

MACMILLAN READERS

BEGINNER LEVEL

CHARLOTTE BRONTË

Jane Eyre

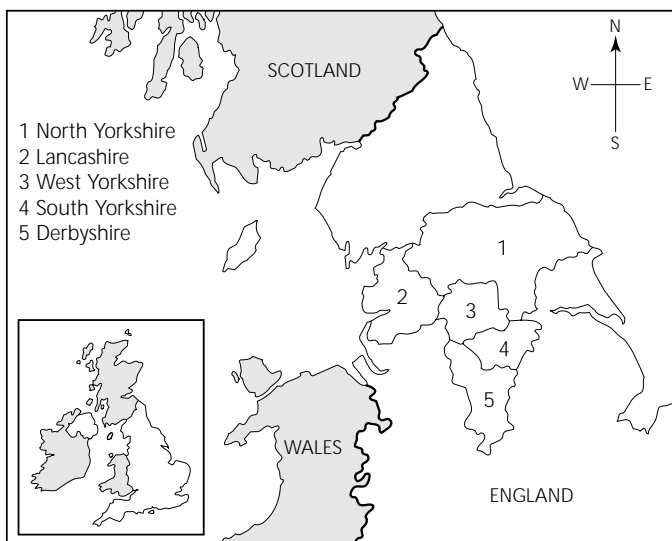
Retold by Florence Bell



MACMILLAN

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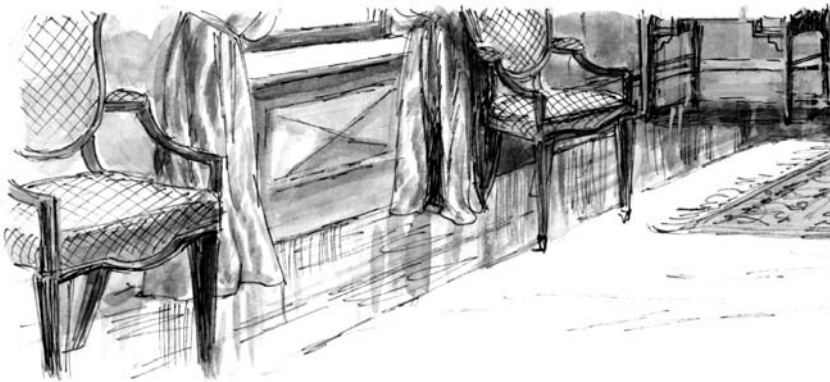
My Story Begins

In 1825, I was ten years old. My father and mother were dead. I lived with my aunt and uncle, Mr and Mrs Reed. Their house was called Gateshead Hall. The house was in Yorkshire, in the north of England. My Aunt and Uncle Reed had two children – a boy, John, and a girl, Eliza.

I liked my Uncle Reed and he liked me. But in 1825, my uncle died. After that, I was very unhappy. My Aunt Reed did not like me. And John and Eliza were unkind to me.

It was a cold, rainy day in December. All of us were in the house. I wanted to be alone. I wanted to read. I opened a book. Then I heard my Cousin John's voice.

'Jane! Jane Eyre! Where are you?' John shouted. He came into the room and he saw me.



‘Why are you reading my book?’ he asked. ‘Give it to me!’

John took the book. He hit my head with it. I screamed. John hit me again. I pulled his hair and I kicked him.

‘Help! Help, Mamma!’ John shouted. ‘Jane Eyre is hurting me!’

Aunt Reed ran into the room. She pulled me away from John.



‘John hit me with a book,’ I said. ‘I hate him. And I hate you too!’

‘You are a bad girl, Jane,’ my aunt said. ‘Why do you hate me?’

‘You don’t like me,’ I replied. ‘John and Eliza are unkind to me. I want to leave Gateshead Hall.’

‘You want to leave!’ Aunt Reed said. ‘Where will you go? Your parents are dead. You cannot live alone.’

Aunt Reed thought for a moment.

‘My friend, Mr Brocklehurst, is the owner of a school,’ she said. ‘I will send you to Mr Brocklehurst’s school.’

A few days later, Mr Brocklehurst came to Gateshead Hall. He was a very tall man. His eyes were dark and his face was cruel.

‘Jane Eyre,’ he said to me. ‘God does not like bad children. God punishes bad children, Jane Eyre.’

‘God will punish John Reed,’ I replied. ‘John Reed hits me and he shouts at me.’

‘That is not true. You are a liar, Jane Eyre,’ Mr Brocklehurst said. ‘You must not tell lies. And you must not live here with your cousins. You will come to Lowood School. You will become a good girl.’

‘I want to come to your school, sir,’ I said. ‘I want to leave this house.’

‘Bad girls are punished at my school, Jane Eyre,’ Mr Brocklehurst said. ‘The girls work very hard at Lowood.’

'I will work hard. I will be a good pupil, Mr Brocklehurst,' I said.



Two weeks later, I left Gateshead Hall. I went to Lowood School.

Lowood School

It was the month of January. I arrived at Lowood School at night. A servant took me up some stairs and into a big bedroom. There were many beds in the room. The girls in the beds were asleep. The servant took me to an empty bed. I put on my nightclothes and I got into bed. Soon, I was asleep too.

I woke up very early. A loud bell was ringing. The bedroom was dark and cold. I watched the other girls. They washed in cold water and they dressed quickly.

