoning Mary...	5:38
9	Very early the next morning...	5:11
10	'This St John, then, is your cousin?'	6:23
11	'Jane, I ever like your tone of voice...'	4:45
12	'Mr Rochester, if ever I did a good deed in my life...'	5:22
13	I longed for thee...	4:31
14	Chapter 38	3:33
15	You have not quite forgotten little Adele...	4:16
16	One morning at the end of the two years...	4:37

Total time on CD 17: 78:43
Total time on CDs 1-17: 20:34:11

Charlotte Brontë

Jane Eyre

It would be wrong to view Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* as merely a romance. Brontë was anxious to examine and describe the theme of a woman's struggle against the conventions of the time: her attempt to grow up and gain respect in a society where she and her talents were not valued. Relations between the sexes, and between the young and those in authority, social and religious conventions, all were explored.

Jane Eyre was written in the traditional style of the 'picaresque' or 'travelling' novel, in which the journeys and adventures of the heroine are described. Consequently Jane is found in five distinct locations at five different phases of her life: childhood at Gateshead, schooldays at Lowood, adolescence at Thornfield, maturity at Marsh End and fulfilment in marriage at Ferndean. The five phases of the story are linked, not mechanically, but by the presence in each of the imagery and symbolism found throughout the story, and as much a part of it as the action. Widely read from an

early age, Brontë drew on, amongst others, Shakespeare, the Romantic novelists, and the Bible for inspiration, and thus her special genius created a work of compelling force.

In spite of Brontë herself denying any link between herself and her heroine beyond their plain looks, saying that Jane Eyre was 'not myself any further than that,' many parallels exist between events in *Jane Eyre* and those in Charlotte Brontë's own life. At Gateshead the young and defiant orphan Jane Eyre is barely tolerated by her spiteful Aunt Reed, who ignores the shortcomings of her own children and gains sadistic satisfaction by instead punishing Jane for these. Charlotte Brontë, born in Thornton near Bradford, on April 21st 1816, experienced the loss of her own mother, Maria, from cancer in 1821. The Brontë children, Maria, Elizabeth, Charlotte, Branwell, Emily and Anne, were, by this time, living in the parsonage at Haworth, where their father Patrick was the incumbent, and their mother's sister Elizabeth Branwell moved in to care for them.

From Gateshead, Jane Eyre is sent to Lowood School where she experiences considerable hardship and the loss of her friend Helen Burns from tuberculosis. These events reflect Charlotte's own experiences as a boarder at Cowan Bridge, a school in Kirkby Lonsdale for the daughters of clergymen. Here, in 1825, her two older sisters, Maria, on whom Helen Burns was based, and Elizabeth, both died from tuberculosis precipitated by the prevailing unhealthy environment.

Like Charlotte herself, Jane Eyre was the daughter of a clergyman but Lowood School provided her with widely differing experiences of religious faith. The Evangelical proprietor, Mr Brocklehurst, was described in such hypocritical terms that when *Jane Eyre* was published criticism was received from some quarters for this apparent attack on Evangelicalism. Helen Burns, however, is portrayed as an exemplary Christian, displaying forgiveness, and meekly enduring adversity in this world, certain of rebirth in Heaven. The gentle and pious Miss Temple also illustrates Christianity at its best, and both characters are seen to have an influence on the young Jane.

After leaving Cowan Bridge School Charlotte Brontë was, for a time, educated at home, together with her surviving sisters

Emily and Anne. The remoteness of their home meant that they seldom saw other people, especially children, and consequently immersed themselves in reading. Later they wrote poetry, drama and prose, losing themselves in fantasy worlds. Not surprisingly then, *Jane Eyre* has a strongly gothic element, the episode in the red-room at Gateshead and the sinister laugh at Thornfield being just two examples. The symbolic use of literature is also present in the novel, so that we learn about the characters and their situations from the works they read. The young Jane reads *Gulliver's Travels* to provide her with a world in which to escape, and later rejects Dr Johnson's *Rasselas* which Helen Burns reads, since it contains no magic or poetry. However, this book is especially symbolic since it suggests wisdom and an acceptance of reality – traits clearly evident in Helen.

In 1839 Charlotte became a governess, firstly for the Sidgwick family in Skipton, then in 1841 for the White family at Rawdon near Bradford. At this time clergymen's daughters, though well educated, were poor, and consequently their social status was difficult to define. Educated like the upper classes, their poverty required them to work, and being a governess was one of the few socially acceptable jobs. This, then, was the third phase which Charlotte Brontë

introduced into the life of Jane Eyre, moving the action to Thornfield Hall.

Opinions vary as to Charlotte's inspiration for Thornfield: Norton Conyers near Ripon, which Charlotte visited whilst with the Sidgwicks at Skipton, has been cited. However, a combination of Rydings, a country house belonging to the brother of her friend, Ellen Nussey, in which Charlotte stayed in 1832, and North Lees Hall Farm which she visited with Ellen in 1845 has also been suggested. The latter had contained a madwoman's room and was reputed to have been burned out in a fire which caused her death. It also belonged to a family called Eyre, its suggestion of air possibly providing Brontë with inspiration for an apt name for a free spirited-heroine.

Charlotte Brontë's time as a governess was not a success, mainly because her own isolated childhood at Haworth rendered her ignorant of normal children. Books and stones were thrown at her by her charges and her discomfort is probably reflected in the humiliating circumstances she describes for Jane Eyre, as a child at Gateshead, and later at Thornfield where, as a governess she is treated with contempt by the beautiful but cold Blanche Ingram.

A gifted artist herself, Charlotte frequently describes Jane Eyre's painting

and drawing ability during her times as a governess at Thornfield and also as a teacher at Morton. In fact Brontë herself was asked to illustrate the novel but declined, saying she felt she was insufficiently talented.

Between 1842 and 1844 Charlotte Brontë, together with her sister Emily, studied French at the Pensionat Heger in Brussels, in preparation for opening their own school. Forced to return home at the end of 1842 by her aunt's illness, and finding the sisters' school idea meeting with little enthusiasm, she returned to Mme Heger's school in 1843 as a teacher of English. She fell in love with M. Heger but on returning home due to her father's failing eyesight, found that her letters to M. Heger went unanswered. Like her heroine Jane Eyre, who rejects St John Rivers's proposal of marriage, and, at that time, being ambitious for something more than life as a clergyman's wife, Charlotte had also rejected proposals. These came in the late 1830s from her friend Ellen Nussey's clergyman brother, and also from an Irish clergyman.

Recognising at last that her great desire was to 'express herself in some way' as she later described it to her biographer, Mrs Gaskell, she published a collection of poems written, together with her sisters Anne and Emily, under the pseudonyms

Currer (Charlotte), Acton (Anne) and Ellis (Emily) Bell. However, it was not until 1846 that Charlotte began writing her first novel. Although this work, *The Professor*, was published after her death, at this time it was rejected. However, in 1847 Charlotte's sister Anne, writing again as Acton Bell, found a publisher for her novel, *Agnes Grey*, whilst the same publisher, Thomas Newby, also published *Wuthering Heights*, written by Emily, again under the pseudonym Ellis Bell. Dedicated to William Thackeray, whose work Charlotte much admired, *Jane Eyre* was published later in 1847 by Smith, Elder and Co., this and the subsequent two editions being in three volumes. The later 1850 edition was the first to be presented in one volume.

The independent and spirited character of Jane Eyre is a reflection of Brontë's own behaviour. In writing the novel she flouted society's expectations in many ways, not least in attacking the convention of brotherly and sisterly love as the basis for marriage, and in creating in her heroine a passionate woman. Some critics considered the work a demonstration of a coarse morality with a portrayal of physical and emotional desires quite explicit for the times, even though Jane learns how to temper passion by duty before we reach the story's end. In addition, Jane's

union with Rochester comes at a price, that of his eyesight, although, like Charlotte's father who regained partial vision through a cataract operation, Rochester does eventually regain some sight.

Charlotte Brontë revealed the identity of her pseudonym in July 1848 but the deaths that same year of her brother Branwell from alcoholism and her sister Emily from tuberculosis dampened any feelings of celebration. Her next novel, *Shirley*, was published in 1849, the same year in which Anne, her only surviving sibling, died, whilst *Villette* followed in 1853. In 1854 Charlotte married her father's curate, Arthur Nicholls, but the following year, pregnant with their first child, her health failed and on March 30th, little short of her fortieth birthday, she died of pneumonia.

Notes by Helen Davies



Amanda Root's main TV and film credits include Anne in the memorable film adaptation of *Persuasion* and Miss Temple in Zeffirelli's film of *Jane Eyre*. Other key roles have been in TV dramas including *The Forsyte Saga*, *Love Again*, *Anna Karenina* and *The Robinsons*. She has played many leading Shakespearean roles including Cressida, Rosalind, Lady Macbeth, Cordelia and Juliet.

Credits

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