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# From the Attic to the Screen: An Adaptation of Jane Eyre and Wide Sargasso Sea

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FROM THE ATTIC TO THE SCREEN:  
AN ADAPTATION OF *JANE EYRE* AND *WIDE SARGASSO SEA*

by  
Farrah Frances Sunn

A thesis submitted to the faculty of The University of Mississippi in partial fulfillment of  
the requirements of the Sally McDonnell Barksdale Honors College.

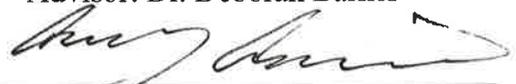
Oxford  
May 2017

Approved by



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Advisor: Dr. Deborah Barker



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Reader: Professor Alan Arrivé



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Reader: Dr. Kathryn McKee

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## ABSTRACT

From the Attic to the Screen: An Adaptation of *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea*  
(Under the direction of Dr. Deborah Barker)

*Jane and Antoinette* is an adapted screenplay from the novels *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë and *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys. Rhys's novel, written nearly one hundred years after the publication of *Jane Eyre* in 1847, functions as a prequel to the original text. I develop the two stories into one, cohesive narrative for the screen. The adaptation process includes close analyses of the texts, both independently and in relation to one another. I viewed all film or television adaptations of the two novels and read critical analyses of these adaptations. I also studied adaptation theory and applied those principles to the discipline of screenwriting.

This thesis includes a brief preface, which frames the social contexts of *Jane Eyre* and *Wide Sargasso Sea* at the times that they were written. The preface also describes characteristics of film adaptations and my decision-making process. As per traditional screenplay formatting, the premise, synopsis, and script then exist together as an independent work. A bibliography is included at the end. The screenplay is a culmination of the research I conducted and my own creative process. I extract key elements from each novel without attempting complete fidelity to either text. This creates space for the collaborative authorship of Brontë, Rhys, and I to share in *Jane and Antoinette*.

## Preface

In my earliest brainstorming for this thesis, I had not planned to write a screenplay. I wanted to explore the adaptation process, but I did not have much else direction. While studying abroad in Spain, I was struck by one of the reading assignments we had in a class on colonial English literature. We read *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys, which was written in 1966 as a prequel to the classic 19th-century novel *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë. In class, we learned that Jean Rhys's tampering of characters from the classic novel bothers many *Jane Eyre* fans. This notion correlated to ideas that I had been exploring with the adaptation process. Why do so many movie goers leave the theater disappointed after watching the film version of their favorite novel? Likewise, why are Brontë readers offended by one author's take on an already fictional story? There were so many layers to explore, and I knew I had found the inspiration for my thesis.

When *Jane Eyre* was published in 1847, it was considered a radical novel for its time. The novel reflects several notions associated with first-wave feminism and is one of the most prominent feminist texts of the era. Some scholars argue that, had Brontë not originally published the novel under a male alias, it would have never emerged as a prominent text considering some of the ideas it posits. It was also published near the peak of British Imperial power and, therefore, is characterized by colonial thought and themes throughout. By the time Jean Rhys published *Wide Sargasso Sea* in the 1960s, second-wave feminism was demanding higher standards of gender equality, and post-colonial theory was reconsidering the ethical nature of imperialism. This is reflected in Rhys's novel, which critiques and recreates aspects of *Jane Eyre* through a second-wave feminist and post-colonial lens.

Rhys's reinvention of Brontë's novel is a textual adaptation made to suit the social climate and reader expectations of her time. This can be seen in the several *Jane Eyre* film adaptations from over the years as well: Elements of the novel that may have been acceptable to Victorian readers are altered in the movie versions to appeal to audiences of different decades. For example, the treatment of gender norms and mental illness may come off harshly in Brontë's novel, but she writes on these subjects according to the standards of her time. So in the screen versions of *Jane Eyre*, mental illness is portrayed more sympathetically and masculinity is portrayed less oppressively the more recent the adaptation. That being said, through all of the alterations made to *Jane Eyre*, the novel *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys remains the furthest derivative from the original plot and the most politically charged of any adaptation. I decided to write a screenplay to alter *Jane Eyre* to the point that it actually includes *Wide Sargasso Sea*, as though the stories always existed intertwined.

In my research, I learned that the adaptation process is not an act of imitation. Even if achieving complete fidelity to a text when adapting it for the screen were possible, it would make for a dull and long-winded movie. As a screenwriter, it is more

important to consider what combination of images and dialogue, what you can see and hear, would produce the same sentiments as the novel being adapted when it is read. To achieve fidelity is to successfully evoke what the author of a novel portrayed and how that made the readers feel. Jean Rhys did this when she enhanced the notions that Brontë had already boldly explored as a female writer of her time. Rhys's recreation may not please readers who closely identify with *Jane Eyre*, but she calls forth social issues just as her predecessor did. My adaptation not only recreates Brontë and Rhys's stories in a way that further appropriates modern-day social issues, but also mimics Rhys's exploratory intertextual novel and the adaptation process as a whole. I believe that the authors would tip their hats.

Premise:

The fates of two women, one creole and one English, are crossed when they fall in love with the same man twelve years apart. Rochester proposes to Jane while his existing wife, Antoinette, is locked away in his attic. With what little they have, they come to be one another's salvation.

## Synopsis:

Jane is an orphaned, young woman who has just received a position as governess at Thornfield Hall in 19th-century England. Jane develops a close relationship with her student, Adele. Amidst strange occurrences at the mansion, Jane falls in love with Rochester, the much older property owner, and he with her. Against class customs, Rochester proposes to Jane.

Twenty years prior, Antoinette is the daughter of a dead slaveowner in post-emancipation Jamaica. Antoinette's mother, who suffers from mental illness, remarries a wealthy English man. Her mother is put away and Antoinette grows up taking care of herself. When Antoinette's mother dies, her stepfather arranges her marriage to Edward Rochester from England.

On the day of Jane's marriage to Rochester twelve years later, Jane learns that Rochester is already married to Antoinette, and that, deemed a madwoman, she has been kept in his attic at Thornfield. After meeting Antoinette face-to-face, Jane flees.

In Jamaica, the couple suffers from cultural differences. Feeling tricked into the arrangement and trapped in a strange land, Rochester strips Antoinette away from her black lover, has her certified insane, and returns with her to England. Antoinette's mental health deteriorates as she is kept in isolation.

Twelve years later, Jane is on her own and learns that she has come into a large inheritance from an unknown relative. Before starting an orphan school for girls in London and reuniting with Adele, Jane returns to Thornfield to free Antoinette. Rochester refuses to turn her over, but that night he is killed in a fire at Thornfield. Antoinette returns to Jamaica.

JANE AND ANTOINETTE

By

Farrah Sunn

Based on the novels Jane Eyre and Wide Sargasso Sea

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FADE IN:

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

A covered, horse-drawn carriage rides over expansive hills.

SUPER: "England, 1856"

INT. CARRIAGE - NIGHT

JANE looks eagerly out the window. She is a simple, young woman with an unexciting appearance. Her hair is fastened in two looped braids, parted down the middle. She wears a plain, gray dress that covers to her neck, and a cloak. Her accent is proper 19th-century English.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

The carriage arrives at a large, stone mansion. A corner tower forms its highest point- the attic. Below this, a row of embattlements stick out and three stories are situated underneath.

JOHN, an old servant, waits outside for the carriage to arrive. He opens Jane's door when it comes to a stop.

JOHN

Is your name Eyre, Miss?

JANE

Yes, sir.

JOHN

This will be your luggage I suppose?

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

They enter through grand, wooden doors. The space is dimly lit by candles, either on candelabras attached to the walls or seated on tables throughout. Paintings fill the walls. Portraits of prominent looking men line the top landing of a grand staircase.

JOHN

One moment, miss.

Jane waits in the silent space, observing its grandeur. MRS. FAIRFAX bustles in from a hallway carrying a candle. She is in her early 60s, matronly, and energetic in conversation.

MRS. FAIRFAX

How do you do, my dear? I am afraid you have had a long journey. You must be cold, come to the fire.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - KITCHEN - NIGHT

Jane and Mrs. Fairfax pass tables filled with pots, pans, and cooking ingredients. A plate of food sits by a strong fire.

JANE

Mrs. Fairfax, I suppose?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Yes, you are right. Do sit down and eat.

Jane eats politely, taking in her surroundings.

JANE

Shall I have the pleasure of meeting Miss Fairfax tonight?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Miss Fairfax? Oh, you mean Miss Varens! Adele Varens is the name of your future pupil.

JANE

Then she is not your daughter?

MRS. FAIRFAX

No, I have no family. It will be quite pleasant living here now with a companion. Thornfield is an old, fine hall, rather neglected of years late perhaps, but it is a respectable place.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Mrs. Fairfax leads Jane to her room. She lags behind in wonder at the house. They ascend the stairs and come to a hallway with several bedroom doors.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I fear it will be getting out of order unless Mr. Rochester should take it into his head to come and reside permanently, or at least visit more often.

JANE  
Mr. Rochester? Who is he?

MRS. FAIRFAX  
Why the owner of Thornfield. Did you not know he was called Rochester?

JANE  
No, I did not.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
Well, more about him tomorrow, I'll not keep you sitting up late tonight. Here is your room.

The two arrive at Jane's bedroom door. Mrs. Fairfax opens it, and Jane walks in.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane spins, observing the bed, dresser, lit fireplace, rocking chair and large window.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
It is small, but I do believe it shall suit you well.

Jane smiles, very pleased with the accommodation.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane awakes under a pile of covers with the sun streaming in. She takes a deep breath and smiles.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DINING ROOM - DAY

Mrs. Fairfax sits at the end of a long table. Jane observes the room's high ceilings and several windows as she enters.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
Up already? I see you are an early riser. Did you sleep well?

JANE  
Yes, very.

Jane takes a seat next to Mrs. Fairfax.

JANE (CONT'D)  
Tell me, the little girl, my pupil, what is her relation to Mr. Rochester?

MRS. FAIRFAX

She is Mr. Rochester's ward, he commissioned me to find a governess for her. Adele was born on the continent. When she first came here 6 months ago, she could speak no English. She has learned very fast, but her accent is so thick I cannot understand it.

Mrs. Fairfax looks past Jane to the entry.

MRS. FAIRFAX (CONT'D)

Ah, here she comes now.

ADELE, 9, enters the dining room dressed fancily. She has a heavy french accent. She is accompanied by her nurse, SOPHIE, 20s.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Good morning, Miss Adele. Come and speak to the lady who is to teach you and make you a clever woman some day.

ADELE

(to Sophie)

C'est la ma gouvernante?

JANE

(Answering the question)

Oui. I am Miss Jane.

Adele, surprised she was understood, moves to Jane and embraces her.

ADELE

You speak my language! Sophie will be glad, she is all French and has no one to talk to. Sophie is my nurse. She came with me over the sea in a great ship. I was sick, and so was Sophie, and so was Mr. Rochester. And, Mademoiselle, what did you say is your name?

JANE

Eyre-- Jane Eyre.

ADELE

Air? Bah! I cannot say it. Well, our ship stopped in a great city named London. We stayed a week, and

(cont'd)

ADELE (cont'd)  
 Sophie and I used to walk every day  
 in a great green place full of  
 trees, called the park, with many  
 children and many new friends.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
 Can you understand her when she  
 runs on so fast?

JANE  
 I understand her very well.

Jane and Adele smile at each other.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DAY

A sunny, winter day. Jane and Adele stroll through the  
 garden dressed in cloaks. The garden is well-kept, despite  
 it being the winter and only a few plants grow.

JANE  
 Adele, with whom did you live  
 before you came on the boat?

ADELE  
 I lived with Mama. She taught me to  
 dance and sing. A great many  
 gentlemen and ladies came to see  
 Mama, and I used to dance before  
 them, or to sit on their knees and  
 sing to them. Shall I let you hear  
 me sing now?

Jane nods and Adele begins to sing a French lullaby. Jane  
 first smiles proudly, then seems troubled.

ADELE (CONT'D)  
 (singing)  
 Dodo, l'enfant do, / L'enfant  
 dormira bien vite Dodo, / l'enfant  
 do / L'enfant dormira bientôt.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. GATESHEAD - DAY

YOUNG JANE, dressed in modest clothes, peeks into a room  
 filled with elegantly dressed party guests. Two beautiful  
 GIRLS, 10 and 12, sing in front of the crowd.

## GIRLS

(singing)

Must the winter come so soon?  
 / Here in this forest neither dawn  
 nor sunset / marks the passing of  
 the days. / It is a long winter  
 here.

AUNT REED, a 30-something, lavishly dressed lady, spots Jane spying from the other side of the door. Just as the two make eye contact, Aunt Reed slams the door in Jane's face.

END FLASHBACK.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DAY

Adele has finished her song and awaits Jane's response. Jane returns to the moment and claps encouragingly.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DUSK

Jane walks alone and seems deep in thought. She observes a beautiful sunset but soon shivers due to a cold wind.

She turns her attention to Thornfield and focuses on a single window at the top of the corner tower. There is movement inside. Jane observes it curiously, then lets it go and starts back to the house.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DUSK

Jane is being watched from an upstairs window as she walks towards the house.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ENTRYWAY - DUSK

Jane enters the house and shuts the door. The room has two other doors leading to other parts of the house. A bell hangs by the door. She takes off her cloak.

GRACE, an unkempt, old servant with a lower-class English accent, enters through one of the doors. She carries a decanter of liquor. Jane is startled by her entry.

JANE

Oh! Excuse me, I did not hear you approach. I do not believe we have been introduced, I am Jane.

GRACE

(grunting)

Poole. Grace Poole.

Grace continues on her way through the space without slowing. Jane looks after her curiously.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DINING ROOM - DAY

Jane and Mrs. Fairfax eat breakfast alone.

JANE

Has Grace Poole been here long?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Mr. Rochester hired her more than a decade ago.

Jane ponders this for a moment.

JANE

Is Mr. Rochester well liked?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Oh yes, the family is well respected here.

JANE

But is he liked for himself?

MRS. FAIRFAX

He is rather peculiar perhaps. He has traveled a great deal and seen a great deal of the world.

JANE

In what way is he peculiar?

MRS. FAIRFAX

I don't know, it is not easy to describe, you feel it when he speaks to you. You cannot always be sure whether he is in earnest or in jest. You don't thoroughly understand him, in short.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NURSERY - DAY

A large bedroom with toys and books strewn about. A window faces the entrance of the house. Jane draws from a sketchpad, while Adele reads aloud, stuttering over large words. Jane stops to listen.

ADELE

"This made me reflect upon the fair skins of our English ladies, who appear so beautiful to us, only

(cont'd)

ADELE (cont'd)  
 because they are of our own size,  
 and their defects not to be  
 seen..."

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. GATESHEAD LIBRARY - DAY

Jane sits on a window seat behind a curtain, her head pressed to a cold window. She breaths fog onto the window and observes the winter day. She begins to read the same passage from *Gulliver's Travels* as Adele in the previous scene, muttering under her breath.

JOHN REED pulls the curtain open abruptly. He is a chubby 14-year-old.

YOUNG JANE  
 What do you want, cousin?

JOHN REED  
 You should say, "what do you want, Master Reed?" What are you doing behind the curtain?

YOUNG JANE  
 I was reading a book.

John takes the book from her.

JOHN REED  
 You have no business to take our books. Mama says you have no money, your father left you none. You ought to beg and not to live here with gentlemen's children like us.

John holds the book out to his side with both hands then hits Jane in the forehead with it. She blacks out.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NURSERY - DAY

Jane finds that Adele has been trying to get her attention.

ADELE  
 Miss Jane! Miss Jane! Are you bored of drawing?

JANE  
 (smiling)  
 I never bore of drawing.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DAY

Adele, Sophie, and Jane skip rocks across the small pond on the property. They wear coats.

ADELE  
 I am very happy to have you, Miss Jane. Mrs. Fairfax never wants to go outside. She says it isn't a place for young ladies.

JANE  
 And why shouldn't it be? Women are supposed to be very calm generally, but women feel just as men. They need exercise for their faculties and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do. If we were trapped up inside all day we may very well go mad.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

The three are watched from the attic window.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane sleeps restlessly in her bed. She has a dream from her childhood.

BEGIN DREAM:

INT. GATESHEAD - DAY

A fine house, though much smaller and more moderately decorated than Thornfield. A screaming and highly distressed Young Jane is carried by BESSIE, a maid, and another MAID through the hallway.

INT. GATESHEAD - RED ROOM - DAY

Young Jane is let go. The space is large and empty except for an unlit fireplace and a grand bed. The bedding and window curtains are red.

YOUNG JANE  
 (screaming)  
 No! No! It's haunted! I didn't do anything wrong!

MAID

What shocking conduct, Miss Eyre,  
to strike a young gentleman. Your  
young master.

YOUNG JANE

Master! How is he my master? Am I  
his servant?

BESSIE

What we tell you is for your own  
good. You should try to be useful  
and pleasant, and perhaps you would  
find a home here.

MAIDEN

God will punish her. Say your  
prayers, Miss Eyre, for something  
bad might come down the chimney and  
fetch you away.

They shut Jane inside, leaving her alone in the room. Jane  
screams and bangs at the door until she passes out.

INT. GATESHEAD - NURSERY - NIGHT

When Young Jane awakes, she is laying in a bed and being  
watched by Mrs. Reed. They stare at one another hatefully.

JANE

What would Uncle Reed say to you if  
he were alive?

AUNT REED

What did you say? You foolish girl.

JANE

My uncle Reed is in heaven and can  
see all you do and think and so can  
Papa and Mama. They know how you  
shut me away, and how you wish me  
dead.

AUNT REED

How dare you.

Aunt Reed gathers herself.

AUNT REED (CONT'D)

A Mr. Brocklehurst is coming to see  
you very soon, Jane. You are going  
away.

JANE

I am glad.

AUNT REED

Have you any more to say, you ungrateful little girl?

JANE

I am glad you are no relation of mine. If anyone asks me how I liked you, I will say that you treated me with miserable cruelty. Send me to school soon, Mrs. Reed. I hate to live here.

Mrs. Reed, highly disturbed, leaves the room and Jane is left alone in bed. She stares at the ceiling as silent tears roll down her face. She shuts her eyes.

END DREAM.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane awakes sad. It is a dreary, gray day outside.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NURSERY - DAY

Jane appears depressed as she draws Adele on her sketchpad. Adele sits across her. Adele begins to make silly faces, poking out her tongue and crossing her eyes. Jane is irritable.

JANE

Adele! Sit still and be polite.

Adele is still for a moment, then begins to cross her eyes again and breaks into a laugh. Jane slaps her sketchbook down and gets up to leave.

JANE

That should be quite enough for today. Please go to Sophie.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DAY

Jane walks briskly through the hallways. She comes upon Mrs. Fairfax.

MRS. FAIRFAX

There you are. I am just sending John to town to post some letters. Have you anything to send?

JANE  
No, but I am happy to take them  
myself.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
Don't trouble yourself, it will be  
dark soon.

JANE  
I like the walk. And I could use  
the fresh air.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
Very well, suit yourself.

EXT. FOREST - DUSK

The forest is damp and foggy as the day loses light. Jane, dressed in a cloak, walks a path thickly lined with trees. She stops because she hears a rumble approaching but cannot decipher from what angle. She spins around- tall trees surround her at all angles.

Suddenly, a man's horse is upon Jane. It rears up to avoid trampling her, kicking ROCHESTER off. He falls, grunting as he hits the ground. He lies on his back and his dog approaches him, barking nervously.

Rochester is in his mid-to-late 30s, has dark hair, strong features, and a masculine energy, though he is not strikingly handsome. He has a proper British accent.

ROCHESTER  
(to dog)  
Down, Pilot!

JANE  
Are you injured, sir?

Rochester rises slowly and groans when he tries to take a step.

JANE  
If you are injured I want to help,  
sir. I can fetch someone.

ROCHESTER  
Thank you, I shall do. I have  
broken no bones- only a sprain.

He again struggles to walk to his horse.

JANE

I cannot think of leaving you at so late an hour till you are fit to mount your horse.

ROCHESTER

So late an hour, indeed. I should think you ought to be home yourself. Where do you come from?

JANE

From just below, at Thornfield Hall. I have set out to post letters.

ROCHESTER

From there just below? Whose house is it?

JANE

Mr. Rochester's.

ROCHESTER

Do you know Mr. Rochester?

JANE

No, I have never met him.

ROCHESTER

You are not a servant at the hall, of course, you are...

Rochester eyes Jane, deciphering her position.

JANE

I am the governess.

ROCHESTER

The governess.

(nods pensively)

I cannot commission you to fetch help, but you may help me yourself if you would be so kind.

Jane takes Rochester's arm over her shoulders and walks him to his horse. He uses her to support himself as he mounts. He looks down at her, steadying the horse.

ROCHESTER

Thank you. Now make haste to your home.

JANE  
 After I first post the letters,  
 sir.

ROCHESTER  
 (wryly)  
 Then make haste on your return.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Jane takes off her cloak and notices the dog from earlier, Pilot, sitting in the entryway. Mrs. Fairfax comes to greet her with nervous energy.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
 The master, Mr. Rochester, he is  
 just arrived. He has had an  
 accident on the road, his horse  
 fell and his ankle is sprained.  
 John has gone for a doctor.

Jane looks puzzled as she puts the pieces together.

JANE  
 Why is he come?

MRS. FAIRFAX  
 How should I know? It would be like  
 him to be gone again tomorrow.  
 Which is probably why he requests  
 your presence, now, in the drawing  
 room.

JANE  
 Now?

MRS. FAIRFAX  
 Yes, now. Adele is there already.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Jane enters hesitantly with Mrs. Fairfax. The room is decorated with fine carpets, chairs, tables, and a piano. Rochester sits in a chair facing the fire, his back to where Jane enters. Adele sits at his knees.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
 Here is Miss Eyre, sir.

ROCHESTER  
 Let Miss Eyre be seated.

Jane takes a seat across him. She eyes him frequently while he remains engaged in the school work and fine gifts Adele shows him. He sips from his glass of scotch. Mrs. Fairfax is seated across the room.

ADELE

Did you bring Mademoiselle a present too?

ROCHESTER

Did you expect a present, Miss Eyre?

JANE

Of course not, sir.

ROCHESTER

Do you not like presents?

JANE

I am not warranted such a bestowment for simply performing my duties.

ROCHESTER

Oh, don't fall back on over modesty. I have examined Adele and find you have outdone your duties. She has made much improvement in a short time.

JANE

Thank you, sir. To hear you say so is my present.

Rochester eyes Jane for several moments before returning his attention to his drink.

ROCHESTER

You have been resident in my house three months?

JANE

Yes, sir.

ROCHESTER

And you came from...?

JANE

From Lowood school, in Yorkshire.

MEMORY HIT:

INT. LOWOOD SCHOOL - DAY

Young Jane stands in a cold, gray classroom, dressed in a white smock. The back of her hand is hit by a switch.

END MEMORY HIT.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Rochester observes Jane.

ROCHESTER

I know of it. A charitable concern.  
How long were you there?

JANE

Eight years.

ROCHESTER

Eight years! Who are your parents?

JANE

I have none. Nor ever had.

ROCHESTER

Who recommended you to come here?

JANE

I advertised in the papers, and  
Mrs. Fairfax answered my  
advertisement.

ROCHESTER

You have lived the life of a nun.  
Brocklehurst, who I understand  
directs Lowood, is a parson is he  
not? And you probably worshiped  
him?

JANE

No, sir.

ROCHESTER

(jokingly)

A novice not worship her priest?  
Blasphemy!

Jane stares blankly at the fire.

BEGIN FLASHBACK:

INT. LOWOOD SCHOOL - DAY

Girls of several ages fill the room in wooden desks. MR. BROCKLEHURST, a middle-aged parson, stands at the front of the room. A TEACHER walks around observing them.

The girls work silently and rigorously. Young Jane's slate slips from her grasp and crashes on the floor. The entire room turns to look at her.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

(to teacher)

Fetch the stool. Place the child upon it.

A classmate seated next to Jane, HELEN BURNS, 10, vibrant red hair, reaches out and squeezes Jane's hand to comfort her. They share a concerned look. The teacher paces across the room to retrieve Jane.

MR. BROCKLEHURST

Let her stand for an hour, and let no one speak to her during the remainder of the day.

END FLASHBACK.

INT. DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Rochester is looking at Jane, awaiting her response.

JANE

I disliked Mr. Brocklehurst, and I was not alone in the feeling. He is a harsh man. He starved us for economy's sake, and he gave long sermons each night on our wicked behavior.

ROCHESTER

And this is your tale of woe?

JANE

I have no tale of woe, sir.

ROCHESTER

An orphan with no tale of woe? Where did you come from before your eight years at Lowood? Who did you live with?

JANE

An aunt and three cousins who  
wanted nothing to do with me.

Rochester looks thoughtful and repeats Jane's remark.

ROCHESTER

No tale of woe.

(beat)

Well, it is late. What are you  
about, Miss Eyre, to let Adele sit  
up so long? Take her to bed.

Adele jumps up to kiss Rochester good night.

ROCHESTER

I wish you all a good night.

Mrs. Fairfax, Jane, and Adele leave the room.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Mrs. Fairfax and Jane walk to their quarters.

JANE

Well. He is very changeful and  
abrupt.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I have become accustomed to his  
manner. And if there are any  
peculiarities of his temper,  
allowance should be made. He lost  
his elder brother and father ten  
years ago, soon after he returned  
from traveling abroad.

JANE

And that is how he acquired the  
estate?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Precisely, but I don't believe he  
has ever stayed at Thornfield for  
more than a fortnight since.

JANE

Why should he shun it?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Maybe he thinks it gloomy.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane stirs in her sleep.

BEGIN DREAM:

INT. LOWOOD SCHOOL - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Young Jane peeks into a room through a keyhole. A NURSE, accompanied by the teacher, is inside looking after Helen Burns. She appears very weak in bed. The nurse and teacher prepare to leave the room.

Jane hides behind a wall and overhears their discussion as they exit.

NURSE

I am afraid it will be a very short time.

INT. LOWOOD SCHOOL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Jane enters the room after they are gone and approaches Helen in her bed.

YOUNG JANE

(whispers)

Helen, are you awake?

Helen opens her heavy eyes.

HELEN

Why have you come, Jane?

YOUNG JANE

I heard you were very ill, Helen, and I could not sleep until I had spoken to you.

Jane gets in bed with Helen and holds her closely.

HELEN

You have come to bid me goodbye.

Jane begins to sob.

YOUNG JANE

No. No, Helen.

HELEN

I am very happy, Jane, I am going home.

YOUNG JANE  
I'll stay with you, dear Helen. No  
one shall take me away.

Jane kisses Helen on the temple.

HELEN  
Good night, Jane.

INT. LOWOOD SCHOOL - BEDROOM - DAY

In the morning, Jane is asleep, intertwined with Helen's blue body. Mr. Brocklehurst picks Jane up out of the bed. She awakes and sees Helen. She wails and reaches out to her as she is carried away.

END DREAM.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane awakes slowly and is solemn for a few moments. She hears shrieking laughter from outside and goes to her window. It is a bright day and Rochester and Adele are in the garden playing. Jane smiles.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Jane ascends the staircase on her way to bed. At the top, she stops at a portrait of Rochester and observes it, her candle and her face closely suspended over his features. Rochester appears behind her.

ROCHESTER  
Do you think me handsome, Miss  
Eyre?

Jane jumps in surprise and swivels around.

JANE  
No, sir.

ROCHESTER  
Bah! By my word! There is something  
very singular about you.

JANE  
I beg your pardon, sir.

ROCHESTER  
I suppose I have all my limbs and  
all my features as any other man?

JANE

Mr. Rochester, allow me to disown my first answer. It was only a blunder.

Rochester laughs light-heartedly.

ROCHESTER

My offense may have been greater when I was a young man of your age. I once had a tender kind of heart, but fortune has knocked me about since.

Jane smiles. They look at each other for a moment longer than is comfortable. Jane looks away bashfully. Grace enters anxiously to address Rochester.

GRACE

You'll be needed in the servants' quarters, sir. Right away.

Grace eyes Jane.

ROCHESTER

Good night, Miss Eyre.

Jane does not answer because Rochester has already begun down the hall, followed by Grace Poole.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DAY

Jane, Adele, Sophie, and Rochester relax in the garden. It is an early spring day, sunny and warm. Jane draws the scenery around her, Sophie soaks in the sun, and Rochester and Adele play hide and seek.

Rochester pretends he cannot find Adele. She jumps out from behind a tree and he acts surprised. Adele is elated. She then runs to play with Sophie, and Rochester goes to sit by Jane.

JANE

How did you come to be ward of Miss Adele?

ROCHESTER

Adele's mother, Celine Varens, was precisely as charming as little Adele. I was quite the traveler in those days... Some years after I broke with Celine, she abandoned Adele and ran away to Italy with a

(cont'd)

ROCHESTER (cont'd)

Musician. I acknowledge no natural claim to Adele. I am not her father, but hearing that she was quite destitute, I took the poor thing out of the slime and mud of Paris and transplanted it here, to grow up in the wholesome soil of an English country garden.

(checking Jane's reaction)

Now that you know she is the illegitimate offspring of an opera girl you may think differently of her?

JANE

No-- Adele is not answerable for either her mother's faults or yours. I have regard for her, and now that I know she is parentless and abandoned I shall cling closer to her than before.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane awakes in the night to sounds of footsteps and something brushing against her door. She is unsure if she is imagining the sounds or if they are real.

She waits until they go away. She hesitates, then takes a lit candle and exits her room wearing her nightgown.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Jane sees nothing in the hallway, but hears a commotion, and enters another adjacent hallway. There, she sees a great light and hears a roaring sound coming from Mr. Rochester's room. She rushes to enter.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ROCHESTER'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Rochester's room is large and filled with elegant furniture. The drapery at the foot of his bed is engulfed in flames. Jane rushes to try and wake him.

JANE

Mr. Rochester! Mr. Rochester!

Jane goes for a basin filled with water. She splashes it on Rochester, knocking over liquor bottles spread out by his bed. He awakes and abruptly gets out of bed.

Jane goes for another basin as Rochester snatches the curtains from his window. Jane splashes water on the flames as Rochester smothers them with the curtains. Once the fire is out, the room is dark and still. Smoke wafts through the room.

Jane and Rochester face each other, breathing heavily. Jane's nightgown is wet from the water. She shivers and covers herself. Rochester goes for his coat, draped over a chair, and wraps it around Jane.

ROCHESTER

Take my coat. What have you seen?

JANE

Nothing. I thought I heard someone outside my door and rose from my bed. The hallway was empty but that was when I heard a commotion coming from your room.

ROCHESTER

Remain here for a few moments and don't call for anyone.

Rochester exits the room. From out the window, Jane sees his candlelight pass by windows ascending the staircase to the corner tower. She sits and rests her head.

Time passes before Rochester returns. Jane stands.

ROCHESTER

I have found it all out. The person you heard was Grace Poole, she often wanders the halls at night, unable to sleep.

JANE

Was she to do with the fire, sir?

ROCHESTER

No, no. The fire must have started from one of my candles. I am afraid I had much to drink before bed. I am glad it were not worse.

JANE

It is all a strange coincidence. I am grateful you are unharmed. Good night, sir.

ROCHESTER

(surprised)

You will leave me like that? You have saved my life, Jane! You walk past me as though we were mutual strangers. At least shake hands.

Jane extends her hand and Rochester clasps it.

ROCHESTER

I knew you would do me good in some way, Jane.

They remain hand in hand and make eye contact, making Jane uncomfortable. She pulls her hand away.

JANE

I am cold, sir.

ROCHESTER

Go, then, Jane.

She hurriedly takes his coat from her shoulders, gives it to him, and exits the room.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane rushes into her room and shuts the door. She turns and leans her back against it, breathing heavily. She looks perplexed.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DINING ROOM - DAY

Jane takes a seat next to Mrs. Fairfax for breakfast.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Good morning. You won't believe what Mr. Rochester managed to do last night. He fell asleep with all his candles lit, in a drunk stupor I should suppose, and the bed curtains caught fire. Luckily, he awoke before the woodwork caught and was able to extinguish the flame.

JANE

How suspenseful. I am glad he was unharmed.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I am glad we were all unharmed. Perhaps it was time he took his leave. Fair day for a journey.

JANE

A journey? Do you expect him back tonight?

MRS. FAIRFAX

No, nor tomorrow. I am surprised he stayed the eight weeks he did this time. He is so often away.

Jane tries to hide her disappointment. It goes unnoticed by Mrs. Fairfax.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NURSERY - DAY

Jane and Adele dress for the day. Jane ties a bow around Adele's waist. Mrs. Fairfax nervously rushes in.

MRS. FAIRFAX

They have come back!

JANE

They?

MRS. FAIRFAX

Mr. Rochester, with a whole party of guests. The lady Ingram and more. We shall have a full house.

She exits just as quickly. Jane and Adele look at each other in excitement. They run to the nursery window.

They watch as twelve or so party guests parade into the house, each distinguished in fine clothing. Jane focuses on Rochester and MISS INGRAM, a young beauty in extravagant garments and makeup.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DAY

Jane and Mrs. Fairfax pass on the staircase.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Jane, Mr. Rochester has requested that you accompany Adele in the drawing room after dinner. Find something nice to put on.

Mrs. Fairfax leaves Jane, who looks down at her simple, black dress.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Jane sits in a corner of the room in her black dress. The guests (including FEMALE PARTY GUEST 1 and 2, and MALE PARTY GUEST) laugh and engage in lively conversation. Jane watches Rochester, who hasn't acknowledged her.

MISS INGRAM  
Can you believe that?

FEMALE PARTY GUEST 1  
It is such a shame. Why all of these people should want to leave England in the first place is beyond me.

MALE PARTY GUEST  
Why, to get you ladies your pretty things, of course. They do not find their way onto ships by accident.

FEMALE PARTY GUEST 2  
Everyone! Hush, hush everyone!

The room quiets and turns to the guest, who stands by Adele. She is dressed in a fancy lace outfit.

FEMALE PARTY GUEST 2  
This darling girl would like to give us a performance.

Adele walks to the center of the room and smiles easily.

ADELE  
(singing)  
Arlequin dans sa boutique / Sur les  
marches du palais, / Il enseigne la  
musique / À tous ses petits valets.

Adele bows when she finishes. The guests respond in joyful applause. Miss Ingram jumps up from her place next to Rochester.

MISS INGRAM  
Oh! My turn, my turn!

She moves to the piano and begins to play expertly. The guests look on fondly. Mrs. Fairfax comes to sit by Jane in the corner. She speaks softly in her ear.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
She is a beauty, isn't she? They say she is to be married to Mr. Rochester.

Jane looks at Mrs. Fairfax with a crinkled brow. She gets up and leaves in the middle of the performance.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Jane holds back tears as she ascends the staircase. Rochester exits the drawing room and calls out to her.

ROCHESTER  
How do you do, Jane?

She turns to him reluctantly.

JANE  
I am very well, sir.

ROCHESTER  
Why did you not come and speak to me in the room?

JANE  
I did not wish to disturb you, as you seemed engaged, sir.

ROCHESTER  
Return to the drawing room, you are deserting too early.

JANE  
I am tired, sir.

ROCHESTER  
And a little upset.

JANE  
I am not upset.

ROCHESTER  
But I affirm that you are. A few more words and you would be brought to tears.

(bites his lip)  
I bid you good night. But I expect you in the drawing room every evening that my guests are here. It is my wish- don't neglect it.

He turns and leaves abruptly. Jane holds back tears but composes herself before continuing up the stairs.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane watches from her window as Rochester and the male party guests leave the property on horseback. They carry guns and are followed by Pilot.

Jane's bedroom door is open, and she turns her attention to a hushed conversation in the hallway.

MISS INGRAM (O.S.)  
The time that has been wasted!

FEMALE PARTY GUEST 1 (O.S.)  
How can you be so sure?

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DAY

Miss Ingram and Female Party Guest 1 walk past Jane's door.

MISS INGRAM  
Why should he lie about being penniless?

FEMALE PARTY GUEST 1  
It's a shame, the way he has led you about falsely.

MISS INGRAM  
I want to be rid of this place, the sooner the better.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

The two move out of earshot. Jane looks confused over what she has heard.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DRAWING ROOM - NIGHT

Jane draws in the corner as guests socialize. She observes Miss Ingram avoid Rochester and keep to herself. Rochester does not seem to notice. He glances at Jane, who quickly diverts her eyes.

Mrs. Fairfax enters and approaches Rochester.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
A Mr. Richard Mason has come. An old acquaintance of yours from Jamaica, he says.

Jane observes Rochester's perplexed reaction to what Mrs. Fairfax has told him. He gets up to leave.

He returns with the guest, RICHARD MASON, 30s, distinguished attire, British accent. The man keeps to himself.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane awakes to an echoing and agonized scream. She gets out of bed and puts on her overcoat.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Jane enters the hallway, where several other party guests murmur concernedly. Rochester comes in.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)  
 Alright! Alright! There is no reason to get excited. A servant has had a nightmare, that is all.

The guests look to one another, dissatisfied. Jane sees that Rochester conceals a blood stain on his sleeve.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)  
 You will take cold if you stay in this chill gallery any longer. I bid you all good night.

The guests disperse to their rooms, but Jane hesitates. Rochester makes eye contact with her that communicates she should stay. She waits until the room clears out.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)  
 Jane, I need your help. Come this way and make no noise.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - TOWER STAIRS - NIGHT

Rochester and Jane ascend the corner tower. At the top, they reach a door, which Rochester unlocks. He looks to Jane, who appears brave and prepared, before opening the door and entering.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC - NIGHT

Richard Mason lies bloody and panting on a table in the center of a small room. Tapestries drape the windowless walls and only a few wooden chairs lay scattered about.

ROCHESTER  
 Come here Jane, hold this to his neck. If he feels faint, dampen his forehead.

Jane takes a wet cloth from Rochester and sits next to Richard. She presses the cloth to a deep wound on his neck. He groans.

ROCHESTER

I am going to town to fetch the surgeon. It will be an hour or two. Do not speak to each other under any circumstances.

Rochester looks at Jane for a brief moment before turning abruptly and leaving the room, latching the door behind him.

Jane looks around the room, curious and increasingly frightened. She hears minor movement through one of the walls covered by a tapestry. She keeps her eye in that direction.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC - NIGHT

Jane rests her head on her arm, barely awake. Rochester reenters with a surgeon, CARTER, 50s. Jane stands up and moves out of the way.

ROCHESTER

You have but half an hour to dress the wound and get him downstairs before the sun rises.

CARTER

Let's have a look.

Carter moves to Richard and examines the wound.

RICHARD MASON

She looked so quiet at first, then she pulled the knife. Oh, I did not expect it.

ROCHESTER

Enough, Richard! I'm warning you.

Rochester checks Jane's reaction to the comments. She looks alarmed at him.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAWN

The first signs of light appear in the sky. Carter enters an awaiting carriage, and Rochester heaves the bandaged Richard Mason in after him. Jane watches.

RICHARD MASON

Let her be taken care of. Let her  
be treated tenderly as may be.

ROCHESTER

I do my best, and have done it, and  
will do it.

Rochester shuts the carriage door and it rides away. He  
turns to Jane, who looks desperate for answers.

ROCHESTER

Will you walk with me, Jane?

JANE

Yes, sir, if you intend to give me  
some answers.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DAWN

They begin walking through the garden, now in full bloom.

ROCHESTER

You have passed a strange night.  
Strange for us all.

(hesitates)

You know of the servant, Grace  
Poole. You may have heard that she  
suffers from fitful episodes.

JANE

(defiantly)

Why does she stay here, sir?

ROCHESTER

Don't trouble yourself over her.  
There are details you cannot know  
at this point, but you are safe.  
Always safe.

Jane nods. They pass bushes and flower beds, walking in  
silence.

ROCHESTER

I should like it if you kept this  
between us. I can offer gratuity.

JANE

Are you bidding to pay me for my  
silence, sir?

ROCHESTER

If it should suit you, Jane, yes.

JANE

You have my silence. For no price, sir.

They stop walking and face each other. Rochester watches Jane with admiration for several moments, then changes his manner.

ROCHESTER

I wonder if my soon-to-be bride would come to such a generous answer.

JANE

So you are to marry Miss Ingram?

ROCHESTER

Does this come as a surprise to you, little friend?

JANE

No, sir, it is just...I am happy for you two. A fitting match.

Rochester nods in acceptance of her answer, but he appears disappointed.

ROCHESTER

Thank you, Jane. And thank you, again, for last night's services. Now go into bed. You have passed a long night.

Jane nods and keeps her head down as she turns and walks away. She heads for the house quickly, looking distressed. Rochester looks after her.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NURSEY - DAY

Jane and Adele watch from the window as the party guests leave.

ADELE

I do not want all of the pretty ladies to leave.

JANE

(solemnly)  
They will be back.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DAY

Jane walks in the garden in deep thought. It is a warm summer evening, but clouds are rolling in. She comes up on Rochester, who sits on a bench watching the sunset.

ROCHESTER

Hello, little friend. Come and sit.

Jane hesitates but takes a seat next to him.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)

"Day its fervid fires had wasted."  
It reminds me rather of a West  
Indian sunset.

Jane observes the garden around them. Rochester watches her.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)

It is a nice existence, at  
Thornfield, isn't it, Jane?

Jane does not answer but looks down, bothered.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)

What is the matter? You look  
depressed.

JANE

It is a nice existence. And one I  
should not enjoy long, for you are  
to be married, sir, and Adele will  
go to school. Then what will come  
of me?

ROCHESTER

I shall seek employment and asylum  
for you. I have already heard of a  
position that I think suits you. A  
governess to the children of an old  
friend. They reside in Ireland, a  
long way off, but you should like  
it.

JANE

Ireland *is* a long way off, sir.

ROCHESTER

No matter, a girl of your sense  
will not object to the voyage or  
the distance.

JANE  
 (increasingly distressed)  
 Not the voyage, but the distance.  
 And then the sea is a barrier-

ROCHESTER  
 -From what, Jane?

JANE  
 From England, and from Thornfield,  
 and...

ROCHESTER  
 Well?

JANE  
 From you, sir. It is a long way.

Jane chokes back tears.

ROCHESTER  
 I sometimes have the feeling, with regard to you, Jane, that if you were to take a journey of any distance, this cord of communion between us would snap; and I should take to bleeding inwardly. As for you, you'd forget me.

JANE  
 (crying)  
 That I never should, sir. You are the one who is to take a bride. Do you think I am a machine without feelings? Do you think, that because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? I have as much soul as you, and full as much heart! And if God had gifted me with beauty, and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me, as it is now for me to leave you.

ROCHESTER  
 Jane!

Rochester embraces Jane, who struggles to release herself before pushing him away. She stands.

JANE  
 You are a married man! Or as good as married. To a woman with whom  
 (cont'd)

JANE (cont'd)  
 you have no sympathy, whom I do not believe you truly love, and who does not truly love you.

ROCHESTER  
 (stands)  
 Jane! I have no bride! My bride is here, my equal and my likeness. Do you doubt me, Jane?

Jane looks at Rochester in angry confusion, keeping a distance.

JANE  
 Entirely!

ROCHESTER  
 I have never loved Miss Ingram, and you are right to have known. I caused a rumor to reach her that my fortune was not a third of what was supposed, and she predictably left the very next day. I would not, I could not marry Miss Ingram.

She paces in distress.

JANE  
 Then why have you led me to believe a lie? Why have you told me plans of your marriage?

ROCHESTER  
 It was to receive a reaction from you Jane, you strange, almost unearthly thing! I could not read your feelings, as you could not read mine. I love you as my own flesh. You, poor and obscure, small and plain as you are, I entreat to accept me as a husband.

JANE  
 What? Me?

Rochester moves closer to Jane. She does not back away.

ROCHESTER  
 You, Jane. I must have you for my own, entirely my own. Say yes.

JANE  
 (doubtfully)  
 Are you in earnest? Do you truly  
 love me?

ROCHESTER  
 I swear it.

Their faces are inches apart. Jane's furrowed brow begins to relax.

JANE  
 Then, sir, I will marry you.

They kiss passionately. The sun has almost completely set and storm clouds cover the sky. They hear thunder and run for the house. Before they reach Thornfield, a heavy rain pours down on them.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

They enter soaked, smiling and embracing.

ROCHESTER  
 Jane. Good night, my darling.

They kiss again before parting.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DINING ROOM - DAY

Jane sits with Mrs. Fairfax and Adele at breakfast. She has just revealed her marriage plans. Adele is elated.

ADELE  
 Madame Jane pour toujours!

Mrs. Fairfax looks dumbfounded and hesitates to speak.

MRS. FAIRFAX  
 I could never have thought it. He is a proud man. All the Rochesters were proud. He means to marry you? I am sorry to grieve you, but you are so young and so little acquainted with men.

JANE  
 (offended)  
 Is it so impossible that Mr. Rochester should have a sincere affection for me?

MRS. FAIRFAX

No, my dear. I daresay Mr. Rochester is very fond of you. It is just...believe me when I say, you cannot be too careful. All is not gold that glitters.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Jane enters the drawing room where Rochester sits waiting for her. She enters timidly after Mrs. Fairfax's warning, but after Rochester embraces her warmly she relaxes.

ROCHESTER

Come, darling. We are going to town to buy you a gown. I will adorn you as the most elegant bride there ever was.

JANE

And I will refuse. A modest gown shall do. I will remain the same Jane as always, no adornments are necessary.

(smiling)

And Adele will be accompanying us to town.

ROCHESTER

(intrigued)

You are a different breed. Whatever pleases you, my Jane.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - NIGHT

As Jane is sleeping soundly, her bedroom door opens. ANTOINETTE, a beautiful woman of her 30s, with long, black hair and a slender figure, enters slowly. She has an English accent with hints of creole influences.

Antoinette wears a worn, white nightgown. Crouching on the floor, she quietly approaches Jane and surveys her sleeping with fascination. She runs her fingers over Jane's loose hair sprawled out on the pillow.

She moves to a parcel of bridal attire on Jane's desk. She pulls out a long and delicate veil. Watching Jane, Antoinette tears the veil from top to bottom. Her face is bold and confident during this process. She drops the two halves and saunters out of the room.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Antoinette drifts through dark hallways, sliding her hand along the wall. The wall begins to brighten.

INT. COULIBRI - DAY

A stately plantation home. YOUNG ANTOINETTE, age 10, runs buoyantly past elegant European furniture, large, tropical plants, vibrantly colored walls, and handwoven baskets. Her long, black hair flies out behind her. She wears a light blue, casual dress.

SUPER: Jamaica, 1836. 20 years earlier.

EXT. COULIBRI - PORCH - DAY

She exits a door, revealing a view of the ocean in the distance. She runs along a wrap-around porch around the circumference of the house, passing entryways open to different rooms. A line of old slave huts with SERVANTS bustling about sit at a close distance.

EXT. COULIBRI - GARDEN - DAY

Young Antoinette slows to a stop, twirls around, then falls into a bed of leaves. She is surrounded by overgrown plants and strange flowers. She stares at the clouds passing over her head. A strong creole voice calls from inside.

CHRISTOPHINE (O.S.)

Antoinette! Antoinette, time to eat!

INT. COULIBRI - DINING ROOM - DAY

Young Antoinette is ushered by CHRISTOPHINE, a slender, black woman of her 50s. She wears a black dress and her hair is tied in a black scarf. She has a strong creole accent.

CHRISTOPHINE

Antoinette! Do not run away when I call to you.

Young Antoinette sits at a stately dining room table across from her mother, ANNETTE, beautiful, 30-years-old, similar features to Antoinette. Annette sits morosely, not touching her food or ever looking in Young Antoinette's direction. Young Antoinette sips her soup, every now and then curiously glancing her mother's way.

INT. COULIBRI - DAY

After dinner, Young Antoinette watches through a window as her mother gallops off into a hilly landscape on a white horse.

INT. COULIBRI - BEDROOM - DAY

Young Antoinette creeps slowly towards her brother's bedroom. With each step, the wood floors make a loud creaking sound. She comes up on her brother's bedroom door, half opened, and peeks inside.

INT. COULIBRI - PIERRE'S ROOM - DAY

PIERRE, a frail, physically disabled young boy, sleeps in a large bed. Daylight streams in. Young Antoinette stares at him intently from outside the doorway.

                          YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
                          (whispers)  
                          Pierre!  
                          (beat)  
                          Pierre!

INT. COULIBRI - HALLWAY - DAY

Christophine appears behind Antoinette, surprising her.

                          CHRISTOPHINE  
                          Antoinette! Why you bother your  
                          brother? You know he cannot play  
                          with you.

                          YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
                          Will you play with me,  
                          Christophine?

                          CHRISTOPHINE  
                          Your mother needs me. Go outside  
                          and play with the negro girls.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Young Antoinette walks through tall, leafy grass in the harsh sun. She is accompanied by TIA, a black servant girl, 9, creole accent, dressed in a dirty smock with no shoes on.

EXT. BATHING POOL - DAY

Young Antoinette and Tia come up on a clear, green, bathing pool. The girls simultaneously pull off their dresses.

Tia jumps in. Antoinette kicks off her shoes then jumps in. They swim around for a while. Antoinette eventually tires and swims to a rock to cling to.

TIA  
(teasing)  
Ha, I forgot white nigga  
can't swim.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
I can swim!

TIA  
From what I see it don't seem  
so. Turn a flip under the water.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
What does that prove?

TIA  
Prove you can.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
Bet you all the money I can.

TIA  
What money? I hear you all poor  
like beggar. Old time white people  
nothing but white nigga now.

Young Antoinette takes a deep breath and pops her head under water.

EXT. UNDER SURFACE OF POOL - DAY

Young Antoinette swims down a bit, eyes wide, then attempts to tuck her body to turn a flip. She begins to twist and stir in jerking movements, not making the full rotation. She starts back up to the surface.

EXT. BATHING POOL - DAY

Young Antoinette breaks the surface and takes in a huge gulp of air. She coughs up water uncontrollably. Her eyes are closed as she moves to the side to cling onto a rock.

When she gathers herself, she looks around to find herself alone. Some tall grass stirs and Tia's footsteps patter off into the distance.

Young Antoinette swims to the area where they left their dresses. Only her shoes remain by the pool. Tears begin to fall down her cheeks. She wipes at them and tries to hold it together.

YOUNG SANDI, a handsome, half black 14-year-old appears. He dresses better than the other black people, wearing shoes and clean clothes. He has a light creole accent.

Young Antoinette gasps and plunges underwater when he appears. He waits and watches her air bubbles reach the surface. When she pops back up for air, Sandi laughs lightly at her. Young Antoinette glares at him for several moments until he gives in and turns his back.

YOUNG SANDI

I will not look at you.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

Keep your head turned the other direction.

YOUNG SANDI

You have my word.

(hesitates)

Do you need my shirt, miss?

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

Take it off and leave it by the edge. Then leave and do not look back.

Young Sandi, smiling, removes his shirt. He is strong. Without looking, he holds it out behind him and takes a few steps backward before plopping it by the pool's edge.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

Now go.

Still smiling, Young Sandi disappears into the tall grass. Young Antoinette looks after him suspiciously.

EXT. COULIBRI - PORCH - DAY

Young Antoinette observes a horse-drawn carriage as she takes the steps up her porch. She is dressed in Sandi's shirt, which reaches her knees.

She follows the porch around to the back-facing side, where she sees her mother, clean and elegantly dressed, with MR. MASON, a forty-something gentleman in fancy English clothing. He notices Antoinette before Annette.

MR. MASON

Well, well, who is this little  
darling in disguise?

ANNETTE

(angrily)

Antoinette! What have you done  
with your dress? Christophine!  
Christophine!

Christophine enters from inside the house. She sees  
Young Antoinette and immediately goes to her.

CHRISTOPHINE

Antoinette, what have you done  
with your pretty dress? Come  
inside.

ANNETTE

Bring her back out when you  
have her dressed properly.

Young Antoinette follows Christophine inside the house with  
her head down.

INT. COULIBRI - ANTOINETTE'S ROOM - DAY

Among a single, small bed, a nice dresser and chairs,  
Christophine scrubs Antoinette's face and undresses her. A  
thin curtain covers an opening to the porch outside.  
Offscreen, they can hear Annette and Mr. Mason laughing  
flirtatiously.

CHRISTOPHINE

I know this ain't no fault by  
you, Antoinette. That man out  
there, he come from across the sea,  
and he bring bad with him.  
Trouble walk into the house this  
day. Trouble walk in.

INT. COULIBRI - ANTOINETTE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Young Antoinette stirs in her sleep.

BEGIN DREAM:

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

Young Antoinette walks through the thick jungle under the dim light of the moon. She navigates the terrain through her perspective but is never seen.

Footsteps and movement approach her from behind. She looks around but sees no one. She continues faster but gets tangled in some vines. The footsteps increase in speed and volume until they are almost upon her.

END DREAM.

INT. COULIBRI - ANTOINETTE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Young Antoinette awakes with a large gasp. She continues panting, looking around and re-centering herself. Her mother sits beside her, not consoling her but simply observing.

ANNETTE

Did you have a nightmare?

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

Yes.

Annette sighs and tucks Antoinette in.

ANNETTE

You were making such a noise. I must go to Pierre, you have frightened him.

Annette leaves. Antoinette looks around her room, then out of her window at the large moon. She calms down and drifts back to sleep.

INT. COULIBRI - DAY

Young Antoinette spies her mother and Mr. Mason outside her window. They are arriving back from a horse ride. They are lively and laughing.

Mr. Mason gets off his horse and catches Annette as she comes down from hers. They remain in an embrace, about to kiss. Antoinette looks away. She spots a beetle on the floor and allows it to crawl onto her finger.

## INT. JAMAICAN CHAPEL - DAY

Young Antoinette is dressed in a fancy white dress, holding a bouquet of flowers. She, Mr. Mason, and a PRIEST, white, stand in front of pews of elegant white guests in a small chapel.

The guests rise as Annette, dressed in a beautiful bridal gown, enters the chapel. Young Antoinette looks at the ground in front of her rather than at her mother.

## EXT. COULIBRI - GARDEN - DAY

Young Antoinette hides under a covering of plants. She is still dressed in wedding attire. She pokes at the earth with a stick.

WEDDING GUESTS walk around the garden mingling. Antoinette overhears a conversation between two women with English accents.

## WEDDING GUEST 1

A fantastic marriage, and he will regret it. Why should a very wealthy man, who could take his pick of all the girls in the West Indies, and many in England too, probably--

## WEDDING GUEST 2

Probably? Certainly--

## WEDDING GUEST 1

Then why should he marry a widow without a penny to her name and her estate a wreck of a place?

## WEDDING GUEST 2

Emancipation troubles killed old Cosway? Nonsense, the estate was going downhill before he drank himself to death.

## WEDDING GUEST 1

And all those women? He had more bastard children to pay off than legitimate offspring.

## WEDDING GUEST 2

I would not go so far as to call them legitimate; The boy an idiot kept out of sight, and the girl--

WEDDING GUEST 1  
Beautiful as her mother--

WEDDING GUEST 2  
And going in the same direction, in  
my opinion.

WEDDING GUEST 1  
But what a dancer.

WEDDING GUEST 2  
Dance! Mr. Mason didn't come to  
the West Indies to dance, he came  
to make money, as they all do.

INT. COULIBRI - NIGHT

Young Antoinette watches pensively from an open window as her mother and new stepfather dance on the verandah. No music plays, but they move together passionately against the backdrop of a starry night.

INT. COULIBRI - ANTOINETTE'S ROOM - DAY

Young Antoinette lies flat on her stomach, drawing a childish picture of a shirtless black boy. She wears a dirty dress. Christophine appears at her doorway.

CHRISTOPHINE  
Antoinette, your mother and  
Mr. Mason return from honeymoon  
today. Put on your nice clothes.

INT. COULIBRI - DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Young Antoinette, Annette, and Mr. Mason eat dinner by candlelight. A servant, TIA'S MOTHER, stands in the corner. Annette's parrot, Coco, is perched on her shoulder. She feeds it some rice.

ANNETTE  
(to Coco)  
Did you miss me dearly, Coco?

Young Antoinette pokes peas around on her plate with her fork and does not eat. Mr. Mason notices.

MR. MASON  
(to Antoinette)  
You know, my son has the  
opposite problem. He is in Barbados  
and cannot get accustomed to  
the primitive food there. He  
(cont'd)

MR. MASON (cont'd)  
misses England. You would like  
Richard.

Antoinette keeps her head down, observing her plate.

MR. MASON  
(to Annette)  
What have you fed her all  
these years? Is she not acquainted  
with proper English customs?

ANNETTE  
We were so poor then, after  
the emancipation. The slaves left.

MR. MASON  
(gesturing to Tia's mother)  
Some seem to have remained.

ANNETTE  
Those who remained became  
servants, but they were never the  
same. They hate us. They laugh at  
us. If they did not fear  
Christophine they might hurt us.

MR. MASON  
They're too damn lazy to be  
dangerous.

Tia's Mother watches hatefully in the corner of the dining  
room. Mr. Mason doesn't notice the tension.

MR. MASON  
The only decent thing around  
here not imported from England is  
the rum. I shall have me some.

He turns to Tia's Mother and holds out his glass. She  
suppresses her anger, picks up a decanter of rum, and begins  
to pour. All the while, Mr. Mason watches her smugly.

INT. COULIBRI - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

The windows are open to let fresh air in. The room is bright  
and full of plants and decorated fabrics. Mr. Mason opens  
Coco's cage with clippers in his hands. Young Antoinette  
watches.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
Won't Mama mind?

MR. MASON

The only thing your Mama should mind is if the parrot were to fly away and never come back.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

But why would Coco ever wish to leave Coulibri? It is the finest place in the world.

Mr. Mason clips one wing, causing Coco to flap inside of its cage in a panic. Antoinette watches with concern.

MR. MASON

You have not seen very much of this world, darling girl.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

Then why should you have chosen to come here?

Mr. Mason looks annoyed. He clips Coco's second wing. The bird flutters more anxiously in its cage.

MR. MASON

A number of prospects call me away from home.

INT. COULIBRI - PIERRE'S BEDROOM - NIGHT

Young Antoinette enters silently. She kneels by Pierre's bed and folds her arms over the edge. She watches him intently.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

(whispering)

Pierre!

(beat)

Pierre, Mr. Mason has married Mama. He has promised to take you across a wide sea, to England. He says there you will be cured and made exactly like other people.

(beat)

Pierre. How will you like being made exactly like other people?

She stares at his still, sleeping body a moment longer before leaving.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Young Antoinette walks through tall grass. She hums a melody to herself and seems content. She steps over some logs and turns a corner in the divide of the brush.

There, Young Antoinette sees her mother's white horse lying dead. Its neck has been slashed and flies buzz around it. Antoinette gasps, wide-eyed.

INT. COULIBRI - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Annette wails as Mr. Mason tries to calm her down.

ANNETTE

I told you! I told you weeks ago! But you did not listen!

MR. MASON

Annette, my dear, do be calm.

Annette picks up a vase from a side table and crashes it against the wall behind Mr. Mason's head. He looks at her appalled.

ANNETTE

I will not stay at Coulibri any longer. It is not safe. It is not safe for Pierre.

MR. MASON

(heatedly)

And where are we to go?

ANNETTE

Look what they did to my horse! Look what they did!

Christophine enters slowly, humming a mournful tune. She approaches Annette and wraps a shawl around her to calm her. Annette collapses into Christophine's arms and lets herself be led away.

Mr. Mason looks after them, perplexed and troubled.

INT. COULIBRI - ANTOINETTE'S ROOM - NIGHT

Young Antoinette wakes in the night. A rustling comes from outside. It becomes quiet. She watches the moon outside of her window.

After some time, she notices that the land outside is glowing brighter, a glow from a fire. A noise of cracking wood and roaring flames reaches her ears.

She walks slowly to her window, afraid, and sees male figures sneaking around Coulibri, throwing torches onto the house. Panicked, Antoinette runs to the hallway.

INT. COULIBRI - HALLWAY - NIGHT

Young Antoinette sees smoke seeping in from different areas and hears muffled flames roaring. Annette comes sprinting down the hallway.

ANNETTE  
(screaming)  
Pierre! Pierre!

Annette opens the door to Pierre's room and smoke comes barreling out. She enters without hesitation. Mr. Mason, putting on a shirt, comes running after her. Antoinette watches, petrified. Mr. Mason screams into the room.

MR. MASON  
Annette!

Annette screams morbidly from inside. She exits, holding Pierre, limp in her arms. Annette is coughing and wailing uncontrollably. She lies him on the ground and clings to his neck. Mr. Mason, coughing, checks Pierre for signs of life.

MR. MASON  
Annette, we must go! We must go!

ANNETTE  
(howling)  
No!

Christophine rushes in and picks up Young Antoinette.

CHRISTOPHINE  
(to Annette)  
Come, Miss, we must go!

The house begins to fill more heavily with smoke and flames as Christophine carries Young Antoinette out.

EXT. COULIBRI YARD - NIGHT

Christophine lets Young Antoinette down in the yard. It is eerily empty of perpetrators, though some servants are visible watching from the windows of their huts, and other people lurk in shadows.

CHRISTOPHINE  
Mannie! Sass! Come prepare the carriage!

Christophine leaves Young Antoinette outside and re-enters the house. Antoinette heaves deep breaths, watching Coulibri catch fire. She hears more wailing inside.

Moments later, Christophine exits with Pierre's dead body in her arms. She is followed by Mr. Mason. He carries Annette over his shoulder. She twists her body in resistance, scratching at him and screaming.

ANNETTE

Leave me! Let me go!

Young Antoinette turns around and covers her face with her hands. When she pulls them away she finds Tia and Tia's mother watching her from the shadows. They glare at Young Antoinette.

She runs up to Tia breathlessly. Coulibri casts a glow over the landscape. Tia picks up a jagged rock. Young Antoinette glances at it a moment before it is thrown at her. The rock strikes Young Antoinette on the forehead and immediately draws blood.

Annette's cries continue from behind. Antoinette blinks, dumbfounded at what has happened. Tia begins to cry. They stare at each other while blood drips down Young Antoinette's face and tears from Tia's.

CHRISTOPHINE

Come, Antoinette!

Antoinette convulses in panicked, tearless sobs as a black servant, MANNIE, grabs her and puts her in the carriage alongside Mr. Mason, Christophine, Annette with Pierre's dead body in her arms, and SASS, another black servant driving the carriage.

As the carriage pulls away, Antoinette's attention is drawn to Coco's distressed screeching. She looks to Coulibri to see the parrot trying to flee from the top window.

The parrot's clipped wings are ignited in flames as it falls to the ground. Young Antoinette watches, bloodied, numb, and hypnotized by the scene before her.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

The carriage arrives at the Lutrells' house, a stately, English-style manor.

INT. CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Young Antoinette appears petrified and still bloody as she is pulled out of the carriage.

INT. LUTRELLS' HOUSE - NIGHT

Several servants and MR. LUTRELL and MRS. LUTRELL rush around. The Lutrells' are an older white couple from England. Mrs. Lutrell wipes the blood from Antoinette.

INT. LUTRELL'S HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Young Antoinette awakes, clean in bed. She hears her mother's screams outside the door.

ANNETTE

Don't touch me. I'll kill you if  
you touch me. Coward. Hypocrite.  
I'll kill you!

Young Antoinette covers her ears and shuts her eyes.

EXT. LUTRELLS' HOUSE - PORCH - DAY

Young Antoinette stands next to Mr. Mason. They both watch solemnly as her mother, silent and disheveled, is escorted by two male DOCTORS in white uniforms. They put her in a carriage.

Mr. Mason puts his hand on Young Antoinette's shoulder. She pulls away and runs into the house.

EXT. CONVENT YARD - DAY

A wide, one story building with a few small windows and an open space in front. A view of the ocean.

A NUN takes Young Antoinette's hand and leads her inside. Mr. Mason watches until the front doors are closed behind the.

INT. CONVENT - NIGHT

Antoinette awakes in her small, single bed. It sits in rows among several like it with other girls asleep inside. Moonlight shines in.

Antoinette hears a noise. She turns to find a large rat staring at her from the floor near the foot of her bed. She gasps and hides under her covers.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Antoinette walks through tall grass, brushing her hands along it as she walks. She comes to a rundown, white building with doctors and nurses roaming around outside of it.

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Young Antoinette is let into an empty room. The floors are dirty. Annette sits in a single chair by a small bed, her face bent low and out of view. When she looks up at Antoinette, she is hardly recognizable. She has swollen eyes and a pale face. Her hair is unkempt.

Young Antoinette walks to her mother, puts her arms around her, and kisses her. Annette squeezes her back tightly. She looks to the door, then back to Antoinette. Antoinette shakes her head.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE

But I am here. I am here.

ANNETTE

No.

(louder)

No, no, no!

She pushes Young Antoinette away from her. Two black NURSES enter and hold Annette's arms down as she struggles. Antoinette stares at her mother in shock.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Young Antoinette walks back to the convent. Along the way, a strongly statured black girl in her teens, GIRL BULLY, and a small, black boy, BOY BULLY begin following her. They have strong creole accents.

Young Antoinette looks behind her nervously and begins picking up pace. They match her pace and begin hissing comments and laughing at her.

GIRL BULLY

Look, crazy girl. You crazy like your mother.

BOY BULLY

White nigga. White cockroach.

GIRL BULLY

Why you no look at me?

The girl catches up to Young Antoinette and pushes her to the ground. Antoinette falls and immediately covers her head with her arms, bundled up on the ground.

A moment has passed, and nothing more has happened. Young Antoinette peeks out to see what is going on. The boy and girl are gone, but Young Sandi stands there. He offers her his hand. She takes it, and he lifts her up.

YOUNG SANDI  
I'll talk to those kids. They  
won't bother you again.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
Thank you.

YOUNG SANDI  
Can I walk with you?

Young Antoinette nods and they begin walking together.

EXT. CONVENT LAWN - DAY

Young Sandi and Young Antoinette come up on the convent and stop walking. They turn to each other.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
What is your name?

YOUNG SANDI  
I am Sandi.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
I am Antoinette.

YOUNG SANDI  
I know.

YOUNG ANTOINETTE  
Why are they afraid of you?

YOUNG SANDI  
I have white blood. They are afraid  
of you too. That is why they are  
mean. You have to be mean back.

He smiles. Young Antoinette smiles back. He nods, then walks away. Young Antoinette looks after him, then out to the view of the vast Jamaican landscape before her.

EXT. CONVENT LAWN - DAY

Among the same beautiful landscape, a grown Antoinette, early 20s, comes running out of the convent. She beautifully resembles her mother. She wears a modest, convent dress.

A grown SANDI, 20s, waits. He is strong and handsome, wearing brown pants and a loose white shirt. When Antoinette reaches Sandi, the two flee the front lawn of the convent hand-in-hand.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

In a thick area of the forest, loud with insects, Antoinette and Sandi redress. Sandi tucks his shirt into his pants. Antoinette pulls her dress over her legs.

Sandi sits against a large tree trunk. He looks up to Antoinette with admiration and holds his hand out. She smiles and takes it, letting him pull her down. She lays her head against his chest as he strokes her hair.

ANTOINETTE

I must go soon.

SANDI

You will leave me to go back to that place? Stay with me.

ANTOINETTE

Stay with you and live where? Sleep where?

SANDI

Here.

Antoinette lifts her head off of his chest to look at him.

ANTOINETTE

Here?

SANDI

Sleep here. Eat here. I will build a house around you, right here.

(laughs)

And we will have the biggest, most beautiful garden in the world.

Antoinette smiles, imagining it for a moment.

ANTOINETTE

And then white people will come  
and plow through our garden and  
find us and kill you.

SANDI

Why do you have to say that,  
huh? This is a happy moment.

ANTOINETTE

(solemnly)  
It will pass.

SANDI

Then let it pass later.

Antoinette smiles at Sandi then lays her head back on  
his chest.

INT. CONVENT - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Antoinette goes about sweeping the front room of the  
convent. She sees a carriage arrive through a window and  
looks on curiously. Mr. Mason, aged, steps out of the  
carriage, and Antoinette gasps. She leans her back against  
the wall by the window and peers out discreetly.

A NUN goes outside to greet Mr. Mason. Antoinette watches as  
Mr. Mason says something to the nun, who reacts by sinking  
her head low and nodding.

INT. CONVENT - FRONT ROOM - DAY

Antoinette awaits Mr. Mason in a chair. Her back sits  
straight, and she picks at her nails. Mr. Mason enters and  
walks to her briskly. Antoinette stands and holds out her  
hand. He reaches for it and kisses it.

MR. MASON

Dear Antoinette. How long it has  
been! And you are lovelier than  
ever.

He holds her at an arm's length and surveys her.

MR. MASON

You are taller than I thought.

ANTOINETTE

It has been years.

MR. MASON

It has, and I apologize for that. Business in Barbados has taken all of my time. I hope you have been receiving my presents?

ANTOINETTE

I cannot wear all the things you buy for me.

MR. MASON

Well. You can wear whatever you like when you come to live with me.

ANTOINETTE

(doubtfully)

To Trinidad?

MR. MASON

Of course not. Here, with me. And my son Richard. Just for the time being.

(beat)

Antoinette, I am afraid I come with some bad news. Do sit down.

They take seats across one another. Antoinette waits as Mr. Mason hesitates to get out his next sentence.

MR. MASON

Your mother... Annette is dead, Antoinette. She died two days ago. I am come to settle some matters.

Antoinette does not move or say anything for a long time. She looks at the floor.

MR. MASON (CONT'D)

I am sorry, dear.

Antoinette blinks, snapping back into it.

ANTOINETTE

Where will I go?

MR. MASON

Of course, I want you to be happy, Antoinette, secure. I have tried to arrange...well, we will have time to discuss all of that later. What is important is that we have plenty of time. I have asked some English friends to spend the winter here.

ANTOINETTE  
Guests are to come?

MR. MASON  
At least one is. Of that I  
am certain.

INT. CONVENT - NIGHT

Antoinette lies awake in her small bed, other girls are sleeping around her. She stares solemnly at the moonlight outside.

In her sleep, she stirs due to a bad dream.

BEGIN DREAM:

EXT. COULIBRI - NIGHT

Antoinette is led by the hand by a man with an unseen face. His figure is obscure and his face never seen. Antoinette wears a beautiful, white gown. She holds up the bottom from the ground to keep it from dirtying.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - NIGHT

They enter a forest and Antoinette begins to show signs of fear- breathing hard and stirring, but she doesn't resist his lead. Her dress now drags in the dirt.

INT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - NIGHT

Tall oaks and sparse vegetation replace the Jamaican jungle. Antoinette looks around at the landscape, panicked at the unfamiliar vegetation.

The weather gets increasingly windy and Antoinette begins hyperventilating. The scenery washes out.

END DREAM.

INT. CONVENT - DAY

Antoinette wakes in a panic, breathing heavily. She looks around her and eventually calms down. She looks out the window at the early morning sky.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Antoinette climbs under and over thick vegetation. She comes to a peak overlooking cliffs and ocean. She breaths in deeply, taking in the day.

INT. LUTRELL'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Antoinette is dressed fancily in an English-style gown with her hair pulled back in a fashionable do. She sits down for tea with Mr. Mason and Richard Mason, 20's.

Antoinette looks around curiously. The room is decorated extravagantly with English furniture and artwork. Outside is the familiar Jamaican landscape. She sips at her tea.

MR. MASON

I know you two have not seen each other since you were young. A shame. You will get along splendidly, step-siblings or not.

They look at one another momentarily, seeming shy. The sound of hooves approaches from outside.

MR. MASON

Ah, I believe our guest has arrived.

Moments later, a SERVANT 1, black, 20s, creole accent, opens the door to the room and introduces the guest.

SERVANT 1

Mr. Rochester has arrived.

The three stand. Rochester steps into the room. He is in his mid-twenties. He enters the room and is immediately greeted with a warm handshake from Mr. Mason and Richard Mason.

MR. MASON

How do you do, Edward? What a man you have become.

RICHARD MASON

Rochester, good to see you again.

ROCHESTER

Good to see you, gentlemen.

MR. MASON

Rochester, I would like to introduce to you my stepdaughter.

(cont'd)

MR. MASON (cont'd)  
 This is Ms. Antoinetta Berthoud  
 Mason.

The men part to introduce Antoinette, who curtsies to Rochester. He takes in her beauty, hesitating a moment before approaching her and taking her hand.

ROCHESTER  
 A pleasure to meet you, Miss.

Antoinette smiles bashfully. He bows, kissing her hand, then steps away.

MR. MASON  
 I am sure you have had a long  
 and exhausting journey. Have a  
 seat. What will you drink?

ROCHESTER  
 Scotch, please.

He confidently meets eyes with Antoinette, who has been studying him. They look intrigued with one another.

EXT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Antoinette is dressed extravagantly in an expensive gown as she exits a carriage. She is escorted by Mr. Mason. They walk towards a stately home among other carriages and fashionable expatriates arriving.

MR. MASON  
 It is Mr. Rochester you should  
 find yourself around tonight. He is  
 a highly sought after man, in  
 England and here, and he has his  
 eye on you, Antoinette.

Antoinette looks around in awe.

MR. MASON (CONT'D)  
 Oh, and Antoinette, perhaps it  
 would be best if we did not go into  
 the subject of your mother.

Antoinette looks surprised at the statement.

## INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

They enter the brilliantly lit room, filled with guests dancing and mingling. String music plays.

Rochester immediately spots Antoinette from across the room. Several others also look on, some whispering and raising their eyebrows. Mr. Mason becomes distracted with a friend. Antoinette looks around and stands to herself. PARTY GUEST 1 and PARTY GUEST 2, two females of their 30s, British accents.

PARTY GUEST 1

Look who has made it out of the convent.

PARTY GUEST 2

She certainly takes after her mother.

PARTY GUEST 1

In more ways than one, probably.

Rochester makes his way over to Antoinette. He bows then takes her hand.

ROCHESTER

May I have the next dance?

ANTOINETTE

Certainly.

When the next song is beginning, the men and women participating in the dance stand in lines opposite one another. Rochester and Antoinette move towards each other on cue. They move elegantly among other dancers, maintaining intense eye contact.

## EXT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Antoinette and Rochester look out at the starry night from a grand balcony adjacent to the ballroom.

ROCHESTER

You are a lovely dancer. Do you come to these often?

ANTOINETTE

Never.

ROCHESTER

Never? Then this is your first?

ANTOINETTE

It is. Mr. Mason took up business in Barbados, and I spent the last several years in a convent school.

ROCHESTER

Where was your mother to look after you?

Antoinette looks down, hiding her lie.

ANTOINETTE

She died. Some time ago now.

ROCHESTER

Well, I cannot imagine how strong that must have made you. A rarity. There are no ladies like you in England.

Antoinette smiles, flattered.

INT. LUTRELL'S HOUSE - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Mr. Mason sits in a chair smoking a pipe. Antoinette enters.

ANTOINETTE

You asked for me.

MR. MASON

Do sit down, dear.

Antoinette walks across the room and takes a seat.

MR. MASON (CONT'D)

What are your feelings towards Edward?

ANTOINETTE

He is rather kind, I suppose.

MR. MASON

(repeats her mockingly)  
Oh he is rather kind I suppose.

Mr. Mason takes a puff of his pipe and studies Antoinette. She looks at the floor uncomfortably.

MR. MASON

My health is declining, Antoinette. I do not have much more time. Now with your mother gone...you do understand that you will lose  
(cont'd)

MR. MASON (cont'd)  
 everything, don't you, dear? Your  
 mother's, your father's land. Is  
 that what you want?

Antoinette keeps her eye on the floor submissively. She  
 shakes her head.

MR. MASON (CONT'D)  
 Mr. Rochester is a fine man. Well  
 sought after. Enough love will  
 follow, my dear.

Antoinette looks up to him in worry.

EXT. BEACH - DAY

Antoinette and Rochester walk along the beach before  
 a beautiful sunset. The waves crash into the sand and rush  
 to their bare feet. They carry their shoes.

ANTOINETTE  
 What is England like?

ROCHESTER  
 Far from anything like this.

ANTOINETTE  
 How so?

ROCHESTER  
 Well, for one, we are never  
 caught without shoes on.

ANTOINETTE  
 (laughing)  
 Then you have never felt the  
 sand between your toes?

ROCHESTER  
 I have rarely seen the sand.

ANTOINETTE  
 Why would anyone want to live  
 in England!

ROCHESTER  
 Maybe I will show you  
 England someday and you will  
 understand.

Antoinette looks at Rochester, then smiles and looks away  
 into the sunset, cast out over the ocean. Rochester watches  
 her and hesitates to speak.

ROCHESTER

Antoinette, I know we have known one another only a few weeks, but...Well, how do I say this...I came here not expecting to have found such delight. And I have a notion that this delight comes not from the nature of this island, but from the presence of you on it. If you were to leave here I should despise this place, and if I were to leave here without you I should never find such joy elsewhere.

Antoinette looks concerned.

ANTOINETTE

But I will never leave this place. This is my home. It will always be my home.

ROCHESTER

Then, perhaps, if it is to your liking, you shall find me here also. With you.

ANTOINETTE

What are you saying?

ROCHESTER

Will you marry me, Antoinette?

Antoinette looks at him. Her brow is furrowed, but soon loosens and she has a slight smile. She nods.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)

Yes?

She smiles more largely and nods bigger. Rochester exhales in relief and smiles. He holds her head in his hands and brings her in for a hug. The waves crash behind them.

INT. LUTRELLS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Antoinette brushes her hair, looking in the mirror pensively. The room is decorated in English furniture-white, lace curtains and bedding.

A tap sounds at her window. She looks out to see Sandi standing outside below, a few feet below the window. He stares up at her with a grave expression on his face. Antoinette turns away and shudders. He speaks to her through the window.

SANDI

Antoinette, you cannot ignore me.

She hesitates before turning back and opening the window.  
He jumps and hoists himself into the room.

ANTOINETTE

(whispering urgently)

You must not make too much sound.

SANDI

(harshly)

What are you doing? What are  
you doing, Antoinette? Who is this  
man I hear of?

Antoinette cannot meet Sandi's eyes.

SANDI (CONT'D)

This is a bad decision, Antoinette.  
I know you. We know these people.  
They are always coming here to take  
something. Do you think he will not  
take you too?

ANTOINETTE

(angrily)

What am I to do, Sandi? Where am I  
to go? Mr. Mason has no further tie  
to me. You know the circumstances,  
why must you do this? Do you wish  
it were you I was marrying? Is that  
what you want? What do you want,  
Sandi?

SANDI

To live with me! To be with me!

ANTOINETTE

You are a negro, Sandi! We can  
never be together. They would never  
allow it! So what should I do?

Antoinette begins to cry.

SANDI

(desperately)

I beg you, Antoinette. I beg you.  
Do not marry this man. It is a  
grave mistake.

Sandi moves closer to Antoinette and pulls her head to his chest, comforting her. They begin to kiss passionately until they hear the sound of someone's footsteps passing along outside the door. Antoinette pushes Sandi from her.

ANTOINETTE  
(whispering)

Go!

Sandi looks painfully hurt. He searches Antoinette for something to move her.

ANTOINETTE (CONT'D)  
I have heard what you have to say,  
now go!

Sandi takes slow steps backward, maintaining severe eye contact with Antoinette, then turns and shakes his head before jumping out of the window and storming off. Antoinette leans back on her bed and begins to sob.

INT. LUTRELLS' HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Antoinette sits on a sofa in a fancy wedding gown. Richard Mason sits in a wooden chair that he has pulled up directly across from her. Mrs. Lutrell, aged, stands by the closed door with a WEDDING GUEST, female.

Richard Mason hesitates to speak and carries a frustrated, pleading expression. Mrs. Lutrell whispers anxiously to the Wedding Guest.

MRS. LUTRELL  
It must just be nerves. Certainly  
only nerves.

Richard Mason stands and abruptly leaves the room, slamming the door behind him. The room is silent for a moment before his muffled voice reaches them from outside, speaking urgently with Rochester. Antoinette rubs her forehead, thinking deeply while they speak.

RICHARD MASON (O.S)  
She won't go through with it.

ROCHESTER (O.S.)  
She won't go through with it?

RICHARD MASON (O.S)  
She won't marry you.

ROCHESTER (O.S.)  
What? But why?

RICHARD MASON (O.S.)  
She won't give a reason. I've  
been arguing with the little fool  
for an hour.

There is a pause; Antoinette looks to the women, who huddle around the door with their ears pressed to it.

ROCHESTER (O.S.)  
If she won't, she won't. She  
cannot be dragged to the altar. Let  
me hear what she has to say.

Rochester opens the door to the room. Mrs. Lutrell and the Wedding Guest jump back. He speaks sternly to them.

ROCHESTER  
Some privacy, please.

The women scurry out, peeking behind them before closing the door. Rochester stands over Antoinette, who does not meet his eyes at first. He breaths in and out calmly.

ROCHESTER  
What is the matter, Antoinette? What  
have I done? You don't wish to  
marry me?

ANTOINETTE  
No.

ROCHESTER  
But why?

ANTOINETTE  
I am afraid of what may happen.

ROCHESTER  
But don't you remember what I told  
you? I told you that when you are  
my wife there will be no more  
reason to be afraid.

Antoinette looks up at Rochester with serious eyes.

ANTOINETTE  
You don't know anything about me.

He sits next to her on the sofa's edge.

ROCHESTER

I'll trust you if you trust me.  
Is that a bargain? You will make  
me very unhappy if you send me  
away. I will go with a sad heart. I  
will be incomplete without you.

Antoinette compassionately touches Rochester's face.  
He leans in and kisses her fervently. When he pulls  
away Antoinette looks down again, not meeting his eyes.

ROCHESTER

Can I tell poor Richard that it  
was a mistake? That all will go on  
as planned?

Antoinette does not speak a reply, she only nods. Rochester  
stands, straightens his jacket, and exhales a short breath.

ROCHESTER

Very good. I am glad to hear that.

He carries a smug expression, as though he has  
defeated something, as he walks to the door. He opens the  
door and passes through the door frame.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DAY

Rochester, 40s, walks out of a doorway. He is dressed in  
nice wedding garments.

SUPER: 12 years later.

He ascends the grand staircase stoically. At the landing, he  
passes the portraits of men from his family line  
dating years back.

He reaches Jane's door and knocks. When there is no  
immediate answer he checks his pocket watch in irritation.

ROCHESTER

Jane! You tarry so long.

Mrs. Fairfax abruptly opens the door and steps out of  
the room, closing it behind her without allowing Rochester  
a glimpse inside. She whispers face-to-face with  
Rochester, guarding the door.

MRS. FAIRFAX

The girl is not well.

ROCHESTER

What is it? Not nerves I hope.

MRS. FAIRFAX

It is nerves, sir, but not from the wedding.

ROCHESTER

Whatever from then?

Mrs. Fairfax pauses, then gives Rochester an apprehensive look.

MRS. FAIRFAX

It seems she is under the impression that someone, something, visited her room in her sleep.

The two share a knowing, fearful look, then Rochester moves past Mrs. Fairfax and enters the room.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane is startled when Rochester enters. She sits on the edge of her bed in a beautiful wedding dress, wiping tears from her eyes with a handkerchief.

ROCHESTER

Jane, my dear, what troubles you?

He sits next to her, looking worried, and wipes the tears from her cheeks with his hands.

JANE

Oh, what a child I am.

She composes herself but stutters as she speaks.

JANE (CONT'D)

It is just, the veil you gifted me, I cannot quite say what has happened. But, sir, it seems that, by some unknown cause, it has been torn. It is destroyed.

ROCHESTER

Do not be upset, Jane! It is but a garment. Nothing for the price of my bride.

JANE

But, sir, it is not so much that the veil has been ruined, but how it was done.

ROCHESTER

Why, Jane? Was it by the hand of someone? Did someone enter your room?

JANE

No, sir, it was not someone, but some... I had a dream in the night, or, what I thought was a dream. I sensed something in my presence, a strange consciousness of some barrier dividing you and I. I never saw it but I felt it. And when I awoke, I found my veil was torn, as it is now, and I became insensible from terror. It seemed to solidify my dream.

Rochester looks noticeably relieved. He pulls Jane to his chest.

ROCHESTER

Now Jane. It is a frightful dream you had. And a strange thing the veil should be ruined. But can you relate the two occurrences? It seems the creation of a girl's overstimulated brain the night before her wedding.

Jane contemplates this thought, now calmed and relaxed against Rochester's chest.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)

I shall inquire about the veil. It has sat around for days and could have been tampered by anyone of the servants. But for now, we must reach the chapel and be married. The priest will be waiting.

Jane nods her head against his chest. Rochester pulls her head away and holds it in his hands. They look into each other's eyes for several moments, then he kisses her forehead and walks out hastily.

Jane looks contemplative for a moment. Her brow is furrowed in anxiety but she breathes deeply and continues readying herself for the ceremony.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DAY

Jane exits her room and is immediately grabbed by the hand by Rochester. They walk briskly through the house. Rochester is in an obvious hurry. Jane looks to him anxiously, trying to keep up.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

As they exit the house, a crowd consisting of Adele, Mrs. Fairfax, Sophie, and John are dressed nicely and awaiting them. A carriage is ready and decorated in flowers for after the ceremony.

ADELE

Belle, mademoiselle!

Rochester and Jane continue hurriedly through the front yard of Thornfield, hand-in-hand. They head towards the chapel a ways off on Rochester's land.

EXT. CHURCHYARD - DAY

They pass a small graveyard that sits beyond the chapel. Jane continues to be led by Rochester.

She looks behind her at Thornfield Hall in the distance. She notices two men coming towards them, but she cannot make them out and is so rushed by Rochester that she does not observe them for long.

INT. ENGLISH CHAPEL - DAY

Jane and Rochester stand face-to-face in the small chapel, empty of any guests. An old PRIEST performs the ceremony, speaking slowly in his British accent. Rochester appears impatient, barely noticing Jane. She looks inquisitively at him.

PRIEST

I inquire and charge you both,  
as ye will answer at the dreadful  
day of judgment, when the secrets  
of all our hearts shall be  
disclosed, that if either of you  
know any impediment why ye may not  
lawfully be joined together in  
matrimony, ye do now confess it.

He pauses. Rochester remains apprehensive, tapping his foot and biting his lip.

PRIEST

Then. Edward Fairfax Rochester,  
wilt thou have this woman for  
thy lawfully wedded wife?

The door at the back of the chapel opens and MR. BRIGGS,  
a well-dressed British man in his 60s, enters with Richard  
Mason, a decade older than last seen in Jamaica.

MR. BRIGGS

The marriage cannot go on.

Alarmed, Rochester and Jane look back at the men.

MR. BRIGGS

I declare the existence of an  
impediment.

Rochester looks back to the priest and demands him under his  
breath.

ROCHESTER

Proceed.

PRIEST

I cannot proceed without some  
examination into what has been  
asserted.

Rochester looks highly bothered as Jane searches him for  
an answer as to what is going on.

MR. BRIGGS

My name is Mr. Briggs, and this is  
Mr. Richard Mason, as Mr. Rochester  
well knows.

Richard Mason looks anxiously to Rochester.

MR. BRIGGS

The marriage cannot go on because  
it consists in the existence of  
a previous marriage. Mr. Rochester  
has a wife now living.

Jane looks at Rochester mortified. He stares at the  
floor avoiding eye contact with her.

PRIEST

Have you an account of the union?

MR. BRIGGS

Certainly.

Richard Mason sheepishly pulls a document from his pocket and hands it to Mr. Briggs, who unfolds it and reads it out loud to the others.

MR. BRIGGS

I affirm and can prove that on the 20th of October, 1840, Edward Fairfax Rochester of Thornfield Hall, was married to Antoinetta Berthoud Mason, stepdaughter of Mr. Jonas Mason, the second husband of Anette Cosway Mason, in Spanish Town, Jamaica. The record of that marriage can be found in the register of that church, and a copy of it is in my possession now.

The priest and Jane look appalled at Rochester, who rubs his eyes in disbelief.

ROCHESTER

(exasperated)

Good God.

PRIEST

Are you aware if this wife is still living?

RICHARD MASON

She is now living, and at Thornfield Hall, none the less. I saw her there last May. I am her step-brother.

PRIEST

At Thornfield Hall? Impossible! I have known Mr. Rochester for years and have never heard of a Mrs. Rochester.

The priest looks at Rochester desperately, searching for answers in his face. Rochester finally looks up from the ground and speaks cynically.

ROCHESTER

No, by God, you did not hear of her. I took care that none should. What this lawyer and his client say is true. I have been married,

(cont'd)

ROCHESTER (cont'd)

and the woman to whom I married  
lives.

(to the priest)

You say you never heard of a Mrs.  
Rochester at Thornfield, but I  
daresay you have many a time  
inclined your ear to gossip of the  
mysterious lunatic kept there under  
my watch and ward.

(to everyone)

I invite you all to come up to the  
house and visit this patient- my  
wife!

Rochester walks briskly down the aisle of the chapel and  
out of the front doors, trailing Jane by hand behind him,  
followed by Mr. Briggs, Richard Mason, and the priest.  
Jane is highly distressed.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

Rochester, Jane, and those from the chapel come up on those  
waiting back at Thornfield Hall. They are unaware of what  
has happened and celebrate them, clapping as they get  
closer.

ADELE

Hooray!

John opens the door to the carriage to let the couple  
in. Rochester barges past.

ROCHESTER

Take the carriage back to the  
coach-house, John. There will be no  
need for it today.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC STAIRS - DAY

Now joined by Mrs. Fairfax, the group from the chapel  
ascend the staircase to the attic. When they reach the door  
at the top, Rochester pulls a key from his jacket. As he  
unlocks the door he looks to Jane with concern.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC - DAY

Inside the attic, Rochester passes the table where  
Richard Mason was stitched and pulls back a tapestry  
covering a large wooden inner door.

The crowd moves behind him as he unlocks and opens it. Once  
open, Grace comes to the opening, surprised.

GRACE

Sir?

ROCHESTER

Only a few moments, Grace.

He steps into the room slowly. The others come to the opening and peer in.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Antoinette's room is painted yellow. It is small, with a single, small stove and a desk and rocking chair for Grace. The ceilings are angled with the roofing of the tower, and there is a single window, covered by a cloth, facing the front of the house.

Antoinette, 30s, wrinkled and pale, stands when Rochester enters. She wears a worn yellow dress and her hair is tangled. She sees the crowd join at the door, Jane at the front, and looks curiously at them. She approaches Rochester.

ROCHESTER

(calmly)

I present Antoinetta Berthoud  
Rochester.

Antoinette leans her head on Rochester's chest. He puts an arm around her. She looks deeply into Jane's eyes, not threatening but concerned. Jane returns the look.

Without notice, Antoinette lashes out at Rochester. She grabs his suit collar and yanks at him. Rochester resists her, and Grace rushes in to help. She grabs Antoinette at the waist and pulls her off.

By the time Rochester has turned to address the crowd, Jane is running out of the attic room.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC STAIRS - DAY

Jane hurries down, holding up her wedding gown. She pants in distress.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DAY

She scurries through the hallways towards her room.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane shuts the door and locks it. She undoes her dress desperately. She starts weeping as she pulls it off.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Antoinette sits on the edge of her small bed. She looks around the small space, now empty aside from Grace, who sits in her rocking chair across the room. She watches Antoinette with sadness.

Tears begin to stream down Antoinette's eyes. She eventually lies down in a ball on her bed and breaks into a sob.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane is changed into a usual dress from her wardrobe. She sniffles back tears as she hurriedly packs a parcel with her clothing. A knock sounds loudly at the door and she jumps.

ROCHESTER

Jane! Open the door, Jane!

Jane looks towards the door fearfully.

JANE

I will not.

ROCHESTER

I must see you.

JANE

I am afraid of you, sir.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DAY

Rochester hesitates outside of Jane's door.

ROCHESTER

What was I to do, Jane? Take you as my mistress? I wanted you as my *wife*. A wife who is not inclined to burn people in their beds at night, or to stab and bite them!

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - BEDROOM - DAY

Jane stands at a distance from the door. She gains a firm voice.

JANE

You speak of her with hate, it is  
cruel. She cannot help being mad!  
And the way she is kept...I too  
should lash out in such isolation.  
Never to feel the sun or breathe  
fresh air!

ROCHESTER

It is not because she is mad that I  
hate her. Will you hear my story?  
Will you open the door?

JANE

(coldly)

And what of her story?

Rochester groans in frustration from outside the door. He  
speaks at a heated, intimidating level.

ROCHESTER

You will go then, Jane?

JANE

Yes, sir. I am leaving.

ROCHESTER

(shouting)

And where will you go? You little  
thing? You Orphan?

He pounds the door with his fists.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)

WHERE WILL YOU GO?

Jane doesn't reply. She takes a seat calmly on her bed with  
an alertness to her. It grows silent outside.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Jane leaves her room slowly in the pitch blackness, wearing  
an overcoat and bonnet and carrying a parcel. She looks  
around frightfully as she walks softly down the hall. At the  
nursery door, she stops, kisses her hand, and touches it to  
the door.

JANE

(whispers)

I love you, Adele.

She continues silently down the hall in the darkness.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Jane runs. Her surroundings are almost completely black and there is little moonlight.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

Antoinette watches Jane flee from her window. She looks transfixed and an excitement grows in her eyes.

EXT. FOREST - NIGHT

Jane continues, now walking at a fast pace. She breathes deeply and her face is full of anguish. Sounds from the forest grab her attention and she looks about fearfully.

EXT. ENGLISH COUNTRYSIDE - DAWN

The first signs of light appear in the sky. The landscape is barren and Jane walks along a single road, her parcel weighing her arm down as she moves along. She hears hooves behind her and turns to see a carriage.

She breathes out in relief and begins the other direction to meet the carriage. It slows to a stop. An old COACHMAN with a stern face looks down at her.

JANE

Where do you go?

COACHMAN

North a long way, to Whitcross.

JANE

For what sum will you take me there?

COACHMAN

30 shillings.

JANE

I have but 20.

COACHMAN

I will try to make it do.

Jane opens the carriage door and hoists herself in.

INT. CARRIAGE - DAWN

As they ride away, she looks out to the sunrise and drifts asleep. The sound of hoof steps continue.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

The hoof steps of two horses sound.

SUPER: 12 years earlier.

It's cloudy and about to rain. Rochester and Antoinette, early 20s, ride horses over a dirt road. Antoinette looks back to Rochester and smiles happily.

A SERVANT 2, black, creole accent, walks alongside the horses with a wagon of luggage and belongings. He begins to veer off down a small dirt road. The horses follow.

SERVANT 2

This way to the honeymoon house.

ANTOINETTE

(to Rochester)

This is where my mother grew up.  
Isn't it beautiful?

Rochester looks at the thick jungle around him.

ROCHESTER

What an extreme green.

ANTOINETTE

(calling to him)

Put your coat on!

ROCHESTER

What?

Rain falls suddenly and heavily. Antoinette laughs and shrieks in joy. Servant 2 seeks shelter under the trees. Rochester puts his coat over his head and peeks out uncomfortably. He shouts over the rain.

ROCHESTER

Should we seek shelter?

She doesn't answer his question but looks to the sky happily, letting the rain soak her.

## EXT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - DAY

The rain drizzles more lightly as Rochester and Antoinette arrive on horseback. The house is tucked among overgrown plants and trees. It has a large wrap-around verandah with openings to rooms of the house. The house is old and has not been well-maintained.

Four servants wait outside, including Christophine. When Antoinette spots Christophine, she shrieks in joy and gets down from her horse. She sprints to Christophine and hugs her tightly, then takes her by the hand to where Rochester is dismounting his horse.

ANTOINETTE

Edward, this is Christophine. My childhood caretaker and friend.

Rochester looks startled at the closeness between the two women. Christophine returns the cold greeting, giving him a suspicious glare. Antoinette does not notice but turns and introduces the other servants (all are black): AMELIE, 18 and beautiful, BAPTISTE, an old, weathered man, and ROSE, 30s.

ANTOINETTE

This is Amelie, Baptiste, and Rose.

Rochester smiles uncomfortably at them.

ROCHESTER

A pleasure to meet you all.

Amelie smiles at him seductively, and Rochester looks away quickly.

ROCHESTER (CONT'D)

Shall we escape this rain?

## INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE DINING ROOM - NIGHT

Rochester sits at a large table set for dinner and lit by candlelight. Doors to the verandah are open. The door to the dining room opens and Antoinette enters. She wears a red dress. Rochester stands upon her entrance and takes in her appearance with desire.

ROCHESTER

Your dress is lovely.

Antoinette blushes at the flattery.

ANTOINETTE

Thank you. It is from St. Pierre in Martinique.

ROCHESTER

You talk of St. Pierre as though it were Paris.

ANTOINETTE

It is the Paris of the West Indies.

They sit to eat.

EXT. VERANDAH - NIGHT

Antoinette and Rochester drink rum on a cushioned sofa. An opening leads to their bedroom. Antoinette fills Rochester's glass from a decanter.

ANTOINETTE

Is it true that England is like a dream?

ROCHESTER

Well, that is precisely how your beautiful island seems to me: quite unreal and like a dream.

ANTOINETTE

But how can rivers and mountains and the sea be unreal?

ROCHESTER

How can millions of people, their houses, and streets be unreal?

ANTOINETTE

More easily, much more easily.

Antoinette takes the glass of rum from Rochester's hand. She sits it on the floor, keeping her eyes seductively on him. She stands and walks towards their bedroom. She pauses and looks back at Rochester before disappearing inside. Rochester sighs with desire before standing and following her.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Antoinette is watching Rochester when he wakes up. They lie in bed with nightgowns on. She smiles at him.

ANTOINETTE  
Come in, Christophine!

Christophine enters, annoyed, with a tray of coffee.

CHRISTOPHINE  
We wake early here.

ANTOINETTE  
(to Rochester)  
The mornings are the best time.

Rochester looks bothered. He takes his cup of coffee and takes a sip. He struggles to keep it down and looks into the cup.

CHRISTOPHINE  
Not horse piss like the English  
drink.

Christophine exits.

ROCHESTER  
Her language is horrible. And she  
doesn't hold her dress up when she  
walks.

ANTOINETTE  
You don't understand at all. They  
don't care about getting a dress  
dirty. It shows it isn't the only  
dress they have. Don't you like  
Christophine?

ROCHESTER  
She will take some getting used to.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Christophine plaits Antoinette's hair in front of her dressing table. Christophine pours oil into her hands.

ANTOINETTE  
Not the scent, he doesn't like the  
scent.

CHRISTOPHINE  
(scolding)  
Antoinette. Who care if he don't  
like the scent? Do you like the  
scent?

ANTOINETTE

There is too much new for him.

CHRISTOPHINE

He knew what he was getting into.

Christophine looks bothered as she wipes the oil off on her dress. She continues to plait Antoinette's hair. She is contemplative for a few moments.

CHRISTOPHINE (CONT'D)

Antoinette, I read his letters.

ANTOINETTE

Christophine!

CHRISTOPHINE

Oh bah! I share a house with the man! How do I know if he dangerous? I read his letters, so what? Do you want to know what he say or not?

ANTOINETTE

Not! I do not want to know.

Antoinette huffs and exits abruptly with her hair unfinished, leaving Christophine at the dressing table.

EXT. WATERFALL - DAY

Antoinette and Rochester walk upon a mid-sized waterfall amidst the dense jungle. It leads into a clear pool surrounded by rocks.

Antoinette looks elated at the view and begins to undo her dress, stripping to her undergarments. Rochester watches as she jumps in squealing. He is amused at her childlike energy and excitement. He takes off his clothes down to his underpants and jumps in.

Rochester pokes and tickles Antoinette under the water, making her shriek. They tread water near the edge where they can still touch. Rochester's back is to the edge. Antoinette spots a medium-sized snake coiled on a rock, hissing behind him.

ANTOINETTE

Move away!

She dips under water to pick up a stone. When she pops back up she expertly throws the stone. It hits below the snake, scaring it and causing it to slither away. Rochester notices the snake only after she has thrown the rock. He turns to her with surprise.

ROCHESTER  
Is it poisonous?

ANTOINETTE  
Might be. He won't come around if  
we stay away from that stone.

They move away from the edge and tread water near the waterfall.

ROCHESTER  
How did you learn to aim like that?

ANTOINETTE  
Sandi taught me.

ROCHESTER  
Who is Sandi?

ANTOINETTE  
Oh, he is a boy you never met.

Rochester looks at Antoinette suspiciously for a long time.

ROCHESTER  
How do you know him?

ANTOINETTE  
(nervously)  
He is a friend.

Antoinette continues to tread water and avoids Rochester's stare, aware of his suspicion.

ROCHESTER  
Antoinette, our wedding night...  
Was that the first time for you?

Antoinette keeps her eyes on the water. Eventually, she looks straight into Rochester's eyes with a serious expression.

Before she says anything, he swims to the water's edge where their clothes lay. He erupts out of the pool. He takes his clothes and storms off. Antoinette treads water and looks into the pool with a grave severity.

EXT. VERANDAH - NIGHT

Antoinette drinks rum alone, straight from the bottle. She looks into the bedroom where Rochester sleeps alone.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - NIGHT

Antoinette stumbles through the hallways. She finds Christophine sitting in a rocking chair, humming with her eyes closed. Antoinette takes a seat at her feet. Christophine opens only one eye, then shuts it.

CHRISTOPHINE

Girl who drink alone have the company of sorrow.

ANTOINETTE

What does he say in his letters, Christophine?

Antoinette peers intently at Christophine, who keeps her eyes closed. Eventually, Christophine opens them and sighs.

CHRISTOPHINE

He a second child- no money to his name. But a big name he have.

Antoinette looks away confused and exasperated.

ANTOINETTE

But I haven't any money, why should he have chosen me?

CHRISTOPHINE

Antoinette look around you, girl.  
(gestures to the house)  
It tied up in the land. The people who owned slaves, they gone now-dead. But they leave you this. It all yours. And now it all his.

Antoinette leans her head on Christophine's lap.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - DRESSING ROOM - DAY

Antoinette enters with a large, red flower. The room shares a wall with their bedroom and only fits a desk, a wardrobe, and a love seat. One door leads to their bedroom and the other to the hallway.

Antoinette sits the flower on his desk. She notices a crumpled up letter. She hesitates, then opens it and reads it. Messy letters are scribbled on the paper.

Voiceover of DANIEL COSWAY, thick cajun accent. As Antoinette reads, she grows increasingly distressed.

DANIEL COSWAY

(V.O.)

Dear sir, You have been shamefully deceived by the Mason family. They tell you your wife's name is Cosway, but they don't tell you what sort of people were these Cosways. There madness in that family. Old Cosway die raving like his father before him. Left his wife Annette with two children and none to work for them.

(continuous)

Antoinette holds her hand to her mouth in astonishment.

DANIEL COSWAY

(V.O.)

Useless and spoilt. We all wait to hear the woman had jump from a cliff, but no, she marry again to Mr. Mason. The boy, her son, die young and lame. The girl, your wife, only ever with negroes. Mrs. Annette's madness get worse, and she has to be shut away, for she try to kill her husband. She laugh and talk to nobody. Finally to die just as you come round.

(continuous)

Rochester enters from behind and Antoinette does not know he is there. He is angry.

DANIEL COSWAY

(V.O.)

I hear old Mason plan to marry the girl to a young Englishman who know nothing of her. I beg you sir, come and see me, for there is more that you should know. Money is good, but no money can pay for a crazy wife in your bed.

ROCHESTER

What do you think you are doing?

Antoinette jumps and turns to face him. She looks at him for a moment in anguish. She holds out the letter.

ANTOINETTE  
Do you believe the contents of this  
letter?

Rochester swallows and pauses.

ROCHESTER  
I am not sure what I believe.

ANTOINETTE  
You must know these claims are  
false!

ROCHESTER  
When did your mother die?

ANTOINETTE  
What?

ROCHESTER  
Answer me.

ANTOINETTE  
(swallows)  
Not long ago.

ROCHESTER  
Why did you lie to me? Before we  
were married, you told me you were  
a child when she died.

ANTOINETTE  
Because they told me to say so. And  
because it is true! She did die  
when I was a child. There are  
always two deaths.

He grabs the letter from her grip.

ROCHESTER  
If this much is true from the  
letter!

ANTOINETTE  
That man hates my family! He tells  
lies about us and he is sure that  
you will believe him and not listen  
to the other side.

ROCHESTER  
Is there another side?

ANTOINETTE  
There is always another side.

Rochester looks defeated.

ROCHESTER  
We won't talk about it now.

ANTOINETTE  
But we must talk about it.

ROCHESTER  
Some other time.

ANTOINETTE  
(fiercely)  
You have no right. You have no right to ask questions about my mother and then refuse to listen to my answer.

ROCHESTER  
I am tired, Bertha.

ANTOINETTE  
Bertha? Why do you call me by my second name?

ROCHESTER  
It is a name I am particularly fond of.

Antoinette looks at him incredulously then storms out.

EXT. JAMAICAN LANDSCAPE - DAY

Antoinette enters a dense area of the jungle, walking quickly and in distress. She wipes at tears that roll off of her cheeks. After some time, she comes out into an opening that reveals a beautiful view of the ocean. She sits down on a boulder to take it in and is calmed.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Antoinette wakes alone, looking morose. Amelie enters with a tray of coffee. She sits it next to Antoinette's side of the bed and stays there.

AMELIE  
I see master been sleeping in his room. Seem this bed plenty big for two.

ANTOINETTE

What did you say to me?

AMELIE

Maybe he don't fancy sharing bed  
with white nigga.

Antoinette sits up and slaps Amelie on the face. Amelie looks at her with hatred then slaps Antoinette back within a split moment. Antoinette holds her face and looks at Amelie in shock.

ANTOINETTE

(screaming)

Get out! Get out!

Rochester comes to the door at the sound of the commotion. As Amelie passes him in the doorway, she smiles seductively, then looks back to Antoinette to make sure she saw the interaction. Antoinette throws a pillow at her and screams out in frustration. Rochester looks at Antoinette as though she is a monster.

EXT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - DAY

Christophine sits on a stool over a bucket, hand-washing clothes. A hut stands nearby with tools and services for the servants. Antoinette approaches her morosely.

CHRISTOPHINE

You come out here to help?

Antoinette sits on the ground by Christophine's stool.

CHRISTOPHINE (CONT'D)

I didn't think so. What be on your  
mind?

ANTOINETTE

He does not love me. I think he  
hates me. He always sleeps in his  
dressing room now and the servants  
know. If I get angry he is scornful  
and silent- he won't talk to me,  
and I cannot endure it anymore.  
What shall I do, Christophine?

CHRISTOPHINE

You ask me a hard thing, I tell you  
a hard thing: pack up and go.

ANTOINETTE

But I cannot go. He is my husband.

Christophine spits over her shoulder.

CHRISTOPHINE

All women, all colors, nothin' but fools. Three children I have but no husband. I keep my money. I don't give it to no worthless man.

ANTOINETTE

Christophine, I may go as you advise, but not yet.

Antoinette's voice gets hushed and secretive.

ANTOINETTE (CONT'D)

I know you can help.

CHRISTOPHINE

Hush up! If the man don't love you I can't make him love you.

ANTOINETTE

Yes, you can. I know you can. You can make people love, or hate, or die.

CHRISTOPHINE

(laughs)

So you believe in that tim-tim story about obeah? All that foolishness and folly. Too, besides, that is not for white folk. Bad trouble come when white folk meddle with that.

ANTOINETTE

(pleading)

You must, Christophine.

CHRISTOPHINE

You talk foolishness. Even if I can make him come to your bed I cannot make him love you. Afterward he hate you.

ANTOINETTE

He hates me now. Every night he is drunk. He calls "good night Bertha" from his dressing room. He never calls me Antoinette anymore. He

(cont'd)

ANTOINETTE (cont'd)  
 found out it was my mother's name.  
 "Good night Bertha." It cannot be  
 worse.

CHRISTOPHINE  
 Listen, Antoinette. Your husband is  
 not a bad man, even if he love  
 money, but he hear so many stories  
 he don't know what to believe.  
 Speak to him calm and cool, tell  
 him about your mother and all what  
 happened at your childhood house.  
 Why she got sick and what they do  
 to her. Don't cry. Crying no good  
 with him. Speak nice and make him  
 understand.

ANTOINETTE  
 (desperately)  
 I have tried, but he does not  
 believe me. I will try again if you  
 do what I ask.

Christophine sighs and thinks for a long time.

CHRISTOPHINE  
 If you talk to him first, I do what  
 you ask.

Antoinette sighs in relief. Christophine stands and enters  
 the servant's hut nearby. Antoinette stands while she waits,  
 looking on curiously. Christophine returns with a tiny,  
 burlap sack and hands it to Antoinette.

CHRISTOPHINE  
 Stir this in his drink well. Make  
 sure he start with plenty rum.

Antoinette takes the sack and slips it into a dress pocket.  
 She exhales then embraces Christophine tightly. Christophine  
 keeps her arms by her sides.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Antoinette sits at her dressing table with two glasses of  
 wine in front of her. She wears the red dress from her first  
 night of marriage. From the reflection in her mirror, she  
 can partly see Rochester on the verandah outside. He lies in  
 a hammock and swigs from an almost empty bottle of rum.

In an intense rush, she unties the small, burlap sack and dumps a white powder into one of the glasses of wine. She stirs it with her finger, continuously checking for Rochester in the mirror's reflection. She then wipes her finger clean on some cloth.

EXT. VERANDAH - NIGHT

Antoinette saunters out with the wine glasses in hand. Rochester watches her silently as he sways lazily in the hammock, a drunken glaze over his eyes.

ROCHESTER

You wear your red dress.

ANTOINETTE

Because you favor it. Will you have some wine?

Rochester holds out his hand to take the wine. Antoinette walks to where he lies and places the drugged wine glass delicately into his hand.

She takes a seat on a chair next to the hammock and watches Rochester lazily put the wine to his lips, taking in about half. He hands her the glass to sit on the side table next to her. She places her own wine next to it without a sip.

ANTOINETTE

After my father died, my mother was very lonely and poor. Alone and poor, but in the most beautiful place in world. It is not possible there is so beautiful a place as Coulibri.

ROCHESTER

Bah! We'll see about that.

ANTOINETTE

We cannot see about it. It is burned down. My brother died in the fire. And my mother was never the same.

Rochester, taken off guard, looks to Antoinette.

ANTOINETTE (CONT'D)

We are letting ghosts trouble us. Why can we not be happy?

Rochester takes in her beauty. She radiates in the candlelight, watching him expectantly.

ROCHESTER  
We can be, Bertha.

ANTOINETTE  
Not Bertha tonight.

ROCHESTER  
Yes, Bertha tonight. Particularly  
tonight.

Rochester begins to lean towards her. Antoinette looks unhappy and uninterested as he gets closer to her.

ANTOINETTE  
(submissively)  
As you wish.

Rochester pulls her onto the hammock.

EXT. VERANDAH - NIGHT

Antoinette wakes on the hammock with no clothes on. Her arms are bruised. Rochester is throwing up over the side of the Verandah wearing only underpants. He finishes and turns towards Antoinette as he wipes his face of vomit. She covers herself.

Looking dizzy and sickly, he notices her bruises. She also observes them. He stumbles to where the glasses of wine still sit and looks into his glass. He fingers the bottom of the glass, discovering the white substance.

He slowly raises his head to look at Antoinette in seething anger. Her face crinkles in dread. She shakes her head at him. Rochester raises the glass above his head and smashes it against the wall of the house.

He grabs his clothes and storms inside. Antoinette stands and quickly puts on her underdress. She starts inside. Before she enters, the front door of the house slams. She watches from the verandah as he strides away. He wretches again somewhere in the distant darkness.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

Antoinette lies in bed on her side. She has a tear streamed face and stares into the distance in turmoil.

She hears the front door slam and Rochester's footsteps enter the house. She sits up anxiously and listens. Rochester's footsteps move inside his dressing room adjacent to her.

ROCHESTER  
(O.S.)  
Amelie! Some water!

Antoinette gets out of bed and goes to her mirror. She wipes at her cheeks and rubs her puffy eyes. She begins to brush at her hair. She trembles when she breaths. She takes herself in in the mirror.

Offscreen, Rochester and Amelie begin having sex against the wall dividing the dressing room and the bedroom. Antoinette's eyes wander to the wall as she deciphers what is going on. They hit the wall loudly and Rochester grunts more intensely the longer it lasts. Antoinette collapses to the ground and doubles over in anguish.

INT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - BEDROOM - DAY

It is completely silent. Antoinette steps morosely towards Rochester's dressing room and opens the door.

She looks down at Amelie. She sits on the floor, legs folded to her chest, with her dress ripped and teary eyes. A pile of money sits on the floor. Antoinette puts her hand to her mouth in shock and sorrow.

EXT. HONEYMOON HOUSE - DAY

Christophine and Antoinette hurry to a horse that Baptiste has ready. They help Antoinette up onto the horse. Christophine hands her a sack of clothes, then holds out a cloth and opens it to reveal the contents. Jewelry and money are wrapped inside.

CHRISTOPHINE  
Put this in your dress, and let no  
one see it.

Antoinette does so hurriedly. She speaks in distress.

ANTOINETTE  
Please come with me. Please.

CHRISTOPHINE  
I go in the nighttime with Amelie  
and the others. You must go now.

Antoinette looks down at Christophine mournfully. Christophine grabs Antoinette's hand and kisses it. They look at one another for a moment before Antoinette turns and kicks the horse into a gallop.

EXT. SANDI'S CABIN - DAY

The cabin is wooden, sits among thick jungle. Antoinette wears a blouse that is wet with her sweat and a brown skirt. Her hair is in a braid and loose pieces stick to her head.

A barrel of sweet potatoes sits before her. She picks one up and peels it with a knife. She is mainly focused on the sweet potato but takes a moment to take in the nature around her. She appears pensive and calm.

At the sound of hooves, Antoinette puts down her knife and sweet potato and walks towards the road. Sandi trots into view on horseback. Antoinette meets him.

He dismounts the horse, ties it to a stake, then turns to kiss her. When they pull apart Antoinette wipes the sweat from his brow and deciphers something is wrong.

ANTOINETTE

What happened?

Sandi looks down and sighs.

SANDI

Let's go inside, Antoinette.

ANTOINETTE

Tell me.

SANDI

(beat)

They have put Christophine in jail.

Antoinette steps backward and shrieks.

SANDI

She was arrested for practicing obeah... and for harmful motive against a white man.

ANTOINETTE

No. No, no, no! This is my fault.

SANDI

No, Antoinette, it is not your fault. Look at me.

He grabs her in his arms and wipes at the tears forming in her eyes. Antoinette pulls herself away.

ANTOINETTE

They will come for you next. They will, Sandi! Send me off!

SANDI

Do not say that! Do not meddle in the future's affairs. We are together now, and that makes me the happiest I can ever be. Let us be happy.

He tenderly pulls her to him again and strokes her hair behind her ears. Antoinette still looks concerned as she lays her head on his chest, eyes closed.

INT. SANDI'S CABIN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

The room is unfurnished aside from a bed. Antoinette awakes to the sound of men's voices and hooves outside. She sits up quickly. Sandi is already hovering in front of the window.

He abruptly turns to Antoinette and rushes to where she sits in the bed. He brushes his hand over her hair as she begins to panic.

SANDI

It's ok, Antoinette, its ok. I am going to be ok.

The front door to the house is kicked in and Antoinette shrieks. She holds Sandi's hands and speaks in panic.

ANTOINETTE

I love you.

They kiss passionately. They are interrupted by the bedroom door getting kicked in. Two white POLICEMEN barge in. Antoinette screams as Sandi is ripped from her arms. He resists as they carry him out of the room, each ahold of one arm.

ANTOINETTE

(horrified)

No! No! Sandi!

Antoinette jumps out of the bed to follow. As she reaches the doorway, Rochester appears in it. Antoinette freezes, looking at him in horror. He scoops her up and throws her over his shoulder.

EXT. SANDI'S CABIN - NIGHT

Antoinette is pounding and clawing at Rochester's back.

ANTOINETTE

Let me go! Let me go!

He takes her straight to a covered carriage with a white DOCTOR waiting outside of it. The doctor binds Antoinette's hands with rope while she hangs over Rochester's shoulder.

Antoinette looks up through piles of hair and sees Sandi opposite her. He lies face down on the ground, shirtless, with his hands tied behind his back. The policemen kick at his ribs.

Each time Sandi grimaces and grunts, but he keeps his eyes straight on Antoinette's with an empowering and stoic look. Antoinette gives up fighting back aggressively. She maintains eye contact with Sandi.

ANTOINETTE

(moaning)

Sandi!

Rochester places her in the carriage. The doctor shuts the door and fastens it, blocking Antoinette from Sandi's view. Rochester straightens his jacket and looks at Sandi. Sandi glares at him but is kicked again and grimaces. Rochester smiles smugly, then enters the carriage. The policemen pick Sandi up as it rides off.

INT. HOSPITAL CARRIAGE - NIGHT

Antoinette bumps up and down. She weeps mournfully. After a moment, she screams and bangs her bound hands against the carriage side.

INT. MENTAL HOSPITAL - DAY

Antoinette sits in a small room on a small bed, balled up in the corner. The room is completely white with cracked walls and one, barred window. She wears a thin, white smock and her hair is messy. A white DOCTOR 2 sits across her. He looks at her doubtfully and sighs as he completes the paperwork in front of him.

ON SCREEN: Unresponsive. Uncooperative. Manic fits. Certified mad.

INT. HOSPITAL - DAY

Antoinette peers out of the window in her room. Outside, Richard Mason and Rochester talk heatedly.

ROCHESTER

Unforeseen circumstances? Perhaps unforeseen by me!

RICHARD MASON

Edward, it was my father who settled the affair. I did not know of the madness. Leave her here in my care. She is my sister, not by blood, but my responsibility all the same.

ROCHESTER

Leave her here? To loosen her black hair and laugh and flatter? I will not leave her to be taken by any man she please, *negro* men, until even the lowest shrug and jeer at her. No, she will be in my keep. And she'll have no lover, for I don't want her, and she'll have no other.

RICHARD MASON

Have pity, Rochester.

ROCHESTER

Pity! Is there none for me? Tied to a lunatic for life. A mad girl.

INT. SHIP CABIN - NIGHT

Antoinette lies in a ball in bed. The room rocks. The sound of crashing waves comes from outside. She covers her ears and looks sickly.

The door to the room opens, allowing light to stream in on Antoinette's face. She looks up to see Rochester. He stares down at her solemnly. She looks at him hatefully. She starts at him to make an escape, but he shuts the door abruptly in her face. She looks hopeless.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Antoinette, appearing skinny and pale, is wrapped in a blanket shivering in her bed. Grace and Mrs. Fairfax watch her from across the room.

GRACE

Well now that I've seen her I don't know what to think. She sits shivering, and she is so thin.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Grace, Mr. Rochester has agreed to double, even treble the money if you agree.

GRACE

I don't serve the devil for no money.

MRS. FAIRFAX

If you imagine that by serving this gentleman you serve the devil, then you make a grave mistake. I knew him as a boy, as a young man. He was gentle, generous, brave. I do not know how he acquired this poor creature or what the relation is, but I know not to doubt him.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Antoinette, aged, stares at the tapestry hanging in the room. In the design of the tapestry, there is a woman dancing in a dress.

Antoinette hallucinates the woman springing from the tapestry and dancing across the yellow walls. She stands to follow the woman, mesmerized. Grace Poole speaks, and it startles Antoinette, making her snap out of it.

GRACE

There is nothing there, you know.

Antoinette looks at Grace, confused.

GRACE (CONT'D)

Oh dear, you don't recognize me, do you?

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

Grace lies asleep, slumped over her desk with an empty liquor decanter beside her. Antoinette sneaks over to Grace quietly and slowly reaches into her apron pocket. Antoinette pulls out a key without stirring Grace.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Antoinette roams the hallways of Thornfield, looking around in awe at the structure, brushing her hand against the surface of the walls as she goes.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DUSK

Antoinette looks out of her window to see Jane walking through the garden. She watches her with enticed eyes. Jane looks up to the window. Antoinette gasps and quickly ducks behind the curtain.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - DUSK

Repeat of scene 14: Jane looks to the house and sees a movement inside the attic window. She looks on curiously for a moment before heading back into the house. She opens the front door and shuts it behind her.

FADE TO BLACK

INT. LAW OFFICE - DAY

Jane's brow is furrowed in thought. She sits at a desk in her regular attire.

SUPER: 1853

Her thoughts are interrupted by a LAWYER, wears a suit, 50s, entering the room. He shuts the door and takes a seat at his desk. He leans over his desk to read over paperwork, holding it closely to his face. He looks up at Jane with a questioning look.

LAWYER

You are Jane Eyre?

JANE

Yes, sir.

He looks paperwork again to read further, then puts it down and sits back in his seat.

LAWYER

Where do you reside, Miss Jane?

JANE

It is much to explain.

The lawyer holds out his hand as if to suggest there is ample time. Jane hesitates, then begins to speak firmly.

JANE (CONT'D)

For the last year, I have been governess at Thornfield Hall. Three months ago, unforeseen circumstances caused me to leave my post there. I fled to a small town in the north and found work there. I was a schoolteacher to farm children. It was a peaceful existence that lasted but six weeks. Word was sent that my cousin had taken his life, and my Aunt Reed had fallen ill. She requested my presence. In the final moments of her life, she presented to me this letter.

Jane takes a letter from her pocket. The lawyer holds his hand out and Jane hands it over to him. He begins to read while she continues her story.

JANE

The letter informed me that I had an uncle, your client, living all my life and that several years past he had inquired over my whereabouts. My aunt cruelly informed him that I was dead, that I fell ill at Lowood school, where she had long before cast me off. Upon my discovery of her lie, I immediately wrote my uncle to inform him of the truth. Not having received a response, I am come to meet my uncle, my only relative, who I did not know existed until some weeks ago.

Jane finishes, swallows, and looks at the lawyer expectantly. He appears deep in thought, a mixture of disbelief and intrigue, as he looks between her and the letter. He takes a large breath before speaking.

LAWYER

Miss Eyre, I regret to inform you that your uncle, John Eyre of Madeira, passed away only just weeks ago.

Jane hangs her head in disappointment.

LAWYER (CONT'D)

Do not be upset, dear girl. It is a miracle that you have come. Truly a miracle.

Jane looks up in confusion.

JANE

Sir?

LAWYER

Miss Eyre, your uncle indeed never received your letter nor knew of your existence. However, as his health declined, he drafted a will in which he named the entirety of his fortune to a proven relative, should they come forth within a year of his passing.

(beat)

Jane, you are the sole heir to your uncle's fortune, and it shall all go to you.

(excitedly)

20,000 pounds!

Jane stares at the lawyer in disbelief as she takes in this information.

LAWYER (CONT'D)

Bah! If you had been discovered committing murder you could scarcely look more aghast!

JANE

It is a large sum- could there not be some mistake?

LAWYER

(encouragingly)

No mistake, Jane. You are a rich woman.

Jane, puzzled, sits back in her chair. She thinks for a moment with a severity in her eyes, then scoffs at the absurdity of her situation.

INT. CARRIAGE - DAY

Jane is dressed in light, elegant clothing. Her hair is fashioned more extravagantly than usual. She looks out of her carriage window to see Thornfield in the distance. She breathes in sharply, looking anxious.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - DAY

A COACHMAN 2 comes around to open Jane's door. She steps down from the carriage and observes the house, shielding her eyes from the sun with her hand. John exits the front door and looks surprised to see Jane.

JANE

Hello, John. May you fetch Mrs. Fairfax?

JOHN

Yes, Miss Eyre.

John bows and re-enters, remaining surprised.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - DRAWING ROOM - DAY

Jane stands in the sunny room, taking it in anew. Mrs. Fairfax enters and rushes quickly to Jane. They embrace. Mrs. Fairfax looks at Jane in amazement.

MRS. FAIRFAX

Miss Jane, how you have changed!

JANE

Yes, Mrs. Fairfax.

Mrs. Fairfax's attitude changes to that of guilt and remorse.

MRS. FAIRFAX

I feared I would never see you again. I feared I would never have a chance to tell you. Jane, I never knew she was his wife. I would have never--

JANE

It is but Mr. Rochester's fault alone. Do not lose sleep, my friend. How is Adele?

MRS. FAIRFAX

She is gone, Jane. Mr. Rochester sent her to an orphan school in

(cont'd)

MRS. FAIRFAX (cont'd)  
Paris. She was greatly distressed  
to leave.

Jane takes this in as though she already knew it were the answer she would receive.

MRS. FAIRFAX (CONT'D)  
Grace is also gone. Left without a  
word, the same way you went. It is  
Mr. Rochester who guards  
Antoinette's door most nights. He  
paces outside her room obsessively  
since you fled.

Jane looks disturbed by this information.

JANE  
I deeply regret the way I left,  
without a goodbye for you or sweet  
Adele. Mrs. Fairfax, you must know,  
I have not come back with the  
intention of leaving again alone.

Mrs. Fairfax looks wide-eyed at Jane.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Antoinette sits on the floor against her bed hugging her knees. She hears the door open and looks nonchalantly to see who it is. Jane appears in the doorway, looking to Antoinette sensitively. Antoinette jumps up in surprise.

The women walk towards each other slowly, observing one another carefully. When they are within an arm's length, Antoinette reaches out and touches Jane's face. Jane smiles and lifts her hand to Antoinette's.

Antoinette has a mesmerized smile, but her face falls suddenly, and she looks past Jane. Jane turns to find that Rochester is in the doorway. He looks at the two of them in confused disgust.

ROCHESTER  
Jane? What do you think you are  
doing?

He starts into the room in quick strides. Antoinette ducks behind Jane, who shields her and stands in front of Rochester defiantly.

ROCHESTER

She is mad, Jane! You put yourself  
in danger!

JANE

I am come to take her.

Rochester looks at her in utter shock, which brims on the  
verge of rage.

ROCHESTER

To hell you have!

JANE

You have no use for her. Why should  
she sit around all day as your  
captive?

ROCHESTER

(enraged)

Because she is mine, Jane.

Antoinette moves back to her bed and holds her head in  
distress.

JANE

Yet you do not want her. Let her  
go! And free yourself from her!

ROCHESTER

I will not!

JANE

Then, Mr. Rochester, I shall inform  
the authorities of this inhumane,  
this disturbing and hostile  
confinement.

ROCHESTER

Go on then. She is my *wife*! And she  
is certified insane, a dependent.  
Go to the authorities and see what  
they have to say.

Jane straightens her posture, keeping stern eye contact with  
Rochester. She abruptly leaves the room.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ENTRYWAY - DAY

Mrs. Fairfax waits nervously where Jane's overcoat and purse wait. Jane strides in and takes her things. She meets Mrs. Fairfax's expectant look with determination.

JANE

I stay in town at the inn. You will  
be seeing me again.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - DAY

Antoinette watches from the window as Jane leaves. She moves to her carriage with great speed. Before Jane enters the carriage, she looks directly up to Antoinette's window. Antoinette places her hands on the window. Jane gives her an empowering nod.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC ROOM - NIGHT

Antoinette quietly walks to her door and opens it slowly. She peeks outside to see Rochester passed out on the floor, sitting against a wall. He has no shoes on, and his shirt is unbuttoned. Two empty liquor bottles lie around him. The attic key is in his hand, which is folded over his stomach. He breathes heavily.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC - NIGHT

Antoinette tiptoes to where Rochester lies. She looks serious and unafraid. She crouches at an arm's length from him, reaches out her hand, and slowly tugs the keys from Rochester's hand. As they release he stirs slightly. Antoinette waits for him to fall back into his heavy breathing before standing and stepping over him.

She unlocks the attic door. When it clicks, she looks behind her to check that Rochester still sleeps. She opens the door quietly.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ATTIC STAIRS - NIGHT

Antoinette shuts the door softly behind her.

INT. INN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane paces thoughtfully and impatiently between a bed and a dressing table, every so often looking out a curtained window.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Antoinette saunters down the hallway.

A lit candelabra extends from the wall next to a curtained window. She reaches up to take the candelabra from its place. It slips from her grip and falls to the ground. The candelabra lands at the foot of the curtain. It catches flame.

Antoinette jumps back and falls to the ground in fear and worry. She watches from the ground as the flames catch brighter and larger. Her expression changes to that of hypnotic amazement. She gets up and runs down the hall.

INT. INN - BEDROOM - NIGHT

Jane hears a knock and quickly opens the door. The INNKEEPER, British accent, 50s, stands in her doorway.

INNKEEPER

Miss, the authorities you asked for  
have arrived. They await you  
downstairs.

INT. INN - PUB - NIGHT

Jane enters the open area and spots two AUTHORITIES, plump British men in uniform, seated at a table. She walks past tables and large windows facing the road outside as she approaches them.

JANE

Gentlemen. Thank you for seeing me  
so late, but I believe the matter  
to be urgent.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Antoinette slows to a stop at the top of the grand staircase, where the portraits of Rochester's family line the wall. A table holds several candles. She stops and looks at the candles, then to the men's portraits.

She slowly takes a candle from its holder and puts it to the canvas of one of the men. A hole forms and the fire quickly consumes the painting. Antoinette walks slowly down the line of portraits and repeats the act.

INT. INN - PUB - NIGHT

Jane speaks urgently with the two authorities.

JANE

The rumors you have inclined your ears to are true. Believe what I say.

AUTHORITY 1

Miss, please be calm now.

AUTHORITY 2

Even if they were true, I do not comprehend what you would expect us to do. This... woman you describe. She is his wife, correct?

JANE

She is his wife! Precisely! He keeps her locked away, never to see the light.

AUTHORITY 1

But she is mad?

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - ENTRYWAY - NIGHT

Antoinette runs to where the bell hangs by the door. She rings it fervently with fear in her eyes.

INT. INN - PUB - NIGHT

The authorities are standing to leave.

AUTHORITY 1

We will take your information into account. There are many variables to be considered, miss.

JANE

(appalled)

I cannot believe this. Have you no sense of justice?

AUTHORITY2

It is late. A young lady like you should be in bed at this hour.

INT. THORNFIELD HALL - NIGHT

Mrs. Fairfax, John, and other miscellaneous servants run about, attempting to control the fire. They throw buckets of water, but the foundation has caught.

INT. INN - PUB - NIGHT

The authorities are leaving when the sound of hooves sound from outside. A TOWNSMAN enters the pub urgently.

TOWNSMAN  
Gentlemen! Thornfield Hall is  
afame!

Jane turns around and gasps at the news. The innkeeper and authorities rush to the exit.

JANE  
Take me with you!

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

Jane exits a carriage, staring at the inflamed house in horror. A group of CIVILIANS stands watching. Jane runs to Mrs. Fairfax, who looks on with tearful eyes, holding her hand to her mouth.

JANE  
(urgently)  
Where are they?

Mrs. Fairfax looks to Jane and shakes her head. Jane searches the face of the house to the corner tower in panic. She paces around to the side of the house.

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - GARDEN - NIGHT

Jane finds a side door open and approaches it. Antoinette crouches in the doorway, hugging her knees to her chest, looking at the ground outside. She is in no immediate danger. Jane beckons to her urgently.

JANE  
Antoinette!

Antoinette does not react to her call. She keeps her eyes on the ground, appearing intimidated.

JANE  
Come, Antoinette!

Jane observes her then walks to her. She leans into the doorframe and grabs hold of Antoinette's arm. They meet each other's eyes. Antoinette stands at Jane's encouragement.

She begins to take a step outside. Her bare foot hovers over the ground. She steps her foot into the earth. Simultaneously, a breeze blows the hair from her face. She closes her eyes in a moment of bliss and steps the other foot out onto the ground.

Jane clasps her arm and pulls her along.

JANE

We must go!

EXT. THORNFIELD HALL - FRONT ENTRANCE - NIGHT

They flee to the front of the house. They stop at the sound of glass breaking from above. The women and civilians look up to see Rochester's body, aflame, bursting from Antoinette's attic window at the top of the corner tower. Antoinette watches in dread.

Rochester's arms and legs flail as he falls the length of the corner tower. His body hits the third story embattlements. Half of his still body hangs off. Jane looks away and covers her mouth, horrified. Antoinette watches in anguish. Tears stream down her face. The wind blows at her hair and the fire glows on her skin.

INT. CARRIAGE - DAY

Jane, dressed elegantly, takes in London's skyline in the distance. She looks down to her lap, where a letter she is composing sits.

JANE

(v.o.)

My dear Adele, I trust you are in good spirits, despite the conditions in which you may find yourself. I am sure that by now you have heard of the untimely death of your friend and benefactor, Mr. Rochester. A tragic accident, as they ruled it, for there had been other cases like it. Thankfully, everyone else escaped the fire unharmed.

## INT. PARIS GIRL'S SCHOOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Adele sits in a room full of beds. Girls bustle about. Her eyes come alive as she reads the letter.

JANE (CONT'D)

(v.o.)

In life, there are many terrible losses, but you must always find the strength to keep on. You are a very extraordinary girl, Adele. I will forever regret leaving Thornfield without saying goodbye to you. Much has happened since we last met, and I have much to fill you in on.

## EXT. SHIP DECK - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Antoinette watches the sea. She looks out on the horizon, feeling the sun and wind on her face. She wears a light-fitting, yellow dress and appears healthy and fresh.

JANE (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

Antoinette, the woman that was married to Mr. Rochester, is leaving England. Mr. Rochester left a considerable sum for her care in the event of his death. Antoinette and I worked together to hire an assistant to help keep her. Together, they return to Jamaica, Antoinette's home. As for me,

## INT. CARRIAGE - LONDON - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jane's carriage comes to a stop in front of a large but modest house in the city of London. A sign outside reads: 'London Charity School for Orphan Girls'

JANE (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I have acquired a large fortune, the inheritance of my late uncle. It is more than I could ever need, so I invested in something very dear to me. I am the new headmistress and property owner of a girl's school in London. It is little and unimpressive for now, but, perhaps, you would like to come visit?

INT. PARIS GIRL'S SCHOOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Adele cries tears of joy.

JANE (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

Or, perhaps, you might like to come live here with me. I am very happy among you, Adele, and should like to prolong our friendship.

INT. LONDON SCHOOL - DAY - CONTINUOUS

Jane enters the old house carrying her bags. It has high ceilings and bright walls. She sits her bags down and walks to a curtained window. She opens the curtain, letting sunshine stream in. She looks around happily.

JANE (CONT'D)

(V.O.)

I hope you will say yes. We may both finally find ourselves a home. Signed lovingly, Jane.

EXT. SHIPYARD - DUSK

Antoinette moves slowly along a line exiting the ship. She is assisted by a black, female ASSISTANT, British accent, of her thirties. She stands behind Antoinette.

The harbor reflects a colorful sunset and meets the lush, green hills of Jamaica. Tears stream down Antoinette's cheeks as she takes in the beauty.

The line leads to an OFFICIAL, black man, creole accent, who checks the travelers' documents. When Antoinette and her assistant reach him, the assistant hands over a set of documents. The official studies the papers then looks at them. He turns to Antoinette.

OFFICIAL

Your name, miss?

Antoinette looks at him with a strong expression.

ANTOINETTE

Antoinette.

FADE OUT.

The End.

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