

Jane Eyre

A New Musical

(Based on the novel by Charlotte Bronte)

Book

by

David Matthews

Music

by

Michael Malthaner

Lyrics

by

Charles Corritore

Cast of Characters

(IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE)

VICAR WOOD
SOLICITOR CHARLES WOODHAM
MOURNERS

“Gateshead”
YOUNG JANE
JOHN REED
ELIZA REED
GEORGEANA REED
MRS. REED
BESSIE

“Lowood School”
MR. BROCKLEHURST
MISS SCATCHERD
HELEN BURNS
MISS TEMPLE
JANE EYRE
STUDENTS
TEACHERS

“Thornfield Hall”
JOHN
MARY
ALICE FAIRFAX
ADELE VARENS
GRACE POOLE
EDWARD ROCHESTER
BLANCHE INGRAM
LADY INGRAM
RICHARD MASON
DR. CARTER
BERTHA MASON ROCHESTER
SOLICITOR BRIGGS
SERVANTS
PARTY GUESTS

“Moor House”
MARY RIVERS
DIANA RIVERS
HANNAH
ST. JOHN RIVERS

Scenes and Musical Numbers

ACT ONE

Scene 1-1 - A Graveyard

#1 - Graveyard Sequence #1.....Vicar Wood & Mourners

Scene 1-2 - A Room at Gateshead

#2 - Where Do I Belong?.....Young Jane

Scene 1-3 - The Parlor at Gateshead

#3 - Where Do I Belong/Lowood.....Young Jane

Scene 1-4 - Lowood School

#3 - Where Do I Belong/Lowood (cont.).....Students, Mr. Brocklehurst,
Teachers, Young Jane

#4 - Lowood School Round.....Students, Teachers

Scene 1-5 - Lowood, later in the day

Scene 1-6 - The Classroom, a week later

#5 - We Have A Duty.....Scatcherd, Teachers, Mr.
Brocklehurst

Scene 1-7 - The Girls' Sleeping Quarters

#6 - I'll Stay With You.....Young Jane, Helen

#7 - How Much Can We Learn.....Miss Temple

Scene 1-8 - The Same, the next morning

#8 - Helen's Bedside Underscoring

Scene 1-9 - The Graveyard

#9 - Graveyard Sequence #2/.....Vicar, Mourners

#10 - Farewell Lowood.....Young Jane, Older Jane,
Miss Temple

Scene 1-10 - Thornfield Hall

#11 - Behind Closed Doors #1.....Servants

#12 - Adele's Welcome.....Adele

#13 - Behind Closed Doors #2.....Servants

Scene 1-11 - A Footpath Near Thornfield Hall, early evening a few days later

Scene 1-12 - A Hallway at Thornfield Hall, later that night

#14 - Grace Crossover Music

Scene 1-13 - Thornfield Hall, the next morning

#15 - Perhaps.....Jane

Scene 1-14 - The Study, the next morning

#16 - My Days With Celine.....Rochester

Scene 1-15 - Rochester's Bedroom

#17 - Bedroom Segue

#18 - Soliloquies #1.....Rochester, Jane

Scene 1-16 - Thornfield Hall, two months later

#19 - A Servant Earns His Keep.....Mrs. Fairfax, Mary, John,
Servants, Adele

Scene 1-17 - The Party at Thornfield

#20 - The Minuet

#21 - Let Every Man Rejoice.....Blanche

#22 - Behind Closed Doors #3.....Servants

Scene 1-18 - A Bedroom at Thornfield

#23 - Soliloquies #2.....Rochester, Jane

ACT TWO

#24 - Entr'acte

Scene 2 -1 - Gateshead, Mrs. Reed's Bedroom

Scene 2 -2 - The Garden at Thornfield

#25 - Wherever You Are Is Home.....Rochester, Jane

Scene 2 -3 - The Church

#26 - Jane's Wedding March

Scene 2 -4 - The Upstairs Room at Thornfield

#27 - No More To Hide.....Rochester, Mason,
Vicar, Briggs, Bertha,
Servants

Scene 2 -5 - A Hallway In Thornfield, that evening

#28 - Memories of Thornfield.....Jane

Scene 2 -6 - Moor House, two weeks later

Scene 2 -7 - Rochester's Study

Scene 2 -8 - The Kitchen at Moor House, a few months later

Scene 2 -9 - Rochester's Study, weeks later

#29 - Set Her Free.....Mrs. Fairfax, Rochester

Scene 2-10 - A Path Near Moor House, Fall

Scene 2-11 - The Kitchen at Moor House, two weeks later

Scene 2-12 - Thornfield Hall, around the same time

#30 - Bertha Burns Thornfield

Scene 2-13 - A Path Near Moor House/The Kitchen at Moor House, Christmas time

#31 - St. John Is The Man

Scene 2-14 - A Schoolroom in Morton, Spring

#32 - Look To Your Heart.....St. John

#33 - Voices.....Rochester, Jane, St. John

Scene 2-15 - The Garden at Thornfield, one week later, sunset

#34 - Final Scene Underscoring

#35 - Wherever You Are Is Home (Reprise).....Rochester, Jane, Company

#36 - Bows/Exit Music

ACT ONE

(As the audience enters, they see a unit set behind a dark scrim. It consists of skeletal construction with many levels, steps, slanted ramps allowing access to upper level from the stage area and a main staircase at center which rolls in and out as needed. It is purposely non-specific, very impressionistic and able to work for the many locations required to tell the story.)

The audience hears the sound of rain and sees light fog rolling across the set.

There is a huge clap of thunder accompanied by an almost blinding lightening flash.)

Music #1: Graveyard Sequence**Scene 1-1: A Graveyard**

(A funeral procession enters as a haunting theme begins. Two rows of MOURNERS enter carrying large black umbrellas. We see two coffins being carried. The coffins are set down and the mourners gather around. One small figure, a little GIRL “representing” YOUNG JANE, kneels facing the coffins, her back to the audience. Overhead on the second level a VICAR and a MOURNER with an umbrella look down on the proceedings.)

VICAR

LET YOUR BENEVOLENT LIGHT SHINE DOWN, O LORD
UPON THESE UNWORTHY SINNERS' SOULS.
FORGIVE THEM THE TRANSGRESSIONS OF THEIR DAILY LIVES
THE ERRORS OF THEIR HUMAN WAYS

MOURNERS

AMEN. AMEN.

VICAR

TAKE YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANTS INTO YOUR OPEN ARMS
AND SHOW THEM YOUR EVERLASTING LOVE.
LET YOUR MERCY AND GOODNESS GUIDE THEM TO YOUR SIDE,
TO THEIR ETERNAL REST.

MOURNERS

AMEN. AMEN.

(From another part of the set, SOLICITOR WOODHAM appears in a special light. As he speaks, the music continues.)

SOLICITOR WOODHAM

....and so it is with some reserve, Mrs. Reed, that I must convey the sad news of the untimely passing of the late Mr. Reed's sister and her husband. Their young daughter would most surely be an orphan were it not for your husband's desire that after his death you would become a surrogate parent to any of his surviving relatives.

Thus, in response to his wish, I have directed the proper authorities to deliver Jane Eyre to you in a fortnight. Alas, she will be a fourth child in your widowed household. I wish you success with this difficult situation and bid you God speed as you enter this new chapter of your life.

I remain your obedient, Charles W. Woodham, Master Solicitor.

(There is another frightening bolt of lightening and crack of thunder. The lights quickly black out and the SOLICITOR, VICAR and MOURNERS fade offstage as a window seat moves on down stage left revealing JANE (age 10) seated in the window, reading a book.)

Scene 1-2: A Room at Gateshead

Music #2: Where Do I Belong?

JANE

WHY DID YOU
HAVE TO GO,
TAKE THE LOVE I HELD SO STRONG,
LEAVING ME
ALL ALONE
WONDERING WHERE DO I BELONG?

ARE YOUR ARMS
THERE FOR ME?
ARE YOU ECHOING THE SONG
THAT YOU ONCE SANG FOR ME
IN A PLACE WHERE I BELONG?

PERHAPS THERE'S A FLOW'R-COVERED GARDEN
WHERE LOVE OVERFLOWS FROM WITHIN.
PERHAPS THERE'S A HOME WHERE I CAN BE LOVED,
A PLACE WHERE I FIT IN.

IF I PRAY
WILL IT COME?
WILL THE STAR I WISH UPON
BE THE LIGHT
THAT WILL LEAD
TO A PLACE WHERE I BELONG?

SOMEONE IS STANDING IN A GARDEN.

SOMEONE IS WAITING THERE,
SOMEONE WHO NEEDS TO HAVE A CHILD SHE CAN LOVE
AS MUCH AS I NEED HER.

IF THERE IS
SUCH A PLACE
WHERE A DREAM CANNOT BE WRONG,
TAKE ME THERE
TO THAT PLACE
WHERE I'LL FINALLY BE-----

(Suddenly three children enter screaming JANE's name. They are JOHN REED (age 14), ELIZA REED (age 12) AND GEORGEANA REED (age 9). They are thoroughly objectionable children and love taunting JANE.)

REED CHILDREN

Jane! Jane Eyre! Here are you! Jane Eyre, etc.

JOHN

Jane, you impudent child.....my Mother wants to see you immediately in the parlor.

JANE

Why does she want me?

GEORGEANA

Only a child as ill-bred as you would dare to question Mother's wishes. Who do you think you are?

ELIZA

Quit dawdling, Jane, and get your nasty little self to the parlor.

JOHN

(Pushing her off left) Now!

(They all exit left as lights cross fade to next scene.)

Scene 1-3: The Parlor in Gateshead Hall

(As the window rolls off left, SARAH REED and MR. BROCKLEHURST enter right. SARAH GIBSON REED is a woman of substance. Although she is far from wealthy, she maintains the attitude and bearing of the rich. She is not without some charm and she is certainly educated. She is, however, a hard woman and unflinching in her belief that JANE is a wicked child. At the present, though, she is all charm and concern as she speaks to MR. BROCKLEHURST. He is an imposing man, very sure of himself and his religious fervor is almost terrifying. He seems to be everything a professed Christian should not....less than charitable, looking for the lowest denominator in all he meets, very severe and lacking in warmth. As they speak, BESSIE (the maid) pours tea.)

MR. BROCKLEHURST

So my dear Mrs. Reed, your life has been less than enchanting since the orphaned child arrived, unwanted at your doorstep?

MRS. REED

Indeed. She has been a thorn in my side since first introduction. My lovely children have tried to embrace her with understanding and consideration, but she is stubborn and willful and refuses their genuine, Christian love.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

Have you treated her with kindness or have you demonstrated true love and dealt with her in a harsh manner that can only be considered therapeutic?

MRS. REED

I have tried all manner of sponsorship. I am at my wit's end. She refuses to accept her role as a female in this society. She argues with me incessantly. She wanders off on her own and reads books that young ladies of her station should not even know exist. I can take no more. I WILL take no more! I feel she is the perfect candidate for Lowood School.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

As director of Lowood, I will need to ask her some pertinent questions and ponder her answers with my professional expertise.

(JANE enters. She is somewhat sheepish, but one also can guess she would not be intimidated by anyone.)

MRS. REED

(With insincere kindness) Jane, come and be introduced to a man of great repute. This is Mr. Brocklehurst, director of Lowood School for orphaned girls.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

(To MRS. REED) Her size is small; what is her age?

MRS. REED

Ten years.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

Your name, little girl?

JANE

(Curtseying) Jane Eyre, sir.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

Well, Jane Eyre, and are you a good child?

MRS. REED

Perhaps the less said on that subject the better, Mr. Brocklehurst.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

No sight so sad as that of a naughty child. Do you know where the wicked go after death Jane Eyre?

JANE

They go to Hell.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

And what is Hell? Can you tell me that?

JANE

A pit full of fire.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

And what should you do to avoid falling into that pit?

JANE

I must keep in good health and not die.

MRS. REED

(Shocked by her response) Do you see the sheer gall of the child? She has no respect for anyone. She is wicked....quite simply, she is wicked.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

Do you read your Bible, Jane? Do you enjoy the Psalms?

JANE

No sir.

MRS. REED

Shocking! Blasphemous!

JANE

Psalms are not interesting.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

That proves you have a wicked heart and you must pray to God to change it and to give you a new and clean one. Mrs. Reed? *(They move away, leaving Jane)* You intimated in the letter that the girl has not quite the character and disposition you would wish.

MRS. REED

That is true. Should you admit her into Lowood School, I should warn the superintendent and teachers to guard against her worst fault....a tendency toward deceit.

JANE

(Overhearing and upset) I am not deceitful. If I were deceitful, I would lie and tell you I love you. But truthfulness forces me to declare my hatred for you, for your disgusting children, and for all this house represents.

MRS. REED

(Grabbing her and moving her aside) What more can I say? She is the devil's child. That a young lady should speak thus is proof she is in great need of discipline and control.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

No need to fear, Mrs. Reed. She shall be watched by all the teachers. She will be kept humble. She will not be afforded vacations and her entire life will be Lowood School. I understand your wishes. You have given the orphan the kindest gift you could. You have given her Lowood. Bless you Mrs. Reed.

(MRS. REED follows MR. BROCKLEHURST off. The lights fade on them as JANE sings. As she does, two woman dressed as TEACHERS move on-stage and dress her in the school uniform.)

Music #3: Where Do I Belong Reprise/Lowood

JANE

I'LL FORGET ALL THE HURT
HERE WHERE NO ONE HEARD MY SONG,
FOR I'LL SOON BE A PART
OF A PLACE WHERE I BELONG.

(JANE exits with the 2 TEACHERS)

Scene 1-4: Lowood School

(Lowood vamp begins and STUDENTS march in carrying school books.)

LOWOOD STUDENTS

BELLS RING OUT AND THE DAYS BEGIN;
EV'RY MOMENT IS FULL.
EACH NEW DAY IS THE SAME AS ALWAYS
HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL.

DISCIPLINE IS THE WAY OF LIFE HERE;
EVERYTHING HAS A RULE.
NO ONE QUESTIONS A DAY OF LIFE HERE,
NOT AT LOWOOD SCHOOL.

WE NEVER HEAR A KIND WORD

OR KNOW A LOVING TOUCH
OUR LIVES ARE FULL OF THE THINGS WE HATE
NOT THE THINGS WE MISS SO MUCH.

JANE

(Reappearing on upper level, this is her final good-bye to Gateshead. As she sings the following, MR. BROCKLEHURST enters with the other TEACHERS in stage area.)

SO GOOD-BYE
TO THIS HOUSE
THAT IN MEM'RY WILL BE GONE
ONCE I GET
TO THAT PLACE
WHERE I KNOW I WILL BELONG.

BROCKLEHURST

(referring to various students)

SHE'S MUCH TOO SMART FOR HER AGE, TAKE HER BOOKS AWAY.
SHE LOOKS TOO HEALTHY, FEED HER LESS, OH YES!
SHE'S GOT IDEA'S OF HER OWN, BREAK HER SPIRIT.
THIS ONE'S HAIR IS A MESS.
SHE'S FAR TOO GAY FIND OUT JUST WHAT'S SHE UP TO.

TEACHERS

FAR TO GAY! WHY IS THAT?

BROCKLEHURST

WHY IS THIS DRESS MADE OF WOOL, YOU FOOL?

TEACHERS

DRESS IS WOOL AND IT MUST BE COTTON

BROCKLEHURST

MAY I REMIND YOU THESE THINGS WON'T BE TOLERATED
HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL!

TEACHERS

RULES ARE RULES
HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL!

JANE & STUDENTS

HOW LONG I'VE WISHED I COULD CHANGE THINGS
AND MAKE MYSELF DISAPPEAR,
TO CLOSE MY EYES AND BE SOMEWHERE ELSE
INSTEAD OF BEING HERE.

(The following verses are sung against one another)

STUDENTS
 WHERE YOU'RE TAUGHT
 FROM THE DAY YOU ARRIVE HERE
 NEVER BE SUCH A FOOL
 TO THINK THAT YOUR HOPES
 AND YOUR DREAMS WILL SURVIVE HERE
 NOT AT LOWOOD SCHOOL
 NEVER HERE, AT LOWOOD SCHOOL!

JANE
 THAT IS WHERE
 I WILL GROW
 THAT IS WHERE
 I'LL BE LOVED
 THERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL.

BROCKLEHURST
 TURN DOWN THE LAMPS, SAVE THE OIL,
 THEY DON'T NEED TO SEE.
 USE FAR LESS WOOD FOR THE FUEL
 RULES MUST BE LEARNED
 AND BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO
 HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL.
 HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL!

TEACHERS
 CHECK THE LAMPS,
 SAVE ON OIL
 FAR LESS WOOD
 IN THE STOVE FOR HEATING
 RULES ARE RULES
 HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL
 HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL!

MR.BROCKLEHURST

(Pulling JANE forward)

This is our new student. Her name is Jane Eyre. I have been advised that she is a liar and a deceiver. It is your task to ignore and shun her. You are not to speak to her; she does not exist to any of you. Miss Scatcherd?

(MISS SCATCHERD, a severe woman, steps forward)

SCATCHERD

Yes, Mr. Brocklehurst.

BROCKLEHURST

I place Jane Eyre in your charge. I trust you will know the proper tenets needed to keep her in tow.

SCATCHERD

Yes, Mr. Brocklehurst.

(MISS TEMPLE, a gentle young teacher, obviously unlike the rest of the teaching staff, steps forward)

MISS TEMPLE

Mr. Brocklehurst, I would be glad to relieve Miss Scatcherd of that task if her duties today seem heavy.

BROCKLEHURST

No, Miss Temple. I fear you and your "kind" ways would not be the guidance Eyre deserves. Miss Scatcherd, teachers, I shall leave her to you. What she is today will not be what she is tomorrow.

(He leaves. MISS SCATCHERD approaches Jane with a threatening look)

SCATCHERD

Burns! *(HELEN BURNS, a young, ill-looking girl steps forward.)* The stool!

(HELEN gets the stool and moves it down right. She then steps back in line after giving JANE a look of compassion. MISS SCATCHERD propels JANE to the stool and JANE steps up on it.)

Eyre you are to stand on this stool for the rest of the day. You will have no drink and no food. Your fellow students are to shun you, knowing you are a girl of deceit!
(She turns savagely on the others) To classes. Immediately!

(They all scurry leaving JANE on the stool. They split into three distinct groups, the YOUNGEST STUDENTS, MIDDLE STUDENTS and OLDEST STUDENTS and begin their studies.)

Music #4: Lowood School Round

YOUNGEST STUDENTS

TWO MINUS ONE LEAVES US ONE REMAINING
TWO PLUS ONE EQUALS THREE AND
TWO TIMES ONE BRINGS US BACK TO TWO BUT
TWO INTO ONE CANNOT BE.

MIDDLE STUDENTS

THE LORD IS MY SHEPHERD, I'LL NOT BE WANTING.
GREEN PASTURES HE SHOWETH ME.
HE LEADS ME BESIDE ALL THE STILL BLUE WATERS;
HIS ROD AND HIS STAFF COMFORT ME.

OLDEST STUDENTS

BONJOUR MONSIEUR, PARLEZ VOUS FRANCAIS?
JE PARLE, UN PEU, MON AMI.
BONJOUR MADAME, COMMENT ALLEZ VOUS?
TRES BIEN AUJOURD'HUI, MERCI

TEACHERS

LEARN YOUR LESSONS
LEARN THEM WISELY
PAY ATTENTION
LEARN THEM WELL.

Scene 1-5: Lowood, later in the day.

(By the end of the round, the light has dimmed on JANE in the stool. As scene begins, we see Jane collapsed on the floor. HELEN comes on to join her.)

HELEN

(Handing her morsels of food) Here. You need some food. I've saved some scraps of bread and cheese.

JANE

Thank you. *(As she begins to eat HELEN has a coughing spell)* You cough a lot. Have you been sick long?

HELEN

Not too long.

JANE

What is your name besides Burns?

HELEN

Helen.

JANE

Why is Miss Scatcherd is so cruel?

BURNS

She dislikes our faults and she uses the rod to teach us and improve those faults.

JANE

If I were in your place I should dislike her. I should resist. What are your faults Helen? To me you seem very good.

BURNS

You shouldn't judge from appearance. Miss Scatcherd says I am lazy and she is correct. I am careless and I forget the rules. This perplexes her because she is naturally neat, punctual and particular.

JANE

And cross and cruel! Miss Temple doesn't treat everyone like that.

BURNS

(A smile on her face) No, she is the opposite. She is full of goodness and I can tell she likes you already.

(Burns has a coughing spell. Jane comforts her)

JANE

I wish they would call a doctor for you. I heard Miss Temple ask for a doctor, but she was refused. Some day we will both be better, Helen. I promise.

(The lights dim)

Scene 1-6: In the Classroom, a week later

(The school bell is heard ringing and teachers and students line up attention. MR. BROCKLEHURST enters.)

BROCKLEHURST

Good morning students, teachers.

STUDENTS

(All curtsey as they respond) Good morning Mr. Brocklehurst.

BROCKLEHURST

I have just returned from a lovely week in London visiting old friends. At most of the houses I observed the children and their impeccable behavior. I know you young girls are orphaned. This is no excuse, however, for the slovenly manner you all adopt. As a result of my London visit, I am even more dedicated to turning out ladies from Lowood and I plan to see to it that everyone adopts my philosophy.

(During the above speech he has been walking down the line of students. HELEN has had a persistent cough. He stops in front of her, upset with the noise from her coughing.)

Young lady, step forward. *(HELEN steps out of line.)* Name?

(HELEN is so terrified she can't speak. MISS TEMPLE steps forward and puts her arm around Burns.)

TEMPLE

Her name is Helen Burns. *(Taking advantage of the opportunity)* Mr. Brocklehurst, Helen has been terribly ill. She has been coughing for weeks now. She can't eat; she has been unable to spend one peaceful night. Would it be prudent for me to fetch a doctor to tend to her?

SCATCHERD

I have told you repeatedly, Miss Temple, that Burns needs discipline, not treatment.

TEMPLE

Just look at the pallor of her face.

(In an effort to show BROCKLEHURST how sick HELEN is, she pulls off her bonnet to expose her face and Helen's hair cascades down.)

BROCKLEHURST

What is this? Long hair? Hair in curls? What vanity! Miss Temple, you know this is against every principle of this school!

TEMPLE

I am sorry Mr. Brocklehurst. We never see Helen's hair, but in my attempt to show you how ill she is, I....

BROCKLEHURST

I need no feeble explanation from you Miss Temple. This is an outrage! We are here to discipline and to alter and improve any mistakes of nature. You should know that.

TEMPLE

Let me attempt to arrange the hair in another manner so as not to offend you Mr. Brocklehurst.

BROCKLEHURST

The hair does not offend me, it offends God Himself! This sort of self-flattery and ego-gratification is a heinous sin in the eyes of God. Plainness is the only flattery a Christian needs. Vanity leads to lies. That hair must be cut immediately.

JANE

(Stepping forward defiantly) No!

BROCKLEHURST

Who dares question my decision?

JANE

God gave her that hair! You have no right to alter God's decision!

BROCKLEHURST

Mrs. Reed's warnings were indeed sound. She said you were a naughty girl and so you are. Fetch me the scissors, Eyre. *(JANE stands her ground)* Jane Eyre, do as I say. *(She still doesn't move.)* Bring those scissors to me this moment!!

(JANE realizes she must comply and gets the scissors. HELEN steps forward and leans over so her hair is hanging in front of her. Just as BROCKLEHURST is ready to cut, JANE steps forward, takes off her bonnet, and mirrors HELEN'S position. As BROCKLEHURST begins to cut, there is an ominous clap of thunder and a stroke of lightning. The lights blackout quickly. MISS SCATCHERD and TEACHERS (not MISS TEMPLE) appear in a pool of light as students exit.)

Music #5: We Have a Duty!

SCATCHERD
WE MUST ENFORCE EV'RY RULE.

TEACHERS
AND THEY SHALL BE FOLLOWED.

SCATCHERD
MAKE SURE NO ONE EVER STRAYS,

TEACHERS
OR DISOBEYS!

SCATCHERD
GOD HAS ENLISTED OUR HELP,

TEACHERS
IN HIS CEASELESS WISDOM,

SCATCHERD
FIGHTING THEIR DEVILISH WAYS.

(MR. BROCKLEHURST steps into light with MISS SCATCHERD as the other TEACHERS exit.)

MR. BROCKLEHURST
WITH CHILDREN LIKE BURNS AND LIKE EYRE,

SCATCHERD
WICKED GIRLS!

BROCKLEHURST
WE MUST EMPLOY EVERY TOOL.

SCATCHERD
LIKE THE STOOL!

BROCKLEHURST
TO TEACH THEM THEIR EVIL BEHAVIOR WON'T BE TOLERATED,
NOT AT LOWOOD SCHOOL!

BOTH
NEVER HERE AT LOWOOD SCHOOL!

(Blackout)

Scene 1-7: The Girls' Sleeping Quarters

(It is night and JANE and HELEN are in the same bed, both sporting short hair. JANE tries to comfort HELEN who is again coughing very badly. It is obvious that it is terribly cold. We hear the wind blowing. MISS TEMPLE enters.)

MISS TEMPLE

How is she, Jane?

JANE

She is worse Miss Temple. You must do something.

MISS TEMPLE

I plan to. I have endured this long enough. I will speak to Mr. Brocklehurst tomorrow.

JANE

Miss Temple, you are the only kind person we see here. Day in and day out we endure the most hateful behavior from the other teachers. Will it ever change?

MISS TEMPLE

It will Jane, it will. Some day you will look back on your days at Lowood and you will have some happy thoughts. *(She offers a warm drink to HELEN.)* Here Helen, try to drink this. You haven't eaten in days. *(HELEN drinks a bit and then coughs).* I must go. If I were found here we would all suffer the consequence. Please girls, be careful. *(She starts to leave and then turns back)* I know how difficult it has been for you. I know you think the entire world is against you and you feel nobody wants you. But you have one special blessing. You are both so very bright. That is a gift from God. Learn to use it. Don't relinquish it to anything or anyone. That gift will get you through life. It will give you independence and that is the only thing you truly need to survive. *(She leans down and kisses them.)* I love you both.

(She leaves and comes face to face with MISS SCATCHERD in the hallway.)

SCATCHERD

Your reason for walking the halls so late at night?

TEMPLE

I heard Helen coughing and brought her some warm brew. Miss Scatcherd, we must call the doctor. She is worse and I fear she won't see dawn.

SCATCHERD

Only Mr. Brocklehurst can make that decision.

TEMPLE

(Starting past her) Then I will visit him now and ask...no plead that he summon the doctor.

SCATCHERD

No. (*MISS TEMPLE stops. MISS SCATCHERD softens her demeanor.*) You go to bed. I will do so. If she is not better in the morning, I will find a moment to speak to Mr. Brocklehurst. (*MISS TEMPLE exits. Once she is gone, MISS SCATCHERD slyly smiles.*) Of course, if he is in one of his moods, it can wait.

(She leaves, the lights come back up on the beds)

Music #6: I'll Stay With You

JANE

Helen, your feet are so cold...here let me warm them with mine. (*She touches her brow*)
You're burning up.

BURNS

I'm so cold. (*She begins to cry*) Please don't leave Jane, I'm so afraid.

JANE

I won't leave you Helen....I promise. We will always be together. You must believe it.

IF THERE COMES A TIME
WHEN EVERY DAY IS FRIGHT'NING,

HELEN

IF THERE IS A DAY
WHEN ALL YOUR HOPES NEED BRIGHT'NING

BOTH

I'LL STAY WITH YOU
I ALWAYS WILL KEEP YOU
(HELEN) I'LL KEEP YOU
IN THE SHELTER OF MY ARMS.

JANE

EVERYTHING I HAVE

HELEN

EVERYTHING I HAVE

JANE

EVERYTHING I'LL BE

HELEN

EVERYTHING I'LL BE

JANE

EVERYTHING I AM

HELEN

EVERYTHING I AM

JANE

I GIVE WILLINGLY

HELEN

I GIVE WILLINGLY

BOTH

IN THE YEARS TO COME,
 ANYTHING I DO,
 I WILL ALWAYS BE WITH YOU.

JANE

Oh Helen, I'll give you strength.....you will have all of mine and get well. And then together we shall have everything that is good in life.

HELEN

HOW WARM IS THE SUN,
 HOW BLUE THE SKIES THERE WAITING.

JANE

WE'LL HAVE ALL THE DREAMS
 WE'VE SPENT OUR LIVES CREATING.

BOTH

AND
 I'LL STAY WITH YOU.
 I ALWAYS WILL KEEP YOU
 (HELEN) I'LL KEEP YOU
 IN THE SHELTER OF MY ARMS.
 IN THE SHELTER OF MY ARMS.

(HELEN coughs again)

JANE

Go to sleep now Helen. Know you are safe and that I am watching over you tonight.

(They fall asleep, wrapped in each other's arms. MISS TEMPLE has been looking on from overhead.)

Music #7: (Seque) How Much Can We Learn?

MISS TEMPLE

HOW MUCH WE CAN LEARN FROM THE CHILDREN,
 THESE CHILDREN WHOSE INNOCENCE IS PURE,

WHO STILL SEE THE DREAMS OF TOMORROW
IN SPITE OF EVERYTHING THEY ENDURE?

THEIR HEARTS OVERFLOW WITH THE PROMISE
OF LIVES AS OF YET UNFURLED;
THEIR EYES NOT YET CLOUDED FROM THE DARKNESS
THAT WAITS FOR THEM IN THIS WORLD.

ONCE THERE WAS CHILD
ALL ALONE WITH NO ONE THERE
REACHING FOR A FRIEND,
ANYONE TO SHOW THEY CARED.
NEVER DID THE CHILD
FIND A HAND TO COMFORT HER
ALL HER DREAMS WERE LOST EVER MORE.

AND NOW, AS I LOOK AT THESE CHILDREN,
I MOURN FOR THAT CHILD OF LONG AGO,
WHO ONCE SHARED THEIR INNOCENT PASSION,
SO FULL OF ALL THE DREAMS SHE USED TO KNOW.
IF ONLY WE COULD STAY AS CHILDREN,
HOW WONDROUS THIS LIFE COULD BE.
GOD SHOW ME THE WAY TO SAVE THESE CHILDREN.
PLEASE HEAR THIS FERVENT PLEA.
DON'T LET THEM END UP LIKE ME.
DON'T LET THEM END UP LIKE ME.

(Blackout)

Scene 1-8: The Same, the next morning.

(The girls are asleep. MISS SCATCHERD'S voice is heard offstage.)

MISS SCATCHERD

Jane! Jane Eyre! Where are you, Jane Eyre?! *(She enters and sees JANE in bed with HELEN).* Ah, here you are....you disgraceful little girl! We have been searching the school for you. Get up immediately, both of you! *(She calls off.)* Mr. Brocklehurst, Miss Temple.....Eyre is in here, in Burn's bed. Eyre, get up. Burns up....stop dallying.

(MR. BROCKELHURST and MISS TEMPLE enter. JANE is up but HELEN has not moved.)

MR. BROCKLEHURST

Get up Burns. You two have some explaining to do.

(At almost the same moment JANE and MISS TEMPLE sense that something is terribly

wrong. MISS SCATCHERD goes to HELEN and shakes her.)

MISS SCATCHERD

Enough of this foolishness....get up Burns. *(She tries pulling her up, but when she lets go of her arm it drops and we realize that HELEN is dead.)* Burns? *(She bends over and listens to her heart. Once she realizes that HELEN is dead, she shows no emotion. JANE tries to go to HELEN but MISS TEMPLE grabs her and pulls her in to embrace her. MR. BROCKELHURST is shaken but tries not to show it.)*

MISS SCATCHERD

Not to worry Mr. Brocklehurst, I will handle everything. *(MR. BROCKELHURST leaves; MISS SCATCHERD turns to leave and comes face to face with MISS TEMPLE. After a moment of strained silence, MISS SCATCHERD exits in another direction. JANE and MISS TEMPLE go to HELEN's bedside.)*

Music #8: Helen's Bedside Underscoring.

(MISS TEMPLE lifts HELEN's hand, kisses it and places it under the coverlet.)

MISS TEMPLE

(She embraces JANE.)

Be at peace Jane, for Helen is. Her trials have ended and she is with the Lord.

JANE

Why didn't they call the doctor? Why did she have to die?

MISS TEMPLE

Her consumption was too advanced. Nobody could have helped at this point. Don't dwell on that Jane. Look to the future.

JANE

We will meet in Heaven won't we Miss Temple?

MISS TEMPLE

You will surely meet in Heaven. We will all meet there someday.

(The lights fade as the underscoring comes to an end.)

Scene 1-9: The Graveyard

Music #9: Graveyard Sequence #2

(The scene is a repeat of the opening funeral cortege. Now the casket is singular and smaller. As the chant progresses, we see JANE enter and stand next to HELEN's coffin.)

VICAR

LET YOUR BENEVOLENT LIGHT SHINE DOWN O LORD
UPON THIS UNWORTHY SINNER'S SOUL

TAKE YOUR FAITHFUL SERVANT INTO YOUR OPEN ARMS
AND SHOW HER YOUR EVERLASTING LOVE.

ALL

AMEN, AMEN.

Music #10: (Seque) Farewell Lowood

JANE

WHY DID YOU LEAVE ME?
WHY DID YOU GO?
HOW WILL YOU EVER SEE
THAT I MISS YOU SO?

I'LL STAY WITH YOU ALWAYS
AND COME HERE EACH DAY
NO ONE MUST EVER TRY
TO TAKE ME AWAY.

(As the music continues, the procession passes in front of YOUNG JANE as she kneels at the grave. As procession exits, OLDER JANE has taken her place at the grave, signifying a passage of 8 years time.)

JANE

DEAR FRIEND, THE TIME HAS COME
FOR ONE LAST GOOD-BYE
THE WINDS OF MY LIFE HAVE CHANGED
IT'S HARD TO SAY WHY.

AND THOUGH I MUST LEAVE YOU,
AND GO OFF ON MY OWN
I'LL CARRY YOUR MEMORY
WHEREVER I ROAM.

(MISS TEMPLE enters.)

MISS TEMPLE

Jane.....Jane.....it's time to go.

JANE

I knew this day would come.....I just didn't know it would come so fast.

MISS TEMPLE

Eight years is not so fast, Jane. So many changes in those eight years.

JANE

Yes, new owners of Lowood, a new direction in the school and me a teacher. How I've loved being a teacher.

MISS TEMPLE

When I saw you answering the advertisement for the governess position, I almost wanted to destroy the letter.

JANE

A governess.....it seems just moments ago that I needed tending and watching myself.

MISS TEMPLE

YOU'RE ALL THAT I DREAMED YOU COULD BE;
A CHILD WHO'S BEEN NURTURED BY THE SUN.
A BEAUTIFUL FLOWER THAT HAS BLOSSOMED
AND BRIGHTENED THE LIVES OF EVERYONE.

DETERMINED TO GRASP LIFE'S PROMISE
THOUGH STUBBORN, COMPARED TO SOME.
MY PROUDEST ACCOMPLISHMENT IN LIFE IS
THE WOMAN YOU HAVE BECOME.

JANE

YOU HAVE BEEN MY GUIDE;
SHOWN ME THINGS I NEVER KNEW
YOU HAVE BEEN MY FRIEND
EVERYTHING I AM IS YOU.

HOW CAN I REPAY
EVERYTHING YOU GAVE TO ME?
CAN I LEAVE BEHIND
YOUR LOVE?

MISS TEMPLE

GO OFF TO THE WORLD THAT AWAITS YOU
AND FOLLOW EVERY PATH YOUR HEART WILL KNOW.
BE KIND TO THE CHILD AS YOU TEACH HER
AND GUIDE AND PROTECT HER SO SHE'LL GROW.

JANE

THOUGH DESTINY NOW MAY WAKE ME
TO DREAMS I COULD NEVER PURSUE,
NO MATTER WHERE LIFE MAY TAKE ME,

MISS TEMPLE

NO MATTER WHERE LIFE MAY TAKE ME,

BOTH

I SHALL ALWAYS REMEMBER YOU.

JANE

I owe you so much.

MISS TEMPLE

Be true to yourself, Jane. Never give in to life's difficulties. Just be Jane Eyre. From that I can take no greater payment.

(They hug.)

JANE

I will always love you.

(MISS TEMPLE exits. JANE pulls out a letter from her pocket. As she reads, MRS. FAIRFAX appears in a light on upper level and recites the contents.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

Thank you Miss Eyre for your prompt reply to my request for references. I am happy to inform you that your request for employment has been accepted. We are awaiting your arrival with great interest. You will be responsible for one young female student and will serve as both governess and tutor. Your references are highly laudatory and I am almost certain you will be most happy here at Thornfield.

Sincerely yours,

Mrs. Alice Fairfax, Thornfield Hall, near Millcote

(The light goes out on MRS. FAIRFAX.)

JANE

NO MATTER WHAT WAITS FOR ME,
WHERE THIS ROAD MAY BEND,
I FACE IT NOW WILLINGLY
THIS LONG JOURNEY'S END.

IS THORNFIELD MY DESTINY,
THE DREAM I'VE HELD STRONG?
SOMEWHERE TO START A LIFE
SOMEWHERE TO HAVE A LIFE
SOMEWHERE TO LIVE MY LIFE
AND FINALLY BELONG.

(Blackout.)

Scene 1-10: Thornfield Hall

Music #11: Behind Closed Doors #1

(As the SERVANTS sing, they bring on furniture which transforms stage into Thornfield Hall.)

SERVANTS

FAR DOWN THE HALL BEHIND EV'RY WALL

LIE SECRETS WITHIN THIS MAZE.
 THORNFIELD'S A PLACE THAT HIDES 'NEATH ITS FACE
 THE FRAGMENTS OF MOURNFUL DAYS.
 IF YOU SHOULD DWELL WITHIN THIS STATELY SHELL,
 YOU'LL SOON AGREE THERE'S MORE THAN THE EYE CAN SEE.
 WE DON'T INTERFERE WITH SOUNDS THAT WE HEAR
 OR THINGS EVERYONE IGNORES.
 WE JUST COME AND GO AS IF WE DON'T KNOW
 WHAT'S HIDING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

(The SERVANTS exit. JANE enters and is soon met by JOHN, a servant, husband to MARY. He is a kind and loving man.)

JOHN

The new governess, I presume? (*JANE nods.*) Aye...and I am John. I am one of the many servants here at Thornfield. Me and the wife Mary have been here for years. (*He calls out*) Mary....the new governess is here.

(MARY comes running on all befuddled. She is sweet and loving, just like her husband.)

MARY

Ah, so young. But I guess age has nothin' to do with how smart ye be....right Miss?

JANE

Right...Mary?

MARY

Yes, it be Mary. My mum thought everyone should be named after someone in the Bible. I guess I got a good name. Lord, wouldn't it have been somethin' if they named me Bathsheba or Salome'? (*They all laugh.*) I'll be getting Mrs. Fairfax for you. (*And she is off.*)

JOHN

(Indicating a chair) Won't you have a seat Miss? It must have been a frightful long journey.

JANE

It has been a lifetime of journey.

JOHN

Aye, Miss. But to be honest and not too presumin'....you have a whole lifetime ahead of ya.

JANE

I suppose I do.

(With that MRS. ALICE FAIRFAX comes in. She is an expansive person who fills a room with her goodness and her joy of living. She has been anxiously awaiting Jane's arrival and she doesn't try to hide her joy as she finally meets her. She is so sure of herself and so comfortable in the house that one would assume she was the owner.)

MARY

May I introduce Mrs. Alice Fairfax.....Miss Jane Eyre.

MRS. FAIRFAX

(Extending her hand with gracious warmth.) Oh, how lovely....how lovely. You are just as I imagined you. Please sit down. Mary, some tea and sandwiches. I am sure our new governess is hungry and thirsty. John, please see to Miss Eyre's bag. *(MARY curtsies and exits. JOHN takes her wraps and suitcase and exits.)*

JANE

Thank you. You are most kind. *(Mrs. FAIRFAX sits opposite JANE and they take each other in.)*

MRS. FAIRFAX

So here you are....at last. Ever since I answered your advertisement, I have prayed you would be just as you seem.

JANE

Thank you. Where is Adele? I am so eager to meet her.

MRS. FAIRFAX

She saw your carriage coming up the pathway and she wanted to pretty herself up before she met you. She is such an energetic and delightful child. By rights she shouldn't even be awake this late in the day, but I gather her mother kept very odd hours.

JANE

Her mother? Isn't Adele your daughter?

MRS. FAIRFAX

No....no. *(She laughs)* She is not my daughter. No her name is Varens. Adele Varens. Her mother is.....with her no more. I have no family. It can be very lonely here...very solitary and forsaken. The Master is away so often and here so infrequently that loneliness is my usual demeanor.

JANE

The "master"?.....I thought you said you had no family.

(Before MRS. FAIRFAX can explain, MARY reenters, carrying the tray of refreshments. She is accompanied by ADELE.)

ADELE

Excusez moi, Madame. C'est la' ma gouvernante?

MRS. FAIRFAX

I fear I have no idea what the lass is talking about. She comes from France and therefore she chooses only to speak French. I dare say, I think she understands all WE are saying, however..

JANE

Mais oui, certainment, Adele. However, I must ask that our first assignment is that you speak English. It would make it so much easier for all concerned, don't you agree?

ADELE

Mais oui.

JANE

Now come here and let me look at you. (*Adele crosses to her.*) Yes, you are beautiful. Tomorrow we will begin our lessons and our learning.

ADELE

Our learning?

JANE

Yes, one can learn without a schoolroom. We will take walks through the fields that surround Thornfield and we will learn about nature, animals and the flowers. We will study all we can that isn't in books and all we can that is. And we will paint.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Paint, Miss Eyre?

JANE

Yes, paint. I believe that art is the window of the soul. Do you like to draw Adele?

ADELE

Oui Madame. I do it all the time. I also sing and dance...just like Mama. She was a singer and a dancer. Would you like to see me dance? I could do it right now. I have been practicing.

JANE

Where is your mother, Adele?

ADELE

In Heaven with the Blessed Virgin. I could also sing if you like.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I am afraid we must acquiesce Miss Eyre. Adele, my sweet, please make it brief. Very brief.

(MARY sits at the harpsichord and accompanies ADELE.)

Music #12: Adele's Welcome

ADELE

BONJOUR DEAR SWEET MAD'MOISELLE
I'M SO HAPPY YOU ARE HERE
I'LL TRY TO LEARN MY LESSONS WELL
AND PLEASE YOU THROUGH THE YEAR.

THINK OF ALL THE TIME WE'LL SPEND--
SHARING SECRETS WE CAN TELL.
YOU CAN BE MY CLOSEST FRIEND
AND I'LL BE YOURS AS WELL.

(SMALL DANCE BREAK)

NOW THAT WE'LL BE DEAREST FRIENDS,
I HOPE THAT YOU'LL WANT TO STAY.
I'LL SAY A PRAYER AS EACH DAY ENDS
YOU'LL NEVER GO AWAY.

(JANE and MRS. FAIRFAX applaud their approval.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

Adele it is long past your bedtime. You have many weeks, many months to entertain Miss Eyre. Mary, would you please see Adele to her room. I will be up shortly to hear you say your prayers.

ADELE

All right. I will sing and dance again for you tomorrow, Miss Eyre.

JANE

Yes...I will look forward to the entertainment eagerly.

(MARY and ADELE leave up the center steps.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

The child misses Mr. Rochester so dearly.

JANE

Mr. Rochester? Who is Mr. Rochester?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Why the Master of the House, Miss Eyre. You did not know?

JANE

No. I'm puzzled. Is this not your house?

MRS. FAIRFAX

My house? Oh, no. How charming that you thought it could be mine. No, this house is owned by Mr. Edward Fairfax Rochester.

JANE

Edward Rochester? How did I not know this?

MRS. FAIRFAX

I apologize most heartily if it was my oversight. As I think back now, all the correspondence was with me. I am mortified that I did not give you full disclosure before you came. I assumed you knew....but then, how could you?

JANE

Please don't apologize. It matters not actually. I am here to be a governess for that charming young girl. Is Mr. Rochester here now?

MRS. FAIRFAX

No, we haven't seen him in months. Mr. Rochester makes a habit of showing up at the oddest times. So the flowers are always fresh....the bed linens newly starched...and the house as bright and shiny as a sixpence.

JANE

Do you like him?

MRS. FAIRFAX

I have no cause to do otherwise. He is considered a just and liberal landlord by his tenants. His character is unimpeachable but he also can be rather peculiar at times.

JANE

In what way?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Nothing striking, but you feel it when he speaks to you. You cannot be always sure whether what he says is in jest or earnest, whether he is pleased or the contrary. But it is of no consequence; he is a very good employer.

JANE

And Adele....what do I need to know about Adele?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Well the briefest version would be to tell you that Adele was born on the Continent and only came here to Thornfield six months ago. Her mother.....was an actress and I suppose that is all you need to know about her. Mr. Rochester feels an obligation to the young girl and looks after her. (*Changing the subject.*) Now we must stop this idle talk. I need to show you Thornfield. There are three floors of rooms. Much of it is closed up, but I will show you the rest.

JANE

I would love that, Mrs. Fairfax. Thank you.

MRS. FAIRFAX

(*Rising and leading the way up the center stairs*) I think we'll begin at the top and work our way down...would you follow me please....

(*Her request is stopped by a piercing laugh echoing through the house. It startles JANE, but other than a bit of concern MRS. FAIRFAX does her best to not show alarm.*)

JANE

Mrs. Fairfax, did you hear that?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Very likely one of the servants.....perhaps Grace Poole. (*Calling out.*) Grace? She sews in one of the upstairs rooms. Sometimes Mary is with her and they are frequently noisy together.

(*GRACE POOLE enters at top of stairs. She is a tired looking woman....anything but pleasant and there is an air of fear about her.*)

GRACE

Yes, mu'm.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Too much noise, Grace. Remember.....directions!

GRACE

I do me best, mum. It is not easy you know. I do me best.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Grace, enough! Please welcome our new governess. Miss Eyre, this is Grace Poole. She has been an employee at Thornfield for a long time.

(*JANE holds out her hand in welcome to GRACE but she ignores it.*)

GRACE

A governess at Thornfield, eh? (*Chuckles*) We need more than a governess in this old house, you can be sure.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Grace, back to your duties. (*GRACE just stares at JANE.*) Grace, please!

GRACE

(*Mumbling to herself*) Duties? Only a fool would assume such duties. (*She keeps muttering as she exits off upstage ramp.*)

MRS. FAIRFAX

And now Miss Eyre, a tour of Thornfield. I am sure you will love the oak paneling, elegant furnishings and spacious lawn and gardens.

(*As they exit, another peel of laughter is heard coming from the direction of GRACE's exit. MRS. FAIRFAX has exited but JANE stops and looks. There is a clap of thunder and lightning and the lights fade.*)

Music #13: Behind Closed Doors #2

(*As the SERVANTS sing they strike furniture from previous scene and set up the next.*)

SERVANTS

WE MUST DO OUR BEST TO CAUTION OUR GUEST
 "PAY HEED TO OUR WISE REFRAIN!"
 LEST SHE SHOULD REGRET, IT'S BEST TO FORGET
 THE THINGS THAT SHE CAN'T EXPLAIN.
 WHAT GOES ON HERE
 IS NOT AS IT APPEARS
 AND, BY THE BY,
 IT'S MORE THAN WHAT MEETS THE EYE.
 WE KEEP TO OURSELVES WHILE DUSTING THE SHELVES,
 ATTENDING TO DAILY CHORES
 AND VOW TO CONCEAL AND NEVER REVEAL
 WHAT'S HIDING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

Scene 1-II: A Footpath Near Thornfield, early evening a few days later

(*In the darkness we hear the sound of a horse galloping, getting closer and closer.*)

ROCHESTER'S VOICE (OFFSTAGE)

Stand aside.....stand aside I say!!!! Aaahhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!

(*The horse whinnies loudly and we are aware that the rider has been thrown.*)

JANE (OFFSTAGE)

Are you injured, sir? *(The man mumbles under his breath. It is obvious that he is hurt.)*
Can I do anything?

ROCHESTER (OFFSTAGE)

You must stand on one side and support me.

(JANE appears, supporting a limping man (ROCHESTER). She helps him sit on a tree stump.)

JANE

If you are hurt and want help, sir, I can fetch someone from Thornfield Hall.

ROCHESTER

Thank you, I have no broken bones-- only a sprain, I'm sure.

(As he attempts to stand up, he utters a gasp at the pain and holds on to her with even more strength. For the first time she truly looks at him. He is a huge man, dark, brooding, a long mane of hair. He looks as if he has been riding his horse for hours. He is unkempt and a bit seedy, but there is something magnetic about him. Even through the obvious disarray, one can tell he is handsome. JANE is immediately struck by the man, but refuses to display her interest at this time.)

JANE

I will stay with you, sir, till I see you mounted back on your horse.

ROCHESTER

I should think you ought to be at home yourself. Where do you come from?

JANE

Thornfield Hall.

ROCHESTER

Thornfield Hall? Whose house?

JANE

Mr. Edward Rochester's.

ROCHESTER

Do you know Mr. Rochester?

JANE

I have never seen him.

ROCHESTER

(Toying with her) He is not in residence then?

JANE

No.

ROCHESTER

Can you tell me where he is?

JANE

I cannot.

ROCHESTER

And you are----?

JANE

I am the governess.

ROCHESTER

Ah, the governess. Well, do you have a bumbershoot or something I can use as a walking stick?

JANE

No.

ROCHESTER

No?! You are on the footpath and create a nuisance that causes my horse to stumble and make me fall and yet you are in no situation to be of comfort to me? I hope being a governess comes easier to you than being a nurse.

JANE

Surely I can be of some help?

ROCHESTER

The kindest help you could give me is to leave me alone. I can suffer through this myself without your assistance. Please leave me.

JANE

Yes, sir. Whatever you wish, sir!

(She leaves in a huff. He struggles to get himself up and starts off as the lights fade and the SERVANTS come on to change the furniture.)

Music #14: Grace Crossover Music

Scene 1-12: A Hallway at Thornfield, later that night

(While the SERVANTS change the furniture below, above GRACE POOLE begins a crossover from stage left. We see that she is drinking. Eventually MRS. FAIRFAX enters above from stage right.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

Grace, why are you stumbling around the house at this Godforsaken hour? Is it your intent to confuse Adele and Miss Eyre when they arise?

GRACE

And how, madam, would my appearance confuse?

MRS. FAIRFAX

You are not to leave your post, do you understand? Now get back to your assignment and don't get haughty with me.

GRACE

Yes, mum. *(She exits stage left, mumbling all the way. The lights fade.)*

Scene 1-13: Thornfield Hall, the next morning.

(JOHN is dusting as JANE enters.)

JOHN

Good morning Miss Eyre. Did you sleep well?

JANE

Yes, thank you John.

JOHN

Mr. Rochester arrived last night. He would like to meet you. He asked that you join him as soon as you awoke this morning.

(They move into the area where ROCHESTER sits in his chair looking at drawings, his back to JANE. ADELE is at his feet, playing with a doll.)

Here is Miss Eyre, sir.

(JANE moves in and is shocked at the sight she sees. ROCHESTER is sitting on chair with his sprained ankle on a stool.)

ROCHESTER

Come in Miss Eyre and please sit down. *(She does.)* That is all John. *(JOHN exits)* Miss Eyre, I must admit my initial impression of you was quite disturbing, but I have been talking with Adele and I am pleased. It is obvious you have taken great pains with her. In a short time she has made much improvement. *(She is still too stunned to speak.)* You come from----?

JANE

From Lowood School...in Shire.

ROCHESTER

Ah, the orphan school. How long were you there?

JANE

Eight years.

ROCHESTER

You must be tenacious of life. Eight years as a pupil?

JANE

No, I was a teacher during the last two years.

ROCHESTER

Who recommended you to come here?

JANE

I advertised and Mrs. Fairfax answered my advertisement.

(MRS. FAIRFAX enters with a tray of tea.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

Yes, and I am daily thankful for the choice Providence led me to make. Miss Eyre has been an invaluable companion to me and a kind and careful teacher to Adele.

ROCHESTER

You need not speak as to her character Mrs. Fairfax, I will make that conclusion myself. She began by felling my horse last night. I never saw him give such a reaction. I thought perhaps she was bewitched.

MRS. FAIRFAX

(Trying to make light of the situation.) I have been enjoying Miss Eyre's talent at the pianoforte in your absence.

ROCHESTER

I am sure you have. Adele showed me some sketches this morning which she said were yours, Miss Eyre. I assume you were aided by a master artist?

JANE

Indeed not sir, they are totally mine. *(MRS. FAIRFAX senses there might be an argument and whisks ADELE out of the room)*

ROCHESTER

Where did you get the ideas for them? I thought them quite splendid.

JANE

Out of my head.

ROCHESTER

That head I see now on your shoulders?

JANE

Yes sir.

ROCHESTER

Is there other furniture of the same kind in that head of yours? (*JANE does not respond*) I am just making light, Miss Eyre. You must learn to not take yourself so seriously. (*He looks at her and realizes she has been studying him.*) You examine me, Miss Eyre. Do you think me handsome?

JANE

No sir.

ROCHESTER

(*Laughing*) You seem a shy, unaware young lass, proper and prim, yet when someone asks you a simple question you blurt out an answer which, if not blunt, is at least brusque. What do you mean by it?

JANE

Sir, I was too plain; I beg your pardon. I should say that tastes differ....that beauty is of little consequence....or something of that sort.

ROCHESTER

(*He moves closer to her.*) Does my forehead not please you? What about the nose? The chin? What about my entire encasement? Does it seem remotely attractive to you?

JANE

I might be considered rude if I gave the wrong reply, sir.

ROCHESTER

Do you ever smile, Miss Eyre? Ever? Ever? (*He moves away*) You fool me not, Miss Eyre. You aren't as devoid of emotion as you would want me or anyone else to believe. I, too, am not the tough, uncaring person you see before you. I once had a heart. Tender feelings did exist in me. Life....life's misfortunes have knocked me about and now I am as hard and tough as an India rubber ball.

Music #15: Perhaps

(*He starts to leave and turns back.*) Any hope I could change from Indian rubber to human flesh?

(With that he exits. JANE is left to ponder what just transpired.)

JANE

WHAT WAS HE EXPECTING?
DID HE HOPE TO FIND
SOMEONE FAR LESS LIKELY
PRONE TO SPEAK HER MIND?
PERHAPS I SHOULD HAVE WAITED....
PERHAPS WHAT I SHOULD BE
IS SOMEONE MORE BEFITTING
A PROPER EMPLOYEE.

WHO IS HE
AND WHAT DID HE SEE
WHEN HE LOOKED AT ME?

I MUST MAKE AN EFFORT
NOT TO BE SO BOLD,
STRIVING NOT TO QUESTION
EVERYTHING I'M TOLD.
PERHAPS I CAN BE SOMEONE
ON WHOM HE CAN DEPEND,
SOMETHING LESS A STRANGER,
SOMEWHAT MORE A FRIEND.

IN TIME I HOPE TO UNDERSTAND
THIS MOST INTRIGUING MAN,
THEN PERHAPS HE'LL HELP ME LEARN
WHO I AM.

(Blackout)

Scene 1-14: The Study, the next morning.

(JANE is sitting as MRS. FAIRFAX enters)

MRS. FAIRFAX

The day is proceeding without your appearance Jane.

JANE

I know. I find this morning daunting for some unknown reason. When I spoke with Mr. Rochester yesterday, I didn't know what to make of the man.

MRS. FAIRFAX

He is not easy to decipher. It's not all his fault, you know.

JANE

But he is so blunt.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I suppose I'm no longer even aware of it. His family is the cause of much of his being.

JANE

I thought he had no family.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Memories, my dear. They can be haunting also. *(She exits.)*

(ADELE pulls ROCHESTER on.)

ROCHESTER

No Adele, I have too much to do.

ADELE

Come, I want to dance for you. Please.

ROCHESTER

Not now, I need to speak with Miss Eyre.

ADELE

But I wish to dance now.

ROCHESTER

(In a very stern voice) I said "no". Now leave me. *(ADELE goes out sadly.)*
And how are you this morning Miss Eyre?

JANE

(In a very curt reply) I am well, Mr. Rochester!

ROCHESTER

I sense some displeasure from the governess.

JANE

You may treat me as you want, Mr. Rochester, but I cannot allow you to treat Adele as you just did.

ROCHESTER

Allow? Who do you think you are speaking to?

JANE

My employer. However, Adele has no employer.

ROCHESTER

I will treat everyone as I see fit, including Adele! (*He pauses and then decides to explain*) You cannot know the pain of memory, of lost love.

Music #16: My Days With Celine

Since you see fit to chastise me, perhaps you should hear the truth about the child.

THERE WAS A TIME
 MY YOUTH FOSTERED PROMISE AND PASSION.
 I WAS A MAN--
 QUITE UNLIKE WHO YOU SEE--
 BACK IN THE TIME
 MY INNOCENCE DANCED WITH COMPASSION....
 BACK THEN BEFORE
 MY DAYS WITH CELINE.

(*As the song progresses, a dream sequence takes place where we see YOUNG ROCHESTER, CELINE, the LIBERTINE and ADELE dance out the tale he sings.*)

OH SHE WAS FAIR;
 A MAGNIFICENT BEAUTY SO RARE
 AND SHE DANCED
 ON THE STAGE LIKE A YOUNG FAIRY QUEEN.
 AND SHE WAS MINE...
 THIS DELICATE BEAUTY WAS MINE,
 AND I GAVE ALL MY LOVE...
 MY LOVE TO CELINE.

NIGHT AND DAY
 I ADORNED HER, MY YOUNG PROTÉGÉ...
 GAVE HER JEWELS,
 SET HER PLACE WITH THE FINEST CUISINE,
 TAKING CARE
 NOT TO SPOIL OUR PERFECT AFFAIR.
 AND I GAVE ALL MY LOVE...
 MY LOVE TO CELINE.

SOON THOUGH I LEARNED I'D BEEN TRICKED INTO BLINDNESS.
 I SAW THAT HER FACE HARBORED MUCH MORE THAN KINDNESS
 FOR, WHILE SHE PROFESSED HER DEVOTION TO ME,
 SHE LAY IN THE ARMS
 OF A YOUNG LIBERTINE
 AND SHE GAVE HIM HER HEART....
 MY BELOVED CELINE.

LIKE A FOOL
 I CHALLENGED THE RAKE TO A DUEL.

WHAT WAS LIFE WITHOUT HER LOVE,
 HOW MUCH COULD IT MEAN?
 I WAS YOUNG
 TURNED MY BACK ON, BUT HOPELESSLY CLUNG
 TO THE LOVE THAT I GAVE
 I GAVE TO CELINE.

YEARS QUICKLY PASSED, THEN I LEARNED OF A CHILD
 ABANDONED BY MOTHER, ALONE IN THE WILD.
 CELINE AND THE RAKE LEFT A DAUGHTER BEHIND.
 ADELE IS THE CHILD,
 THEIR INNOCENT SPRING.
 I CARE FOR HER NOW,
 THIS DELICATE THING.
 THE HAUNTING REMINDER
 OF A LONG WITHERED DREAM...
 THE MEMORY OF
 MY DAYS WITH CELINE...
 THE MEMORY OF
 MY CELINE.

I am sure I am not her father. But, if Celine had no trouble hurting me, I feared she would do the same with the child. Hence Adele has come to live with us and hence my decision to hire you. I apologize, Miss Eyre. Perhaps my explanation will serve as proof that I am a total ogre with Adele.

JANE

Adele is not responsible for her mother's faults or for yours.

ROCHESTER

Mine? How dare you! What do you know of my faults? I honor my responsibilities. Is that a fault? *(She doesn't answer)* Good night, Miss Eyre! *(She exits as we segue into next scene.)*

Music #17: Bedroom Segue

Scene I-15: Rochester's Bedroom

(The lights dim except for a spot on ROCHESTER which follows him as he first gets a bottle of liquor and begins drinking. As this happens, GRACE is discovered above crossing from Stage Left to Stage Right, also drinking. The scene is changed to ROCHESTER's bedroom. Once his bed is in place, ROCHESTER makes his way into the room, takes one last swallow from the bottle and passes out on the bed.)

(Rochester's bed is darkly lit. Suddenly a shadowy female figure appears, a lit torch in her hand. As she makes her way to the bed she laughs ominously. She circles the bed and touches the torch to the fabric. Suddenly flames erupt. There is much smoke. The figure runs off laughing.)

JANE

(Frantically knocking from offstage.)

Mr. Rochester, I heard that strange laugh again. Mr. Rochester? I smell smoke. Mr. Rochester! *(JANE runs into his bedroom and sees the fire.)* Mr. Rochester. Wake up! Fire.....Fire! Mr. Rochester....you must get up. *(She has grabbed the water pitcher and put the fire out)* Please sir....wake up! *(She finally throws some more water in his face and he wakes up immediately.)*

ROCHESTER

Is there a flood?

JANE

No sir, but there has been a fire.

ROCHESTER

What are you trying to do....drown me?

JANE

You have had too much drink, sir.....it is obvious you would have slept through the fire. I had to wake you somehow!

ROCHESTER

How did it happen?

JANE

I don't know. But just prior to it, I heard that same strange laugh I have been hearing since the first day I arrived.

ROCHESTER

(He is furious.) Grace! Grace!! Grace...come in here this minute!

JANE

I don't understand , sir. Every time I mention that laugh to Mrs. Fairfax, she invariably changes the subject.

ROCHESTER

(He puts his cloak around her) Here get warm. *(Finally GRACE enters.)*

GRACE

You called sir?

ROCHESTER

Grace, my bed has just been set afire. How did this happen? Are you following rules?

GRACE

(It is obvious GRACE has been drinking also) To the letter, sir. To the letter.

ROCHESTER

And you have no idea how a fire may have started in my bed chamber?

GRACE

I was fast asleep, sir. How could I know about such happenings?

JANE

Grace, I heard that strange laugh again.

GRACE

Then I suggest, Miss, that you keep your door locked at night.

(It is almost a threat. ROCHESTER apparently doesn't want to deal with it.)

ROCHESTER

Grace, you are excused. *(She begins to leave.)* And Grace.....I would be happier if these unexplained happenings ceased. Do I make myself clear?

GRACE

Perfectly, sir. I shall do my best. *(She looks at JANE .)* Good night. *(She exits.)*

ROCHESTER

Jane I would be glad if you and I were the only two who know of tonight's events. I will somehow account for this state of affairs to the others.

JANE

Yes, sir. Good night Mr. Rochester. *(She begins to exit)*

ROCHESTER

(Softening) You go so soon?

JANE

I thought you had given me leave, sir.

ROCHESTER

But not like this. I need some word of acknowledgment. You saved my life yet you plan to leave as if we were strangers. At least shake my hand. *(He extends his hand....she takes it...and then he moves closer, holding her hand with both his hands.)* I feel a pleasure in owing you so immense a debt.....a closeness and a bonding we did not have before.

JANE

(Gently pulling her hand away.) There is no debt, sir. No obligation in this case.

ROCHESTER

You strike delight in my innermost heart, Jane. Thank you.

JANE

Good night Mr. Rochester. (*She begins to leave, then stops*) I am glad you are safe. (*She leaves. ROCHESTER goes over to bed. JANE appears above.*)

Music #18: Soliloquies #1

ROCHESTER

WHO IS THIS THAT ODDLY FINDS MY SOUL RENEWED?

JANE

WHO IS THIS THAT STRANGELY BREAKS MY SOLITUDE?
WHY SHOULD HE CONSIDER WHAT MY THOUGHTS WOULD BE?

ROCHESTER

DOES SHE SOMEHOW KINDLE A SPARK INSIDE OF ME?

BOTH

WHO IS HE (SHE)
AND WHAT CAN THIS BE?
IS THERE MORE THAN I CAN SEE?

JANE

WHAT IS THERE ABOUT HIM MAKES MY MIND REJOICE?

ROCHESTER

WHY IS IT HER PRESENCE WAKES MY INNER VOICE?

BOTH

CAN IT BE AT LONG LAST
ALL MY SILENT YEARS
SUDDENLY HAVE VANISHED
NOW THAT HE (SHE) APPEARS?

JANE

WHERE THERE ONCE WAS NO ONE,

ROCHESTER

SILENCE FILLED THE HAZE,

BOTH

SUDDENLY NOW SOMEONE
FILLS MY DAYS.

(Blackout.)

Scene 1-16: Thornfield Hall, two months later

(MARY enters and meets MRS. FAIRFAX)

MARY

Good morning, Mrs. Fairfax. Any word from Mr. Rochester?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Not a word, but we should plan for his arrival anyway. One never knows just what he will expect when he returns.

MARY

And how about Miss Eyre. Is she any better?

MRS. FAIRFAX

A bit, but still not her old self, I'm afraid. It was all such a shock for her, the morning after the fire finding Mr. Rochester gone. Gone now for eight weeks with no word. Also....I think perhaps it was a mistake to tell her about Miss Ingram.

MARY

Why should Miss Ingram concern her?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Sometimes we miss the obvious, Mary. I think Jane shows a fondness for Mr. Rochester. Unfortunately I wasn't aware of it before I told her about Blanche Ingram....what a beauty she is....what a special voice she possesses.....how Mr. Rochester is a different man in her presence..... how he acts the charming debonair suitor.

MARY

Did you tell her that Miss Ingram and Mr. Rochester are to be married?

MRS. FAIRFAX

I did. I'm sure it broke her heart. That bit of news, coupled with his long absence, seems to have deeply saddened her. We've hardly seen her these past weeks. She spends every moment with Adele or in her room alone.

(JOHN enters carrying an envelope.)

JOHN

Mrs. Fairfax, I believe this might be the letter we've been waiting for. *(He hands her the envelope. She reads the letter.)*

MRS. FAIRFAX

Mary! John! It seems Mr. Rochester is arriving in three days! And to complicate matters, he's bringing a house full of guests.....including Miss Ingram! Oh my. Oh, my....we'll never be ready.

Music #19: A Servant Earns His Keep

MRS. FAIRFAX
MR. ROCHESTER IS COMING HOME!

(The SERVANTS assemble)

MRS. FAIRFAX AND SERVANTS
MR. ROCHESTER IS COMING HOME!
THERE IS MUCH TO DO.
WE'LL WORK THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH
AND THE NEXT FEW DAYS THE SAME
FOR MR. ROCHESTER IS ON HIS WAY.
HE'LL BE HERE SOON,
HE'LL BE HERE SOON.

MRS. FAIRFAX
DON'T BE AFRAID
I HAVE EVERYTHING UNDER CONTROL

SERVANTS
WHAT SHALL WE DO?
WHAT SHALL WE DO?

MRS. FAIRFAX
WE'VE GOT THREE MORE DAYS
AND WE WILL WORK STRAIGHT THROUGH.

SERVANTS
MR. ROCHESTER!
MR. ROCHESTER!

MRS. FAIRFAX
HE WILL BE HERE IN THREE DAYS
AT HALF PAST NOON.

SERVANTS
MR. ROCHESTER!
MR. ROCHESTER!
IN THREE DAYS BUT THAT'S TOO SOON.
WE'LL CLEAN THE FLOORS
WE'LL SCRUB THE WALLS
POLISH THE BRASS
PREPARE A FEAST
FOR OUR MASTER AND HIS MANY GUESTS.
THE GARDEN LAWNS,
THE CHANDELIERS
THE ROOMS UPSTAIRS

WE'LL CLEAN THEM ALL.
 WILL WE EVER GET SOME REST?
 FOR MR. ROCHESTER IS COMING HOME.
 MR. ROCHESTER IS COMING HOME.
 THERE IS MUCH TO DO
 WE'LL WORK THE WHOLE NIGHT THROUGH
 AND THE NEXT FEW DAYS THE SAME
 FOR MR. ROCHESTER IS ONE HIS WAY!

(During the subsequent verses, the SERVANTS prepare Thornfield for Mr. Rochester's arrival and the party. As the verses progress, there is a passage of time, three days to be exact.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

FIRST WE'LL SCRUB ALL THE CARPETS AND SCOUR THE HALL.
 PREPARING THE BEDROOMS IS MOST CRITICAL!
 WE MUST WORK 'ROUND THE CLOCK TILL THE PANTRY IS CLEAR.
 WE'VE ONLY THREE DAYS TILL THEY'RE HERE!

SERVANTS

THUS A SERVANT EARNS HIS KEEP
 WHEN THERE'S ALWAYS FLOORS TO SWEEP.
 FROM THE DUST THAT WE SOW THERE'S NO FRUIT THAT WE REAP.
 BLESSED IS THE WORKING SET
 WITH OUR DAILY MINUET
 FOR WE'RE EARNING OUR KEEP WHILE THE UPPER CLASS SLEEP.

MARY

(to one of the other servants)

NOW WE KNOW MASTER EDWARD'S AWAY QUITE A BIT
 BUT WE STILL ALWAYS KEEP EV'RY ROOM NEATLY FIT.
 SO HE MUST HAVE GOOD REASON WE'RE WORKING LIKE THIS

MRS FAIRFAX

(slightly scolding them)

AND I DARE SAY IT'S NOBODY'S BUSINESS BUT HIS!

SERVANTS

THUS A SERVANT EARNS HIS KEEP
 WHEN THERE'S ALWAYS FLOORS TO SWEEP.
 FROM THE DUST THAT WE SOW THERE'S NO FRUIT THAT WE REAP.
 BLESSED IS THE WORKING SET
 WITH OUR DAILY MINUET
 FOR WE'RE EARNING OUR KEEP WHILE THE UPPER CLASS SLEEP.

JOHN

(appearing, holding a small box)

THOUGH IT'S LESS THAN A DAY TILL THE MASTER ARRIVES,
IT'S DOUBTFUL MY BACK OR MY FEET WILL SURVIVE.
I CAN'T BEAR TO MAKE ONE MORE TRIP UP THE STAIRS
SO I THINK I'LL JUST HIDE THIS ONE UNDER THE CHAIR.

ADELE

TODAY IS THE DAY MONSIEUR WILL BE HERE!
HOPE HE'S FOUND ME A LARGE SOUVENIR.
PERHAPS A DOLL OR SOMETHING AS FINE.
NO MATTER, AS LONG AS IT'S MINE.

(During final verse, we see MR. ROCHESTER, MISS INGRAM and all the PARTY GUESTS making an entrance from the above level. By the end of the song the guests are posed on the center staircase.)

SERVANTS

(perhaps spruced up a bit, ready to welcome the guests)

FINALLY OUR WORK'S AT END
NO MORE SCRUBBING YET TO TEND.
NOW THE MASTER IS HOME AND THE GUESTS WILL DESCEND.
BLESSED IS THE WORKING SET
WITH OUR DAILY MINUET
FOR IT'S NOW THAT OUR WORK STARTS ALL OVER AGAIN!
BLESSED IS THE WORKING SET
WITH OUR DAILY MINUET,
FOR IT'S NOW THAT OUR WORK STARTS ALL OVER AGAIN!

Scene I-17: The Party at Thornfield

Music #20: The Minuet

(There is much happiness. Some are chatting, refreshments are being served. Lots of fan fluttering and coyness from the ladies. BLANCHE is indeed beautiful and she has ROCHESTER'S ear and full attention. MARY sits upstage at the pianoforte as if playing "The Minuet" and some are gathered around her listening. On an upper level we see MRS. FAIRFAX leading JANE across in discussion).

JANE

I can't Mrs. Fairfax. Mr. Rochester can't expect me to be seen at a party with such elegant people.

MRS. FAIRFAX

He does. And he has asked Adele too. You must attend. It is his wish. Why don't you wear that pretty frock you made for my birthday celebration?

(They go off stage as lights cross fade to party.)

BLANCHE

Oh come, Edward. You must sing. We don't get to hear that glorious voice enough. (*All agree.*)

ROCHESTER

I have no intention of favoring you all with baritone majesty. You are at my home, we shall entertain each other....with dance. Come....a minuet.

(They dance a minuet. At some point during the dance they move upstage and the lights cross fade to another section of the house where we see JOHN come in to speak with MRS. FAIRFAX.)

JOHN

Mrs. Fairfax. There is a gentlemen waiting in the hall who says he must speak to Mr. Rochester.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Send him on his way. We are in the middle of a party. This is not the time for interruption.

JOHN

I did my best, ma'am. He refused. He said to tell Mr. Rochester that "the weather in Jamaica is lovely."

MRS. FAIRFAX

(in obvious shock) Bring him to me. *(JOHN starts off)* And please, John....not a word to Mr. Rochester. I will handle this. *(She paces, deeply concerned. JOHN comes back on with MASON, a darkly somber man.)* I assume you are Richard Mason.

MASON

I am that, ma'am.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I am Mrs. Alice Fairfax, the housekeeper.

MASON

I certainly know of you. Is Mr. Rochester available?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Your timing could not be worse. He is in the midst of a celebration. You must be exhausted from your journey. John, would you show our guests to the blue room. You can rest there for the evening, Mr. Mason. I will inform Mr. Rochester of your arrival and he can see you in the morning at a suitably convenient time.

MASON

Thank you. Your kindness is appreciated. I am not sure he will be pleased to see me, but I must speak with him. *(He turns and follows JOHN out. MRS. FAIRFAX remains to ponder.)*

MRS. FAIRFAX

I am quite sure, Mr. Mason that you are the last person Mr. Rochester would wish to see now or any time. Oh my, just when the future seemed hopeful...the past comes full force on the scene. Oh dear me, dear me. *(She exits.)*

(The lights cross-fade back to the party as JANE and ADELE come on. Jane feels very awkward and moves to the window seat unnoticed. ROCHESTER dances with ADELE. Everyone seems enchanted by her. JANE stays quietly out of the way.)

BLANCHE

(Cutting in) May I cut in, young lady?

ADELE

Oui Madame. *(And she sits with JANE.)*

BLANCHE

(dancing with ROCHESTER) I'm befuddled, Edward. I thought you were much like me....disenchanted with children. And yet you take this ward on without hesitation.

ROCHESTER

It was not entirely by choice. She was deserted. Abandoned. You can't expect me to ignore that plight, can you?

BLANCHE

I suppose not. But wouldn't school be good for her? A school located far away from Thornfield?

ROCHESTER

Although you think money is plentiful here Blanche, the truth is that private school would be too costly.

BLANCHE

How do you handle her then? Surely you don't care for her by yourself?

ROCHESTER

No, there is a governess. A fine governess who has made it all so much more pleasant.

BLANCHE

(Looking around) Ah...I spy her. That has to be the governess. They all have one universal similarity, don't they. They are plain...exceedingly plain. She certainly fills the role to perfection.

(BLANCHE'S MOTHER, MRS. INGRAM, approaches)

MRS. INGRAM

Now what are you two lovebirds chattering on about?

BLANCHE

The governess for that little child is sitting over there in the window seat. Could you ever have guessed that was her vocation?

MRS. INGRAM

(Haughtily) She might as well wear a sign around her neck announcing "Governess". But don't speak to me of that position. I have had a lifetime of suffering through their lack of skill. They are but mere servants and yet they think they sit on the top rung of society's ladder. It takes no talent, no aptitude, no mother's wit to be a governess. I shudder at the thought.

(JANE has heard it all and, though upset, remains seated.)

ROCHESTER

(Realizing that Mrs. Ingram has said too much, too loudly) My dear Mrs. Ingram, you are obviously Blanche's mother....being outspoken is an Ingram trait.

(JANE starts off. ROCHESTER sees her and excuses himself from BLANCHE who rejoins partygoers as he moves to JANE.)

ROCHESTER

Jane....you leave early.

JANE

Yes. I don't feel well.

ROCHESTER

You appear as if ready to cry. *(She turns away)* Or do I already see tears?

JANE

There are no tears, sir. I am just tired. Please allow me to go.

ROCHESTER

Jane, I must ask that you attend all functions with my guests while they are here. *(She starts off)*. Jane. *(She turns back)* That is more than a request.

JANE

Yes sir. *(She goes back to the window seat. He is left watching her as BLANCHE rejoins him.)*

BLANCHE

So near...and yet so far. Where are those thoughts, dear Edward?

ROCHESTER

They are here. *(He turns to her)* With you. Are you enjoying the party?

BLANCHE

I am enjoying you. I am not sure that the feeling is reciprocated, however.

ROCHESTER

It is. It's just that....I have worries, Blanche. I have recently received word that my finances are in turmoil.

BLANCHE

(Taken aback but trying very hard to hide it.) All will be fine. Now, I suggest we get back to the party. Your guests are eager for your presence.

ROCHESTER

I have a better idea. *(To the guests)* Everyone.....I think we definitely need some entertainment and, as we know, the lovely Blanche Ingram has a very gifted voice. I also would like to introduce Adele's governess, Miss Eyre, and ask her to accompany Blanche.

JANE

(Stepping forward quickly and speaking quietly to ROCHESTER) Please, sir. I can't. I would be too frightened.

ROCHESTER

It will be fine Jane.

BLANCHE

Come, young lady. My voice would make any accompaniment seem better.....*(realizing her ego has been too much)*...in deep humilite'.

(She bows to the guests and pulls JANE to the pianoforte. As she explains her music to JANE, MRS. INGRAM approaches ROCHESTER.)

MRS. INGRAM

Your home is beautiful, Edward and Blanche's voice will only make it lovelier.

ROCHESTER

Thank you. I don't have guests often enough.

MRS. INGRAM

Oh....it seems that my darling is ready to begin.

Music #21: Let Every Man Rejoice

(BLANCHE sings while JANE struggles with the accompaniment. She periodically hits bad notes and BLANCHE does her best to overcome it.)

BLANCHE

HARK, HARK THE NEW DAY DAWNS
 AS LOVE AWAITS THE MORN.
 HARK, HARK LET JOYOUS SONG
 WITHIN THY HEARTS BE BORN.
 CAST OFF ALL DUBIOUS MUSING.
 EMBRACE WHAT'ERE BE YOUR CHOOSING.
 HARK, HARK THE NEW DAY ARRIVES.
 LET EVERY MAN REJOICE!
 FA-LA-LA-LA-LA
 LET EVERY MAN REJOICE!

HARK, HARK PROCLAIM THE NEWS
 THAT LOVE DOES CAST ITS SPELL.
 HARK, HARK MAKE HASTE TO ACQUIRE
 WHAT CUPID'S ARROWS FELL.
 THINK NO MORE OF MODEST CONVENTION.
 PARTAKE OF EACH BLISSFUL INTENTION.
 HARK, HARK THY LOVE TAKES FLIGHT.
 LET EVERY MAN REJOICE!
 FA-LA-LA-LA-LA
 LET EVERY MAN REJOICE!

(BLANCHE bows deeply as the guests applaud. JANE, embarrassed, quickly crosses away from the pianoforte. BLANCHE stops her.)

BLANCHE

My dear young lady, don't let your mistakes worry you. You did well enough. Of course, I am used to much more proficient technique when I sing, but I suppose you can't be held accountable. After all, you had no chance to rehearse.

JANE

(Trying her best to contain her emotions.) I am sorry, Miss Ingram.

ROCHESTER

(Trying to be amusing.) Oh, come now, Jane. You can't be faulted. You're a governess, not a musician.

(JANE is mortified and immediately flees up the steps where she stops in tears.)

BLANCHE

(Realizing that ROCHESTER is worried that he may have hurt Jane.) Come everyone, I want to show you Edward's beautiful gardens. Won't you join us darling?

ROCHESTER

I'll be with you in a moment. (*BLANCHE exits with the guests. ROCHESTER runs up the steps and finds JANE.*) Jane, please forgive me. I was merely trying to lighten the moment but my choice of words only served to give you pain.

JANE

I don't understand you. I thought we shared some warmth between us.

ROCHESTER

Jane, I do care about you.....more than you know. Please accept my apology. I would never want to hurt you.

(*MRS. FAIRFAX rushes in.*)

MRS. FAIRFAX

Mr. Rochester, a calamity! You are needed immediately.

ROCHESTER

What is it? (*She whispers in his ear. He, too, is suddenly visibly shaken.*) Jane, I need your help. Do you sicken at the sight of blood?

JANE

I don't know, but I suspect not.

ROCHESTER

Please get a basin of hot water and follow me to the third floor.

(*He rushes off.*)

MRS. FAIRFAX

Please dear, not a word of this to anyone.

JANE

What has happened?

MRS. FAIRFAX

A gentlemen who arrived during the party has been hurt. I had put him in the tapestry bedroom hoping to keep him out of sight until everyone had retired. Now there has been a horrible accident.

JANE

Who is he?

MRS. FAIRFAX

I suppose you should know. His name is Mason. Richard Mason. He is here from Jamaica.

JANE

Jamaica? Why would a man from Jamaica come to Thornfield?

MRS. FAIRFAX

No time for idle questions, Jane. You must get to Mr. Rochester immediately. I will see that the guests are tucked away never knowing of the incident. Now, please hurry!

(Blackout)

Music #22: Behind Closed Doors #3

(As the SERVANTS sing, the scene is changed.)

SERVANTS

BEHIND THE FACADE OUR FRAGILE CHARADE
PLAYS ON IN A PERFECT WAY.
YOU'D NEVER DETECT OR EVEN SUSPECT
THE RULES OF THE GAME WE PLAY.
WE WON'T LET ON THERE'S SOMETHING GOING ON,
PROTECTING ALL THE SECRETS OF THORNFIELD HALL.
ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT, IN SHADOWY LIGHT,
DOWN ECHOING CORRIDORS,
WE SPEAK NOT A WORD OF THINGS THAT ARE HEARD
HIDING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.
NEVER A SOUND OF THINGS THAT ARE FOUND
HIDING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.

Scene 1-18: A bedroom in Thornfield

(There is a bed and in it lies Mr. MASON. He is severely wounded. There is much blood on his shoulder. ROCHESTER is attending him awaiting JANE's arrival.)

MASON

My apologies, sir. To arrive unannounced and then cause you such distress.....

ROCHESTER

You were warned Richard. You knew better. Why would you try the impossible?

MASON

I thought I could surpass the obvious. I was wrong. Please return to your guests, I shall be fine.

ROCHESTER

The guests are all asleep by now.

(JANE rushes in with the water basin. She is at first shocked by the sight of MASON'S wound but then recovers and begins attending to him.)

JANE

Sir, I am afraid this is going to pain.

MASON

(To ROCHESTER) We both know how this happened Edward. I must prevent it from happening again. I shall be gone before dawn.

ROCHESTER

Why on earth did you come? Why?

MASON

I thought I could do some good. She....she....

ROCHESTER

It was a mistake!

(MRS. FAIRFAX ushers in DR. CARTER.)

CARTER

Good evening sir. *(He moves to Mason and checks wound)* There is much blood, however the wound appears treatable. This does not look like a knife wound. How did it happen?

MASON

I was bitten. Like a wild animal.

ROCHESTER

He must be out of the house by dawn. Is that possible?

CARTER

I can take him to my house until he is totally mended.

ROCHESTER

And then, Mr. Mason...back to Jamaica. No one should ever know you were here.

CARTER

(To ROCHESTER, purposely trying to be vague) Does....."she" know?

ROCHESTER

(Indicating MASON'S wounds) Isn't that obvious?

(CARTER and MRS. FAIRFAX get MASON to his feet and they leave. JANE and ROCHESTER are alone. They stare at each other over the empty bed. It has been a long evening.)

ROCHESTER

Not the happiest ending for a party, is it? (*She doesn't answer.*) You are quiet. The questions must be racing through your head.

JANE

They are.

ROCHESTER

I am sorry Jane. You are not ready to hear the answers just yet. Let me ask you something. You care about me do you not?

JANE

Yes.

ROCHESTER

Do you have trust in me? Do you think I am a man of principle?

JANE

I do, sir.

ROCHESTER

"Sir?" Still no endearment. Ever the employee. What if I were to tell you that, like all men...there are terrifying skeletons in my closet?

JANE

I am sure they aren't as terrifying as you think.

ROCHESTER

Would you think so much of me if you found I committed an error in the past?

JANE

A crime?

ROCHESTER

Not a crime? A grievous error.

JANE

An error, Mr. Rochester?

ROCHESTER

Yes. I am heart-weary, Jane. I am soul-withered. It has been a life I did not wish on myself and now it seems you too are involved.

(*MRS. FAIRFAX enters carrying an envelope.*)

MRS. FAIRFAX

I am sorry to interrupt sir. Miss Eyre, this just arrived. The gentleman delivering it says it is most urgent. (*She hands it to JANE.*)

ROCHESTER

Thank you Mrs. Fairfax.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Good evening. *(And she goes. In the meantime, JANE has been reading the letter).*

JANE

Sir, I must ask for a leave of absence.

ROCHESTER

For what purpose?

JANE

To visit a lady who is ill and who has sent for me.

ROCHESTER

How much sickness can we take in one evening? Where does she live?

JANE

At Gateshead. She is my aunt.

ROCHESTER

You always said you had no family.

JANE

None that would admit to me. Her oldest son ruined himself with drink and debt. He committed suicide according to this letter and in her anguish she has suffered an attack and is bedridden.

ROCHESTER

How long will you stay?

JANE

As briefly as possible.

ROCHESTER

Promise me you will only stay a week. Adele will miss you.....I will miss you.

JANE

Thank you. I have a request of you.

ROCHESTER

A request?

JANE

Will you give me ample time to advertise for a new position by affording me the date you plan to marry Blanche Ingram?

ROCHESTER

You won't need to advertise. I promise to find you a situation much superior to the one you had here....one you will be most happy with, I assure you. *(She turns to leave)* You leave now?

JANE

I must.

ROCHESTER

Then you and I must bid good-bye for a time.

JANE

I suppose so.

ROCHESTER

And how do people perform that ceremony of parting, Jane? Teach me. I'm not quite up to it.

JANE

How can I teach the teacher? I guess they say "farewell" and then part.

ROCHESTER

But that is so dry....so unfriendly. *(He moves closer to her)* And we have become more than friends, have we not?

JANE

.....Yes.

ROCHESTER

(Moving even closer. They are next to each other. He takes her hand) We could shake hands. That is what strangers do. But we are no longer strangers. We are more than that...are we not?

JANE

We are.

ROCHESTER

You say "farewell". I find I need more than that. I need....*(He gives her a gentle kiss.)* I needed that. Now go. Have a safe journey. See to your Aunt. And remember that I shall be here, with Adele, awaiting your return.

JANE

(Totally confused) I don't know what to say.

ROCHESTER

And that is exactly when you should find the strength to say nothing.

JANE

Good bye. I will think. *(She pulls away but he grabs her hand and gently kisses it. With great fortitude, she reaches up and kisses him again. A daring thing for JANE to do. She quickly runs off)*

(ROCHESTER is left alone pondering the pain of losing her when he has just found her.)

Music #23: Soliloquies #2

ROCHESTER

JUST WHEN I THOUGHT MY LIFE WAS CHANGING,
 JUST AS SHE RESCUED MY SOUL,
 GIVING ME HOPE OF ONE DAY FINDING
 HAPPINESS LOST LONG AGO.
 NOW MUST I ONCE AGAIN
 BURY THESE THOUGHTS AGAIN
 HELPLESSLY WATCHING HER LEAVE.
 WHEN WILL SHE KNOW HOW MUCH I NEED HER?
 HOW CAN I MAKE HER BELIEVE?

(JANE appears on upper level, dressed in a cape and carrying her travel bag.)

JANE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN?
 WHY DID HE KISS ME?
 WHY DID HE SPEAK THAT WAY?
 DID I IMAGINE HEARING
 THE THINGS I HEARD HIM SAY?
 HOW CAN I KNOW THE ANSWERS
 IF NOW MY DUTY LIES
 FAR, FAR AWAY FROM THORNFIELD
 AND THE KINDNESS IN HIS EYES?

BOTH

NO MATTER WHAT'S THERE FOR ME,
 WHERE THIS ROAD MAY BEND,
 I'LL FACE IT NOW WILLINGLY--
 THIS NEW JOURNEY'S END.
 NO MATTER HOW LONG IT TAKES,
 I'LL WAIT FOR HIS (HER) SONG.
 ONCE MORE TO HAVE A LIFE,
 ONCE MORE TO LIVE MY LIFE,
 ONCE MORE TO SHARE HIS (HER) LIFE

JANE

AND FINALLY BELONG

ROCHESTER

ONCE MORE TO HAVE A LIFE
ONCE MORE TO SHARE HER LIFE

BOTH

AND FINALLY BELONG!

(Blackout)

End of ACT ONE

ACT TWO**Music #24: Entr'acte****Scene 2-1: Gateshead, Outside Mrs. Reed's Bedroom**

(BESSIE, the maid, enters with JANE.)

JANE

How is Aunt Reed?

BESSIE

She is doing poorly. It is good you came Miss Eyre.

JANE

Thank you, Bessie. *(She looks around)* My memories of this place are so sad.....so unhappy.

BESSIE

I wasn't sure you would come when I sent the letter. Come with me, Miss Eyre.

(They enter the area where MRS. REED is in bed. JANE approaches her cautiously.)

BESSIE

Missie. Jane Eyre is here. She honored your request and made the long journey to see you. *(She nods to JANE and leaves).*

JANE

Aunt Reed?

MRS. REED

Is this Jane Eyre?

JANE

Yes, Aunt Reed. *(JANE reaches for her hand but MRS. REED abruptly pulls it aside.)*
You sent for me and I am here. It is my intention to stay till I see how you get on.

MRS. REED

I presume you thought I was asking you here to mend wounded fences. I wish I could. I cannot.

JANE

There is no point now going over all that, Aunt Reed.

MRS. REED

I am very ill. I know it. I committed two wrongs against you, Jane which I must now make right. The first was breaking the promise I made to my husband to raise you as my own child. The other---- *(She cannot bring herself to say it.)*

JANE

Aunt Reed if this is too hard for you, we can talk later.

MRS. REED

There is no "later" Jane. It must be now. Eternity is knocking at my door. (*She points to the bed table.*) Go to my dressing case, open it and take out the letter you will see there. (*JANE does so and returns to the bedside.*) Please read it.

JANE

(*Reading*) Madam, will you have the goodness to send me the address of my niece, Jane Eyre, and tell me how she is? It is my intention to write to her and request that she come to me at Madeira. Providence has blessed my endeavours and I am a wealthy man. As I am unmarried and childless, I wish to adopt Jane Eyre during my life and bequeath her at my death whatever I may have to leave. I am, Madam,....etc.....etc. John Eyre. (*JANE turns the letter over and reads*) This letter was dated three years back. Why did I never hear of this?

MRS. REED

Because my dislike of you was so intense, I refused to help you become prosperous. Your fury towards me was more than I could forgive.

JANE

But three years ago. Please, Aunt Reed, neither of us is the same as we were.

MRS. REED

I wrote him. I said I was sorry for his disappointment, but Jane Eyre was dead; she had died of Typhus at Lowood. Now.....act as you please. Write to him and expose my falsehood as soon as you like. You were born to be my tormentor.

JANE

I am not vindictive. Let us accept each other with kindness and forgiveness. (*She leans forward to kiss AUNT REED who turns her head away.*) Love me, or hate me, as you will. You have my full and free forgiveness. (*She begins to exit, stops at the door and turns back .*) And now, by the love of God, be at peace.

(*She exits. Lights cross face to upper level as ROCHESTER enters with ADELE and scene below is changed from the bedroom to the garden.*)

Scene 2-2: The Garden At Thornfield

ADELE

It has been a month she has been gone.

ROCHESTER

It seems like a dozen months. I grow terribly impatient to see her again.

ADELE

She will be back. She promised.

(They make their way down the steps into the garden area.)

ROCHESTER

The letter came two weeks ago saying Mrs. Reed had died. How much longer does she need to stay? *(JANE enters.)*

JANE

She need stay no longer. Thornfield beckoned and I have returned.

ADELE

(Running to embrace her.) Jane....Jane, I missed you.

JANE

And I missed you. What news my dear young pupil?

ADELE

I am to go to school in Paris. I am so excited. I can hardly wait.

JANE

(Suddenly heartbroken.) Paris? So far away? When will I see you again?

ROCHESTER

Adele, please go tell cook to set another place for dinner. Tell her Miss Eyre has returned. *(ADELE gives JANE another kiss and runs off)* So you came back after all?

JANE

I promised, you know.

ROCHESTER

Yes, you promised. What have you done with yourself this last month?

JANE

As you know, I have been with my aunt who has since passed away.

ROCHESTER

My sympathy. *(Sensing that something is troubling JANE)* Back but minutes and already the look of concern. What troubles you?

JANE

Adele.....school in Paris?

ROCHESTER

Yes. Don't you think that is best? It is her home.

JANE

You must be getting married.

ROCHESTER

Quite right.

JANE

Then I should advertise for a position.

Music #25: Wherever You Are Is Home

ROCHESTER

No Jane, that's not what I mean.

JANE,
YOU HAVE OPENED UP MY EYES
TO A WORLD I COULD NEVER SEE,
TO THE EARTHLY PARADISE
LIFE CAN BE.

HOW I WASTED THE PAST,
EMOTIONS HELD FAST.
BUT I'VE FOUND YOU AT LAST
AND NOW I KNOW
THAT A MAN CANNOT BE WHOLE
WITHOUT ONE TO SHARE HIS DREAMS
AND HIS LIFE
AND HIS HEART....
WHO CAN TOUCH HIS VERY SOUL.

JANE,
THROUGH MY LIFE NOW BE MY GUIDE,
SHARE MY WORLD, MY EVERY BREATH.
BE MY EQUAL, BY MY SIDE
UNTIL DEATH.

AND TO YOU THIS I SWEAR
I WILL ALWAYS BE THERE
BESIDE YOU WHAT'ER
THIS LIFE MAY BRING,

THOUGH WE DON'T
KNOW THE FATES
THIS WORLD
CONTEMPLATES.
BUT, NO MATTER WHAT UNCHARTED COURSE AWAITS,
I WILL SHELTER YOU FROM WRONG

AND YOUR LOVE WILL KEEP ME STRONG
FOR IT'S WITH YOU I BELONG.
COME BE MY BRIDE
MY WHOLE LIFE LONG.

Jane, will you marry me? *(She doesn't respond)* Do you doubt me, Jane?

JANE

Entirely.

ROCHESTER

You have no faith in me?

JANE

Not a whit.

ROCHESTER

You must understand that I have no love for Blanche and she none for me. I allowed her to believe that I had no money and she fled the coop as quickly as a chicken in search of new feed. Jane.....*(He takes her in his arms)* You.....you strange....almost unearthly thing. I love you, not Blanche.

JANE

Are you in earnest? Do you truly love me? Do you sincerely want me to be your wife?

ROCHESTER

I do. And if an oath is necessary to satisfy you....I swear it.

JANE...

JANE

(Stopping him)

HOW I WISHED THAT YOU COULD SEE
WHAT'S BEEN LOCKED DEEP INSIDE MY HEART,
WHAT YOUR WORLD HAS MEANT TO ME
FROM THE START.

BUT WHAT HOPE COULD THERE BE
THAT SOMEONE LIKE ME
WOULD EVER BE FREE
TO HEAR YOUR WORDS,

WHAT YOU SPEAK AND WHAT IT MEANS.
IS THIS MOMENT AS IT SEEMS?
IS IT REAL?
DO I FEAR
I'M STILL LOCKED INSIDE MY DREAMS

ROCHESTER

JANE,
BY THE HEAVENS THIS I VOW,
THAT MY LIFE HAS JUST BEGUN
AND FOREVER WITH YOU I AM ONE

JANE

THEN TO YOU THIS I SWEAR...
I SHALL ALWAYS BE THERE
BESIDES YOU WHAT'ER
THIS LIFE MAY BRING,

BOTH

THOUGH WE DON'T KNOW WHAT FATES
THIS WORLD CONTEMPLATES.
BUT NO MATTER WHAT AWAITS
WHERE'ERE WE ROAM

ROCHESTER

I WILL SHELTER YOU FROM WRONG

JANE

AND MY LOVE WILL KEEP YOU STRONG

BOTH

FOR IT'S WITH YOU I BELONG.
(R) COME BE MY BRIDE (J) I'LL BE YOUR BRIDE
MY WHOLE LIFE LONG.

ROCHESTER

FOR WHEREVER YOU ARE....

JANE

FOR WHEREVER YOU ARE....

BOTH

FOR WHEREVER YOU ARE
THERE IS MY HOME.

(They kiss. Blackout)

Music #26: Jane's Wedding March

Scene 2-3: The Church

(Guests assemble on upper level. ROCHESTER and VICAR WOOD enter. ADELE, as the flower girl, processes in. Finally JANE enters in wedding garb and makes her way to ROCHESTER and VICAR WOOD.)

WOOD

We are gathered here in the sight of God to join this man and this woman in Holy Matrimony. Any man and woman joined together by God must.....

(SOLICITOR BRIGGS suddenly enters)

BRIGGS

(Interrupting) This marriage cannot continue. There is an impediment.

(Vicar Wood stops)

ROCHESTER

(Desperate) Continue Rev. Wood. Continue!

WOOD

I cannot.

ROCHESTER

I say continue!

WOOD

(Questioning the SOLICITOR) What is the nature of this impediment?

BRIGGS

Mr. Rochester has a previous marriage and a wife still living.

WOOD

Who are you, sir?

BRIGGS

(Stepping forward) I am Solicitor Briggs. I am with a firm in London. I have come with the truth.

ROCHESTER

(Advancing to him) What proof do you have of such an accusation?

BRIGGS

(Taking out document and reading from it) I confirm that on the 20th day of October, 1828, Edward Fairfax Rochester was married to my sister Bertha Antoinette Mason in Jamaica. A copy of the marriage certificate is appended to this statement. Signed Richard Mason.

ROCHESTER

(Grabbing the documents.) This document does not prove, if it is indeed real, that a former wife still lives.

BRIGGS

She was alive as recently as three months ago.

ROCHESTER

You have proof to substantiate such an outlandish statement?

BRIGGS

Inconvertible proof. Proof even you cannot deny.

ROCHESTER

Enough with these feeble accusations.

BRIGGS

I have a witness. Someone, Mr. Rochester, whom you will remember.....(*he turns to JANE*) as will you, young lady.

WOOD

Sir, we tire. Present this proof.

BRIGGS

(*Turning to the shadows behind him*) Kindly step forward sir.

(*RICHARD MASON presents himself.*)

ROCHESTER

You? What in Hell do you have to say for yourself?

WOOD

Mr. Rochester, sir.....do not blaspheme. You are in the house of God. (*Turns to MASON*)
Sir, Mr. Rochester may have been married before, but are you certain he wife is still living?

MASON

She is living even as we speak.

WOOD

Are you sure, sir? Where?

MASON

She resides in Thornfield Hall.

WOOD

I have been to Thornfield Hall many times. I have neither seen such a woman or heard of her anywhere in the community. Can you explain that....Mister?.....Mister?.....

MASON

Mason. (*He turns to JANE*) You now know who I am Miss Eyre. The lady who resides hidden away at Thornfield is none other than my sister.

(The reaction from all is immediate. ROCHESTER turns to WOOD)

ROCHESTER

Close that Bible, Rev. Wood. There will be no wedding today. What Richard Mason says is true. I have been married and the woman to whom I was married still lives. You say you never heard of a Mrs. Rochester of Thornfield Hall. I dare say you have many a time heard gossip about the mysterious lunatic kept there under the watchful eye of Grace Poole. I married the lunatic fifteen years ago when I was tricked into marriage. I was told nothing of her madness or the madness her relatives before her had shared. And now it is time for you to meet Mrs. Fairfax. (*He grabs JANE's hand and begins pulling her*) Come with me....now! Come with me to Thornfield and meet Grace Poole's patient. MY WIFE!

Music #27: No More to Hide

(To symbolize the travel from the church back to Thornfield, everyone makes a complete circle of both upper and lower levels of the set. Lightening crashes heighten the mood. Eventually, ROCHESTER leads JANE, VICAR WOOD, SOLICITOR BRIGGS, MRS FAIRFAX and MASON to the area below representing Bertha's bedroom. All others are assembled on upper level looking down. In the bedroom, we find GRACE POOLE. Coiled on the floor in the corner is a woman who is barely visible. When we do see her she is filthy, wild, almost animal-like. Her hair is long and unkempt. She looks like she is from another world and not a citizen of Thornfield. She is BERTHA MASON ROCHESTER.)

SCENE 2-4: The Upstairs Room at Thornfield

ROCHESTER

You know this place Mason. She bit you here at that fabled party not so long ago. Good morrow, Mrs. Poole? How are you? And how is your charge today?

GRACE

We're tolerable sir, I thank you. She's rather snappish, but not totally outrageous. (*With that BERTHA rises screaming and lunges at ROCHESTER. JANE instinctively curls into the minister as MASON looks on. MRS. FAIRFAX, sensing JANE'S turmoil crosses and pulls her aside in her arms. GRACE pulls BERTHA off him and forces her back to the floor.*) I spoke too soon, sir. You'd better not stay.

ROCHESTER

Keep out of the way, Grace. I am not afraid.

GRACE

One never knows what she has hidden.....be it a knife or a match to set another fire.....yet another abomination. (*BERTHA gives the hysterical laugh we heard earlier in the play.*)

BRIGGS

We had better go. We have seen enough. (*They turn to leave.*)

ROCHESTER

No!

LOOK AT THIS WOMAN, THIS PITIFUL CREATURE,
SHE WHO I MARRIED AND GAVE ALL MY LIFE.
IS THERE AMONG YOU A PERSON WHO SEES HER
WHO WOULD STILL CALL HER A WIFE?

MASON

Pitiful creature though she may be, she remains your wife sir! In the eyes of the law you are still bound to her. Of that there is no question.

ROCHESTER***

(*To MASON*)

HOW CAN YOU ASK ME TO HONOR THIS UNION....
YOU WHO WERE THERE AND KNOW THEY TRICKED ME
INTO A MARRIAGE YOU ALL KNEW WOULD ONE DAY
END UP AS WHAT YOU NOW SEE!

SERVANTS***

NO MORE TO HIDE;
THE DOOR'S OPENED WIDE,
THE SECRETS HAVE BEEN REVEALED.
THORNFIELD AWAITS THE FRUIT OF ITS FATES,
ITS DESTINY NOW FULFILLED.

ROCHESTER

(*To the VICAR*)

SHE WAS A WOMAN OF DAZZLING BEAUTY
BACK IN JAMAICA WHERE LIVING WAS STILL GOOD.
SOON THOUGH I WATCHED AS SHE PLUNGED INTO MADNESS
(*Referring to MASON*) JUST AS HE KNEW THAT SHE WOULD!

VICAR/MASON/BRIGGS***

YOU CANNOT CHANGE WHAT'S HAPPENED...
ERASE THE PATH YOU'VE TROD.
YOU VOWED TO LOVE AND HONOR
THERE IN THE EYES OF GOD.

SERVANTS

THE SILENCE BREAKS;

THE GHOST OF THORNFIELD WAKES.
THE TRUTH IS TOLD,
THE MYSTERY UNFOLDS.

ROCHESTER

(To JANE)

I NEVER KNEW OF THE MADNESS SHE CARRIED;
NOR OF THE MADNESS OF HER MOTHER AS WELL.
LOCKED UP AWAY IN A LUNATIC'S PRISON,
EACH ONE CONDEMNED TO THIS HELL.

MASON/VICAR/BRIGGS

(To JANE)

HE IS NOT FREE TO MARRY;
HIS VOWS MUST BE OBEYED.
YOU MUST RENOUNCE THE LOVE
AND PROMISES THAT HE'S MADE.

ROCHESTER

I have been trapped by this woman for 15 years!

MASON

(To ROCHESTER)

THOUGH YOU MAY THINK THAT I HARBOR A HATRED,
I HAVE COMPASSION FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE SAID
BUT I CAN'T STAND BY AND LET YOU FORGET HER,
TO LIVE ON AS THOUGH SHE WERE DEAD!

*(They all sing at once, using the verses which are starred***. MRS. FAIRFAX takes JANE off. Before she exits, JANE drops her wedding veil to the floor.)*

ROCHESTER

I BEG YOU TO SPARE ME THE LIFE THAT SHE'S LEFT ME
I DON'T DESERVE THIS....TO LIVE WITH THIS PAIN,
I'M TRAPPED BY THIS SHELL OF AN INHUMAN WOMAN,
NEVER TO KNOW LOVE AGAIN.
ALL I HOPE TO HAVE.....
ALL I'M ASKING FOR
IS TO SHARE ALL MY LIFE WITH JANE.

SERVANTS

NO NEED TO HIDE
THE DOOR'S OPENED WIDE,
THE SECRETS HAVE BEEN REVEALED.
THORNFIELD AWAITS THE FRUIT OF ITS FATES,
ITS DESTINY NOW FULFILLED.

(BERTHA lets out a bloodcurdling wail.)

BRIGGS\MASON\VICAR\SERVANTS
YOU VOWED TO LOVE AND HONOR
SHE WHO'S BEHIND CLOSED DOORS!

ROCHESTER
HOW CAN I LIVE WITH THIS WOMAN BEFORE YOU
LIVING BEHIND CLOSED DOORS?

(Blackout)

Scene 2-5: A Hallway in Thornfield, that evening

(The clock is chiming six as we see ROCHESTER stagger on, carrying JANE'S wedding veil. He has obviously has been drinking. He sits. Eventually JANE enters dressed in her cape and carrying her travel bag. He sees her coming...runs up and grabs her in an embrace from behind. She melts to him even though she knows she shouldn't.)

ROCHESTER
I have waited for you....hoping against all hope that you wouldn't flee before I could see you.....to hold you. *(She pulls away, but not unkindly. She is totally quiet. He turns her to him and his voice increases in volume.)* You pull away. I had hoped you would let that reserved Jane Eyre barrier down and scream...or weep....or accuse....or allow me to explain at least. *(She pulls away again and he softens)* Jane....I would lay down my life to change what has happened. You are the last person I would ever want to hurt.

JANE
I trusted you. I gave you my heart. Please....please let me go in peace.....you shall not see me again.

ROCHESTER
I love you. Please say you love me.

JANE
God forgive me, I do love you. Alas, this is the last time you will ever hear me say it.

ROCHESTER
What can I do to win your love?

JANE
I must leave you. *(She runs away and he grabs her)*

ROCHESTER
Please you can't go.

JANE

Your wife is still living. How can I sanction that? Do you want me to be a mistress...a fallen woman?

ROCHESTER

Of course not. You are incapable of that.

JANE

And I am incapable of staying. Please remember me with kindness for even in the midst of this confusion and breaking heart...the word "kindness" best explains my feelings for you.

ROCHESTER

I am such a coward. I should have been honest with you. I know in my heart you would have understood. I should have bowed down on my knee and begged you to be mine...as I do now. *(He kneels down, begging)* Please be mine.

JANE

I cannot. I cannot!

(He breaks down.)

ROCHESTER

I can't let this outrage happen. You mean everything to me. *(She starts to leave. He is crying by this point.)* You are my hope.....my life.

JANE

Please do not follow me. *(She leaves. He screams after her. The scream turns into a reverberated sound)*

ROCHESTER

I will have you. I will. I will. I love you, Jane. .

Music #28: Memories of Thornfield

Jane don't leave. Please Jane....don't leave!

(He runs as if to stop her and then realizes it is futile. He picks up her veil and makes his way offstage. We hear BERTHA'S laugh once more.)

(JANE has made her way to upper level)

JANE

THERE'S NOTHING MORE MY HEART CAN BEAR TO REASON,
NO MORE THAT MY EMOTIONS CAN DENY,
FOR SUDDENLY THE LIFE THE LAY BEFORE ME HAS BECOME A LIE....
A LIE.
ALL HOPES HAVE NOW BEEN SCATTERED,

THE DREAM FOREVER SHATTERED.
THE TENDERNESS THAT MATTERED
IS NOW NO LONGER THERE.
WHAT CHOICE IS THERE REMAINING?
WHAT WORDS ARE LEFT TO SAY?
WHAT MORE IS THERE THAT I CAN DO
EXCEPT TO RUN AWAY?

(She descends middle staircase while, on upper level, YOUNG JANE appears in a pool of light)

YOUNG JANE

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO GO,
LEAVE THE LOVE YOU HOLD SO STRONG,
LEAVING HERE, ALL ALONE,
WONDERING WHERE DO YOU BELONG?

(The light goes out on YOUNG JANE.)

JANE

I'LL LEAVE ALL THE MEMORIES OF THORNFIELD....
EVERYTHING I'VE COME TO KNOW;
FORGET EVERY MEMORY OF THORNFIELD,
THIS PLACE THAT I'VE SEARCHED FOR SINCE LONG, LONG AGO.

OUT THERE, FAR BEYOND THE WALLS OF THORNFIELD,
IS WHERE ALL OF MY TOMORROWS LEAD.
I KNOW, TILL I'VE TRAVELED FAR FROM THORNFIELD,
AND BURIED HIS MEM'RY, I'LL NEVER BE FREED.

FREE FROM ALL THE JOYS THAT ABOUND HERE,
FREE FROM ALL THE LOVE THAT I FOUND HERE.

IT'S GONE, ALL THE HAPPINESS AT THORNFIELD...
TAKEN AWAY FROM ME.

THOUGH I KNOW I MUST LEAVE THIS PLACE I'VE LOVED
CAN I LIVE APART
FROM THE SWEET YOUNG FACE OF DARLING ADELE
OR THE ARMS OF THE MAN WHO HAS OPENED MY HEART?

I KNOW EVERYTHING I WANT IS THORNFIELD.
IT'S HERE, SHARING EVERYDAY WITH HIM.
EVERYTHING I AM IS THORNFIELD
HOW CAN I GO ON OR KNOW WHERE TO BEGIN?

THOUGH MY LIFE SURELY WILL MEND FROM THIS DAY,

HOW MY HEART BREAKS FROM THE WORDS THAT WE SAY.

FAREWELL TO THE MEMORY OF THORNFIELD
AND TO WHAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN.
GOOD-BYE TO THE DREAM I HAD AT THORNFIELD
AND TO MY LOVE FOR HIM.

(Blackout)

Scene 2-6: Moor House, two weeks later

(MARY and DIANA RIVERS, the epitome of good, kind and gentle Christian women, enter with HANNAH, their faithful, if too-protective, servant. They are in the midst of a discussion about the mysterious young woman who they found collapsed on their doorstep three days earlier. While they speak in one area of the stage, a bed is brought on in another. In the bed is JANE.)

DIANA

She has barely moved in three days.

MARY

Lying there like a stone.

HANNAH

You ladies are too kind. I did my best to protect your home from this vagabond lady. But, no....you had to allow your Christian compassion to interfere.

MARY

Hannah, if I didn't know you better I would say you are surely the most unpleasant lady in town. But I know better.

HANNAH

What are we going to do when she comes out of her sleep? Who is she?

DIANA

Hannah, listen to yourself. If my brother had not come home and found her unconscious on the doorstep, she might have died.

HANNAH

What will people say? The local minister and his two sisters taking a young girl in without any knowledge of who or what she is.

MARY

(As they make their way to the area of the bed.) They will saw bravo. Bravo to the Rivers' family. We are only doing what a good Christian would do.

HANNAH

Even a good Christian would investigate the lady's credentials!

(ST. JOHN RIVERS, brother to DIANA and MARY enters. He is the local minister....polite, kind, pragmatic and somewhat overly zealous in regards to his religious duties. He takes off his coat and hat and joins his sisters)

ST. JOHN

(Concerned) How is she? Has she been awake at all?

DIANA

No. St. John, you needn't worry. We are here and we will take care of her when she does awaken.

ST. JOHN

She has been very ill. It will only be through the grace of God that she will awaken.

MARY

She will, dear brother, I am sure.

(JANE stirs)

DIANA

She is wakening.

HANNAH

(Sarcastically) The Lord IS working fast these days.

DIANA

We must not burden her with too many questions.

JANE

(Waking up, slowly. She is confused. Her only comfort in her confusion is the sweet faces of the Rivers' sisters. She has not yet seen HANNAH.) What....? Where am I?

ST. JOHN

You are at Moor House near Morton. I am the local clergyman. My name is St. John Rivers. These ladies are my sisters, Diana and Mary. You have been sleeping soundly for three days now.

JANE

How did I get here?

ST. JOHN

I found you at our doorstep and brought you in. You were exhausted and soaked to the bone.

HANNAH

(Disgusted) Hruumpf!

JANE

(Looking at HANNAH) You I remember...you closed the door on me. *(Her memory returning)* Ah...it all comes back. *(She tries to sit up, but is too weak)*. I musn't nuisance you any more.

MARY

You lie back and relax. There is plenty of time to worry about departure.

DIANA

However, you are too weak now. Hannah, fetch her a sherry, please.

(HANNAH leaves)

JANE

I suppose you would like to know who I am. My name is Jane....Jane Elliott.

ST. JOHN

And where do you live? Where is your family? Your friends?

(JANE is silent)

MARY

Can we send for any one?

(HANNAH enters with the glass of sherry and hands it to ST. JOHN)

HANNAH

The sherry, sir.

ST. JOHN

Miss Elliot. What can you tell us about yourself? Is there anything you wish us to do?

JANE

Not tonight. I am too exhausted. Please be patient.

HANNAH

There are those whom, without further knowledge, would cast you out into the Moor.

JANE

(Looks at them very carefully and then gives a slight smile.) I may be weak, but I can see the kindness in your faces....all of you. You would not cast an animal out tonight and I feel you will not cast me out. We have just met, but I feel a kinship to you. I feel safe and at peace. *(She weakens)* Please. I can speak no more. *(She falls asleep)*

ST. JOHN

We will leave you then. There is time to learn who you really are. (*He crosses away.*)
For my heart tells me your name is not Jane Elliot. Not Jane Elliot at all.
(*Lights cross fade to next scene*)

Scene 2-7: Thornfield, Rochester's Study

(*ROCHESTER is seated at his desk. JOHN enter.*)

JOHN

Mr. Rochester, there is a gentleman to see you. The solicitor, Mr. Briggs.

ROCHESTER

Yes, I sent for him. Please show him in.

(*JOHN nods for BRIGGS to enter. JOHN leaves.*)

MR. BRIGGS

We meet again Mr. Rochester. I am surprised you called me here. I assumed we would never cast our eyes on each other again.

ROCHESTER

Mr. Briggs, let us not discuss what preceded this meeting. I know you are a professional man and you were hired to do what you did.

BRIGGS

Why am I here? Why this "command performance."?

ROCHESTER

Miss Eyre has vanished.

BRIGGS

Are you surprised?

ROCHESTER

Please do not interrupt me, sir. She vanished into the night the day of the wedding. I am need a smart city lawyer not an inept country bumpkin.

BRIGGS

London is indeed a city and I am a lawyer, Mr. Rochester. But I am still confused as to how I can be of service.

ROCHESTER

You are one of a large brotherhood of lawyers. Every town, every hamlet has at least one of your ilk. I ask that you contact them all...urge them to do some searching, some questioning, some seeking. Expense is of no concern. I will spend every pound I have to learn where she is and how she is.

BRIGGS

If I find her, are you certain she would want me to inform you of her whereabouts?

ROCHESTER

I do not plan to invade her privacy. I cannot face the future, however, without knowledge of her well-being. I must know she is fed, clothed, and living in a comfortable situation. Please assure me you will find her. She must be found.

BRIGGS

I will do my best, sir.

(They shake hands, BRIGGS exits.)

(Lights cross fade to next scene)

Scene 2-8: The Kitchen at Moor House, a few months later

(MARY, DIANA and JANE are seated at the table. ST. JOHN stands nearby. They are drinking tea.)

MARY

Please, Jane, some scones with your tea?

JANE

Alas, no. I feel as if I have added such weight over the past few months. You have been so kind to me...but all I do is eat.

ST. JOHN

You eat because you are hungry. That is God's plan.

JANE

I promise not to burden you much longer. I can never repay you.

MARY

Oh, posh. You have been a godsend to our quiet house.

DIANA

You are a bright candle in a dark corner here at Moor House.

ST. JOHN

It has been time enough, Jane. You need to tell us about your family so we can write and inform them of your existence and your good health. I am sure they must be in anguish.

JANE

There is no one to tell. No one who cares. No one is concerned.

ST. JOHN

I see your naked finger. I would think a young lady of your age would be married. To be a spinster is not a happy consequence.

DIANA

St. John, how rude. I have never heard you so uncaring. Jane is much too young to ever be considered a spinster.

MARY

You are much too eager to learn about her St. John. It is not your place to pry.

ST. JOHN

How can we be of help to her if we don't know her?

JANE

The only help I ask now is employment. If you could be of service to me in this matter, I could leave you with deep appreciation.

MARY

Oh leave her be, St. John. She is still not strong enough to answer to your questions.

ST. JOHN

You have told us your name is Jane Elliot.

JANE

It is not. However, it must be my name for now. Someday, perhaps, I will be able to tell you the truth...the entire story....but please....not yet.

DIANA

St. John, you are relentless.

ST. JOHN

Very well, I will vex you no more at this time. I'm sure my sisters would love to keep you here for as long as you wish.

MARY

We do feel a kinship.

DIANA

As if we have known you forever.

ST. JOHN

I will be leaving soon on parish work and, by rights, my sisters should go south and we would close up this house. However, if we can find you employment....you can stay here.

JANE

Oh bless you, sir. Nothing would make me happier. I do wish to be able to earn my own keep.

DIANA

Don't worry, Jane. The seasons pass rapidly here in the country. You will heal quickly, your heart will lighten...and you will find a position.

MARY

A position worthy of you. Now we must go work in the garden. The summer sun will be too hot within a few hours.

(They exit. Lights cross fade to next scene.)

Scene 2-9: Thornfield, Rochester's Study, weeks later.

(ROCHESTER is sitting by himself. He looks tired, haggard and lonely. MRS. FAIRFAX enters.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

Sir, you must eat some dinner. You can't continue like this. *(He is silent.)* May I sit with you, Mr. Rochester?

ROCHESTER

Of course. Excuse my lack of consideration.

MRS. FAIRFAX

(Sitting on bench.) Consideration is something you have always had my dear lad. You are in trouble sir. You have been letting all important matters slide. You refuse to see anyone. You stay holed up in your room drinking every night. She would not want this.

ROCHESTER

That is the first that you have spoken of Jane to me since she left. I assume that was the "she" you referred to.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Indeed. Mr. Rochester, I loved her too. I miss her too. Now with Adele off to school, Thornfield is the loneliest estate in England, to be sure.

ROCHESTER

What am I to do? I don't know where she is.

Music #29: Set Her Free

I loved her more than I have ever loved in my life. My past caught up.....and my past became her agonizing present. Help me, please.

WHERE HAS SHE GONE?

WHAT PATH MUST I TAKE
TO FIND WHERE SHE'S RUN?
WHAT PLACE HIDES HER NOW?
WHAT CAN I DO
TO HASTEN HER RESCUE?
I HAVE TO HELP HER SOMEHOW!

FAIRFAX

YOU CANNOT BLAME YOURSELF FOR LOVING HER THE WAY YOU
DID.
YOU GAVE HER MORE THAN ANYONE COULD EVER KNOW.

ROCHESTER

I WILL NOT REST
UNTIL I HAVE FOUND HER.
I MUST GO ON,
THIS JOURNEY CAN'T END
'TIL SHE IS SAFE
AND ONCE MORE IS SHELTERED
BACK HERE AT THORNFIELD AGAIN.

FAIRFAX

PERHAPS SHE'S SOMEWHERE IN A PLACE WHERE SHE'S FOUND
HAPPINESS
AND NOW THE BEST THING YOU CAN DO IS LET HER GO.

IF ONE DAY YOU DISCOVER A SPARROW
AND YOU FIND IT HAS BROKEN ITS WING,
IF YOU GIVE IT THE LOVE
AND THE CARE IT WILL NEED,
YOU'LL BE BLESSED WITH THE SONG IT WILL SING.

ALL TOO SOON YOU WILL FIND THAT THE SPARROW
WILL ONCE MORE LOOK TO FLY TO THE TREE.
IN YOUR HEART YOU MUST KNOW
THAT IT'S TIME TO LET HER GO....
LET HER GO, LET HER FLY,
SET HER FREE.

GIVE HER WINGS,
LET IT END.
YES, YOUR HEART MAY NEVER MEND,
BUT YOU'LL STILL
HEAR HER SONG
IN THE MEM'RY THAT LIVES ON.

THOUGH, WITH YOU, JANE HAS FOUND LIFE WORTH LIVING

AND YOU SHOWED HER THINGS SHE'D NEVER SEE.

BOTH

YOU (I) MUST NOW LET HER BE
ALL THAT SHE WAS MEANT TO BE...
LET HER GO, LET HER FLY,
SET HER FREE.

FAIRFAX

AS YOU ONCE GAVE HER WINGS,
YOU MUST NOW LOVINGLY

BOTH

LET HER GO, LET HER FLY
SET HER FREE.

(Blackout)

Scene 2-10: A Path Near Moor House, Fall

(ST. JOHN and JANE enter on upper level right and, during dialogue, make their way across to upper left. They are wearing light coats or capes.)

ST. JOHN

The air is chilling up. Fall has always been one of my favorite times of the year.

JANE

St. John, have you heard of any placement for me?

ST. JOHN

Indeed, I have. I was waiting for the right moment....and for you to gain your strength.

JANE

That time has come, hasn't it?

ST. JOHN

(They stop) That time has come. Jane, you may not know that I established a school for the young boys of the area awhile back. I feel it is now time to do the same for the young girls. Would you like to be their teacher?

JANE

St. John, I would be honored and thrilled. I have never been happier than when I was a teacher.

ST. JOHN

The salary will be 30 pounds a year. A wealthy lady of the town is providing the funds.

JANE

You have given me great joy with this news...I must run and tell Mary and Diana....thank you sir, thank you.

(JANE runs off as he exits in another direction. The lights cross-fade.)

Scene 2-11: The Kitchen at Moor House, two months later

(MARY and DIANA enter wearing winter garb.)

MARY

Jane has taken to the school as if she had no other purpose in life. It is wonderful to see her so happy.

DIANA

And the children are equally happy. I cannot believe how they adore her.

(JANE enters carrying Christmas packages)

JANE

I can honestly say I don't think I have ever looked forward to Christmas as much as this year.

MARY

I hope one of those boxes is for me.

DIANA

Or for me, dear sister.

JANE

You are both wrong. They are all for some of the students who would have no Christmas without my help.

(ST. JOHN hurries in carrying a letter.)

ST. JOHN

Mary....Diana.....*(He sees them)* I am glad I found you. I have received news with this letter. *(They listen carefully.)* It seems that our uncle John is dead.

DIANA

(Rising, cautiously hopeful) What does that mean?

ST. JOHN

Read this. *(MARY and DIANA read the letter. After reading it they seem saddened. JANE watches them, confused.)*

DIANA

So, it is not meant to be?

MARY

We can stop hoping?

ST. JOHN

We can stop hoping. *(He leaves, somewhat unhappy)*

DIANA

We confuse you, Jane. I am sure we appear unconcerned about an uncle's death.

MARY

We have never even seen the man, Jane. You see, our uncle and our father should have been close.

DIANA

Uncle John, our mother's brother, gave our father some bad business advice and we ended in poverty. He, on the other hand, gained great wealth.

MARY

Our parents died believing we would be eventually be compensated for the years of anguish his advice had caused.

DIANA

But that has not happened. It seems he has given the money to another relative whom we do not know.

JANE

How much is the inheritance?

MARY

Fifteen thousand pounds. *(Trying to make light of it all)* Diana and I would have probably squandered our share.....but we know St. John would have done good and noble work with his share.

JANE

(Hoping to lighten their spirits) Come, it is Christmastime. Surely there are many other reasons to be happy. Why don't you both come with me? I have more shopping to do.

(The three go off. Lights cross fade into next scene.)

Scene 2-12: Thornfield, around the same time.

(MRS. FAIRFAX enters on upper level from one side as ROCHESTER enters from the other. MRS FAIRFAX is carrying the daily mail.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

The post sir. *(She hands it to him and he looks through it, hopefully.)* Don't be hopeful sir, there is nothing there that looks to be word from or about her.

ROCHESTER

It is more than I can bear. My life might as well be over. There is no purpose, no reason for being. You must tire of me constantly living in a sea of depression. I don't know how you maintain your cheerful disposition.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I remain hopeful because of my belief in God and I trust He will give you hope as well. You deserve a life of love and happiness, sir. No one should have to live as you are.

(Suddenly there is a scream from offstage and GRACE POOLE runs in on upper level. Swirling red lights coming from offstage tell us that there is a fire.)

GRACE

Mr. Rochester....help. Fire! For God's sake help!!!

ROCHESTER

What is happening, Grace?

GRACE

She has gone more mad than ever. She has set a fire to her room and the tapestry in the upper hall is in flames. She threatens to burn down all of Thornfield.

(BERTHA suddenly runs on, somewhat crazed, carrying a lit torch)

Music #30: Bertha Burns Thornfield

BERTHA

Fire! Fire! My savior is fire. Burn out the sin. Burn out the lies. God forgive me.
BURN! BURN!!

(JOHN and MARY rush on)

JOHN

Sir....the fire in the upper floors is out of control. You have to get out....we must all flee before it is too late.

(JOHN and MARY run down ramp to lower level and exit)

(Pandemonium has broken out and it seems everyone is yelling at once. BERTHA keeps them all at bay by thrusting the torch in their faces whenever they approach.)

ROCHESTER

Bertha. Please put down the torch. Give me your hand.

GRACE

You mad fool, you are ruining us all. Give me that torch.

MRS. FAIRFAX

God help us.....Mrs. Rochester, please in the name of sanity....no more.....stop.....stop before it is too late.

BERTHA

Fire is good! Fire is my friend. Damn you.....damn you....

(As the lighting turns red , we realize the fire has now started spreading dangerously close. We hear the noise of the fire....getting louder and louder. The rain storm starts. There is lightning and thunder. The general effect is pure cacophony. Suddenly BERTHA screams louder than everyone.)

BERTHA

It is time for Thornfield to burn. Burn. Burrrrrn. *(BERTHA runs off brandishing the torch. ROCHESTER, GRACE and MRS. FAIRFAX scream for her.)*

ROCHESTER

Bertha!! BERTHA!!!!

(The music and the noise come to a head, all culminating with one last loud and echoing scream from BERTHA. There is a quick blackout, as quickly as it started the stage is now silent.)

Scene 2-13: A Path near Moor House, Christmas time

(In the darkness we hear the distant caroling sounds of “Good King Wenceslaus” JANE and ST. JOHN are walking, in lower area of stage. JANE’s seems distant and lost in thought.)

ST. JOHN

The chill is heavy tonight. We should plan to wake up to snow on the ground in the morning.

JANE

That would be pleasant. Christmas is always better with snow.

ST. JOHN

Why is it I always feel like you are not quite here?

JANE

What do you mean?

ST. JOHN

Jane, we know each other too well. You have been here close to a year. You are loved by my sisters. I care for you deeply. Yet, I feel you are never quite totally here.

JANE

I am here, to be true, but my heart is always elsewhere.

ST. JOHN

You cannot hold on to dreams that will never be reality. You have a life here, yet I know you constantly look back to the life you had before as another person.

JANE

I have tried to move on, but something holds me there. Something almost mystical.

ST. JOHN

Well, I fear I won't be aware of it too much longer. I am going to be leaving Moor House and the town. I have decided to become a missionary. *(They arrive at the Moor House where the MARY, DIANA and HANNAH are at work in the kitchen. ST. JOHN seems to have more to say but changes his mind.)* Now, run along, dear Jane. We have much time to discuss all of this. I know my sisters are waiting for you and I have a sermon to prepare.

MARY

(Meeting them and escorting JANE to the table.) Come join us Jane. We are making the plum pudding. *(ST. JOHN exits.)*

JANE

How can I help?

DIANA

Pare the apples. Pie is on the menu too.

(MARY and DIANA exchange glances)

MARY

(As they commence work) What are your feelings Jane?

JANE

My feelings? What an odd question. I am not sure what you mean.

MARY

I think you know exactly what we mean? *(Coyly)* What are your feelings toward members of the clergy?

JANE

(Not catching on) I think it is a blessing to do God's work. Don't you?

DIANA

Oh, we do. That isn't the answer we were hoping for, however.

HANNAH

Ladies, I know it's my place to hold my tongue, but honestly....how long are these questions to continue? Just come out with it.

JANE

Out with it?

HANNAH

The Sisters River are too shy to ask the question I know they want to ask. Do you fancy the Minister?

Music #31: St. John Is The Man

MARY

YOU'RE SUCH A DEAR
AND WE SHAN'T INTERFERE
IN WHATEVER THE SORT OF LIFE YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO LEAD.

DIANA

SO DON'T THINK US UNKIND
IF WE BOTH SPEAK OUR MIND...
THIS IS SOMETHING ON WHICH WE'VE AGREED.

BOTH

THOUGH HE OFTEN CAN BE DISTANT,
SOLITARY AND ALOOF
AND HE MIGHT GIVE THE IMPRESSION
THAT HE'S FAR ABOVE REPROOF,

MARY

FOR A PILLAR OF GOOD VIRTUE

DIANA

AND A FINE SAMARITAN,

BOTH

THEN YOU WON'T FIND ONE MORE PERFECT
FOR OUR ST. JOHN IS THE MAN.

HANNAH

NOW I KNOW IT'S NOT MY BUSINESS
BUT I HOPE YOU'LL HEAR ME OUT.
WHAT THE MISSES HERE ARE SAYING
IS THEY LIKE YOU 'ROUND ABOUT.
AND THEY'VE SETTLED ON A WAY

THAT THEY HOPE WILL MAKE YOU STAY,
BUT HAVEN'T TOLD THE MASTER YET, NO DOUBT.

DIANA

THAT'S A FACT.

MARY

JUST SO.

DIANA

THOUGH HE DOES

MARY

NOT KNOW,

BOTH

WE'VE NOTICED THAT HE'S HAD HIS EYE ON YOU.

DIANA

SINCE YOU'VE COME

MARY

THERE'S BEEN

DIANA

SUCH A CHANGE

MARY

IN HIM

BOTH

HOW PERFECT THAT HE LOVES YOU LIKE WE DO!

(Jane is somewhat perplexed at what they are suggesting. She is smiling courteously but it's obvious that she doesn't share their excitement.)

MARY

THOUGH YOU'RE PERPLEXED
AT THE PLAN THAT WE SUGGEST,
WE HOPE THAT KNOW THAT WE NEVER WANT YOU TO LEAVE.

DIANA

AND WE PRAY THAT YOU'LL BE
PART OF OUR FAMILY
IN SPITE OF ALL HIS FAULTS YOU MIGHT PERCEIVE.

BOTH
THOUGH HE OFTEN CAN BE DISTANT,
SOLITARY AND ALOOF
AND HE MIGHT GIVE THE IMPRESSION
THAT HE'S FAR ABOVE REPROOF,

MARY
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A FELLOW

DIANA
WHO'S ADMIRER THROUGH THE LAND,

BOTH
THEN THERE'S NO NEED TO LOOK FURTHER
FOR OUR ST. JOHN IS THE MAN.

DIANA
CONFIDENT,

MARY & HANNAH
AND PRIM,

DIANA
SLIGHTLY SHY...

MARY & HANNAH
THAT'S HIM

ALL
AND SCRUPULOUS,
BUT NOT A PURITAN.

DIANA
PLEASE FORGIVE OUR SCHEME

MARY & HANNAH
IT'S OUR FONDEST DREAM

ALL THREE
THAT YOU'LL AGREE
OUR ST. JOHN IS THE MAN.
HE'S THE ONE FOR YOU...
OUR ST. JOHN IS THE MAN!

(Blackout)

Scene 2-14: A Schoolroom in Morton, Spring.

(ST. JOHN is pacing. JANE is bidding "good-bye" to some of the students.. Finally she enters the room.)

ST. JOHN

Good day Jane. Finished for the day?

JANE

Yes, saying goodnight to the children is always unhappy for me. I never want to part from them.

ST. JOHN

It is so nice to see you smiling. After those first few weeks when you seemed so sad and alone, I feared you would never be the special lady you are today. Jane I need to speak with you, if I may?

JANE

Let us sit down, then.

(They sit on bench)

ST. JOHN

I received a letter regarding my late Uncle John. The letter was from his solicitor.....a Mr. Briggs.

JANE

(JANE is surprised and speechless) Mr. Briggs? *(After a pause)* Can I assume then you now know my real name.

ST. JOHN

Yes, and I now understand the pain of the memory that you have been enduring.

JANE

(Anxiously) Do you know of Mr. Rochester? Is he well?

ST. JOHN

I cannot believe you would still ask such an unnecessary question. Of what consequence to you would be Mr. Rochester's present state?

JANE

You have never met Mr. Rochester.

ST. JOHN

(Apologizing for being so harsh) Forgive me Miss Eyre. You are probably unaware that my mother's name was Eyre. One of her brother's was John Eyre who died in Madeira. The other was a poor clergyman who died many years ago, leaving an orphan child. That child's name was.....and is.....Jane Eyre. *(JANE can't believe what she's hearing.)*

Your deceased Uncle John has left you a great deal of money in his will. You are, quite simply, an heiress. The inheritance totals fifteen thousand pounds.

JANE

(Her excitement building) We are related then? And Diana and Mary are my dear relatives? *(Bursting with excitement)* I have a family. After all these years, I have a family.

ST. JOHN

How strange you are. No reaction at all to learning you are an heiress and total glee at finding we are all related.

JANE

And I know immediately what I shall do with the fifteen thousand pounds. It will be divided among us all. You have been so kind to me and now I can finally repay that kindness.

ST. JOHN

Jane... you make too hasty a decision.

JANE

We shall all share in my uncle's wealth.

ST. JOHN

Your compassion is the true essence of a Christian heart, something I find very admirable in you.....which brings me to my next bit of news. I told you of my dream to be a missionary. I have a chance to go to India. My sisters are heartbroken that I am leaving, but I know it is God's plan. Jane.....I want you to be part of my life, come with me to India.

JANE

(At a loss for words) I have the school, the children...

ST. JOHN

You are a good teacher Jane, we will need good teachers in India. Come be my helpmate my worker.

Music #32: Look To Your Heart

God intended you to be a missionary's wife. A missionary's wife you must be, not for my pleasure but for the service that together we can give to God.

ST. JOHN

IF YOU LOOK TO YOUR HEART
AT WHAT LIES DEEP WITHIN,

AND SOMEWHERE THERE'S A VOICE
 CRYING OUT AT THE WIND,
 IT'S THE VOICE OF GOD THAT BECKONS
 FOR HE HOPES TO DRAW YOU NEAR
 AND YOU'LL KNOW THEN, AS I KNOW,
 THERE'S A REASON WE'RE HERE.

JANE

But, I have no vocation concerning religion St. John. You do, but I do not.

ST. JOHN

ONCE I WALKED THROUGH THIS LIFE
 ASKING WHAT WAS IT FOR?
 I'D BEEN BLESSED WITH A GIFT;
 I COULD DO SO MUCH MORE
 THEN HE LAID HANDS UPON ME,
 GAVE ME STRENGTH I NEVER KNEW.
 IT WAS THEN THAT HE CHOSE ME
 JUST AS NOW HE'S CHOSEN YOU.

SO NOW LOOK TO YOUR HEART,
 AND FEEL THE POW'R HE CAN GIVE.
 YOU WERE BROUGHT HERE TO SERVE HIM.
 IT'S THE REASON YOU LIVE.
 TAKE MY HAND AND WE'LL JOURNEY
 TO THE GREATEST WORK WE KNOW
 FOR WITH YOU THERE BESIDE ME
 THEN OUR LOVE FOR HIM CAN GROW.

JANE

But what of the love of man? Man was not made to love only God.

ST. JOHN

We can learn to love one another. Wish your heart away Jane and fix it on your Maker.
 We'll spend our lives in the service of God.....you and I together loving God. And, who
 knows, someday we may grow to love one another.

IF YOU LOOK TO YOUR HEART,
 LISTEN CLOSE TO THE VOICE,
 TRADE THE LOVE THAT YOU NEED
 FOR THIS ONE SOLEMN CHOICE.
 THOUGH YOUR MIND MAY EVER QUESTION
 WHAT YOUR PATH WILL THUS IMPART,
 YOU WILL FIND EVERY ANSWER
 IF YOU LOOK TO YOUR HEART,
 IF YOU LOOK TO YOUR HEART.

JANE

(Moves away and then turns back.) St. John, I will go to India with you. However, I cannot be a wife to you. You speak of no love in your request and I do not feel love toward you in my heart. If I can be of service, I shall go....but not as your wife.

ST. JOHN

That is unacceptable. I am a young man. You are a young woman. What would the appearance be? If you reject my invitation, in my mind you reject God.

JANE

St. John, if you know nothing else, you know I would never reject God.

ST. JOHN

I will give you time to consider your decision. I am needed in India and so are you.

(Suddenly a voice is heard echoing loudly.)

ROCHESTER'S VOICE (OFFSTAGE)

Jane.

(JANE doesn't know if it's real or imagined)

Music #33: Voices

(ROCHESTER appears in a dim pool of light on upper level. His face is barely visible.)
Jane! Jane!!

JANE

(She pulls away from ST. JOHN) I'm coming. I'm coming. *(She runs to the other side of the stage)* Where are you? Where are you?

ST. JOHN

(Running to her, confused) What is wrong Jane? What has happened?

ROCHESTER

JANE,
HOW I LONG FOR YOUR SMILE,
HOW I ACHE FOR THE JOY
I HAD WITH YOU.
JANE,
WHY DID YOU GO,
DESTROY THE LOVE
THAT WE ONCE KNEW?

JANE

YES,
I HEAR YOU CALLING!

I HEAR YOU CALLING ME!

ST. JOHN

COME AWAY WITH ME.

JANE

SHOULD I GO?
IS IT RIGHT?
HOW WILL I EVER KNOW?

ROCHESTER & ST. JOHN

JANE

JANE

I NEED YOU NOW

I NEED YOU NOW

DEAR JANE.

JANE, JANE

MY JANE.

OR SHOULD I RUN TO THE ARMS OF
THE MAN

WHO MADE ALL THE LOVE IN MY
HEART OVERFLOW.

WHERE CAN I TURN?

WHAT MUST I DO?

WHERE SHOULD I GO?

JANE

IF I GO WITH ST. JOHN HE'LL BE GOOD TO ME.

HE'S GIVING ME

THE CHANCE TO DO

EVERYTHING I'VE EVER HOPED TO DO IN LIFE.

I'D BE HIS BRIDE,

BUT NOT A WIFE.

EVEN THOUGH HE TELLS ME THAT HE NEEDS ME

AND WANTS ME THERE BESIDE HIM,

I KNOW THAT I WILL NEVER

HAVE PASSION FOR THE MAN.

BUT WITHIN HIS HOME I FOUND A FAMILY....

MY FAMILY

AND I KNOW WHO I AM.

ROCHESTER & ST. JOHN

JANE

ANSWER MY PLEA!

I NEED YOU NOW!

ROCHESTER

COME BACK TO ME.

ST. JOHN

COME NOW WITH ME.

JANE

BUT I COULD GO BACK TO THORNFIELD,

TO HIS ARMS,

TO EDWARD'S ARMS,

AND ALWAYS KNOW

I'D BE THE WITH MAN I'VE STILL BEEN DREAMING OF
 TO SHARE HIS LIFE...
 TO SHARE HIS LOVE.
 ALL I EVER WANTED IS THERE WAITING
 AND, THOUGH MY WORLD IS CHANGING,
 I STILL PROTECT THE MEM'RIES
 I FOUND THERE FROM THE START.

IS IT REALLY EDWARD WHO IS CALLING ME,
 OR IS IT JUST
 A VOICE WITHIN MY HEART?

ROCHESTER & ST. JOHN

JANE

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| JANE | | |
| ANSWER MY PLEA! | | I MUST GO BACK! |
| I NEED YOU HERE! | | I MUST GO BACK! |
| COME BACK TO (NOW WITH) ME! | | I MUST SEE HIM! |
| I NEED YOU HERE COME HOME | | I MUST GO BACK TO BE |
| TO ME | | WITH HIM! |
| | (NOW WITH) ME | |

(Blackout)

Scene 2-15: The Garden at Thornfield, one week later, sunset.

(We hear the evening crickets. Sitting on a bench with his back to the audience is ROCHESTER. MRS. FAIRFAX enters and watches him from afar. Then she crosses to him.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

The sun has about set, sir.

ROCHESTER

(He changes position to face front. We see his face is severely disfigured) Even without sight, I can feel the cool air of evening starting to fall. Soon Spring will give way to Summer and then I can sit in the garden as much as I wish.

MRS. FAIRFAX

John says the workers have rebuilt the south wing of Thornfield. At least that is a start. Some day it will be returned to its former glory.

ROCHESTER

All that glory and yet nothing to feel glorious about.

MRS. FAIRFAX

The fire Bertha started took away more than your eyesight, but let's not start getting morose again. We must both think of the future. Adele is due home for her visit any day

now, Thornfield is back on the mend....and the doctors say there may be a chance your eyesight will return in the future.

ROCHESTER

How ironic. As much as you would think I would miss seeing, who would want to view this house in ashes? (*JANE enters on upper level, unseen by ROCHESTER or MRS. FAIRFAX. She watches silently for a time.*) And why see when she isn't here to look at. Those eyes, the smile she hid so deftly...her tongue so tart when it needed to be...the love she gave with no questions asked. I have taken the wrong road at every fork in my pathetic life.

(JANE makes her way slowly down the stairs into the garden area.)

MRS. FAIRFAX

You have not sir. You had no choice. Your life was thrust on you and the mistakes were part of your inheritance. You didn't know about Bertha. Her family kept her lunacy a secret. You were forced into that marriage. Unlike most men, you didn't desert her when the truth was finally evident. She should have been placed in an asylum, but you kept her here and gave her some semblance of life. Bertha made the choices that ruined your life, not you. What a pity she had to die in the fire.

(MRS. FAIRFAX suddenly sees JANE. As ROCHESTER continues, MRS. FAIRFAX crosses to her, hugs her and then exits to leave the two of them alone.)

ROCHESTER

Yes, but I did make one fatal mistake. I didn't tell Jane the truth about my marriage. How can I ever be forgiven for that?

JANE

You have already been forgiven.

Music #34: Final Scene Underscoring

ROCHESTER

Who? Who is it?

JANE

It is Jane Eyre.

ROCHESTER

It IS you, Jane. A little late in the day for a visit, isn't it?

JANE

This is more than a visit. (*JANE suddenly sees ROCHESTER'S disfigured face and reacts silently*)

ROCHESTER

Jane Eyre silent. How amusing. I suppose my appearance has finally taken your tongue. Shocking isn't it.....what fire can do so quickly? (*She sits next to him and reaches up to feel his face. He then touches her face. She is crying.*) A tear? A tear shed by my dear Jane. It seems I always reduce you to tears one way or another.

JANE

All tears aren't an indication of sadness, Edward. There are tears of joy also.

ROCHESTER

I assume your stay will be short. You must have much to return to in your new life. Work....a home.....a husband.

JANE

There is no return. I am here now.

ROCHESTER

No husband? I find that perplexing. Gone so long and no one has asked you to marry?

JANE

You assume too much, sir. I never said I hadn't been asked.

ROCHESTER

Well, you should be married. Can we agree on that?

JANE

We can if you agree that you too should be married. I will be getting married, Edward. That is a promise, a pledge.

ROCHESTER

And when is this wedding to be? Adele is due home....we would both like to be on the guest list.

JANE

You will be there Edward. Am I so very difficult to understand? You will be there, but not as a guest.....as the groom, and I the bride. You called me, didn't you? You pleaded with me across time to return to Thornfield. I heard your voice clear as a bell.

ROCHESTER

Oh, my beloved, indeed I did call you, and you heard. It seems there are still miracles here at Thornfield. Years ago, the first night we met, I told you I thought you were bewitched. Now I know you were....you are.

JANE

You summoned me. Your love beckoned and I am here.....Jane Eyre is here and she will stay as long as you want her.

ROCHESTER

Jane, I don't know what to say.

(The underscoring stops)

JANE

As someone I love very much once told me, "that is exactly when you should find the strength to say nothing." *(They embrace)*

Music #35: Wherever You Are Is Home (Reprise)

JANE

NOW TO YOU THIS I SWEAR
I WILL ALWAYS BE THERE
BESIDE YOU WHAT 'ERE
THIS LIFE MAY BRING.

ROCHESTER

BUT WE DON'T KNOW THE FATES
THIS WORLD CONTEMPLATES.

JANE

NO MATTER WHAT AWAITS
WHERE 'ERE WE ROAM,

(Suddenly the upper level is filled with everyone who has touched JANE'S life.)

BOTH

I WILL SHELTER YOU FROM WRONG
AND YOUR LOVE WITH KEEP ME STRONG
FOR IT'S WITH YOU I BELONG.
COME SHARE MY LIFE
FROM THIS DAY ON.

CHORUS

AH.....

ROCHESTER

FOR WHEREVER YOU ARE...

JANE

FOR WHEREVER YOU ARE...

BOTH

FOR WHEREVER YOU ARE
THERE IS MY HOME!

CHORUS

THERE IS MY HOME!

(They kiss as the curtain falls)

End of ACT TWO

Music #36: Bows/Exit Music