

**АНГЛИЙСКИЙ В АДАПТАЦИИ:
ЧТЕНИЕ И АУДИРОВАНИЕ**

ШАРЛОТТА БРОНТЕ • CHARLOTTE BRONTË

ДЖЕЙН ЭЙР



JANE EYRE



**МОСКВА
2018**

УДК 811.111(075.4)
ББК 81.2Англ-93
Б88

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Бронте, Шарлотта.

Б88 Джейн Эйр = Jane Eyre : 3-й уровень / Шарлотта Бронте. — Москва : Эксмо, 2018. — 272 с. + CD. — (Английский в адаптации: чтение и аудирование).

ISBN 978-5-04-004209-8

Жизнь не балует Джейн Эйр: она одинокая сирота и в жизни ей нужно всего добиваться самой. Но вера в честь и искренность, в любовь и долг, в людей и человеческое достоинство поможет ей пройти тернистый путь к счастью. Роман сокращен и адаптирован для тех, кто уверенно читает по-английски, но пока не готов знакомиться с крупными произведениями в оригинале.

Серия «Английский в адаптации: чтение и аудирование» — это тексты для начинающих, продолжающих и продвинутых. Теперь каждый изучающий английский может выбрать свой уровень и своих авторов и совершенствовать свой английский с лучшими произведениями англоязычной литературы. Читая и слушая текст на диске, а также выполняя упражнения на чтение, аудирование и новую лексику, читатели качественно улучшат свой английский. Они станут лучше воспринимать английскую речь на слух, а работа с текстами станет эффективнее. Аудиозапись начитана носителями языка.

Книга предназначена для изучающих английский язык на продвинутом уровне.


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ББК 81.2Англ-93

ISBN 978-5-04-004209-8

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CHARLOTTE BRONTË



JANE EYRE

CHAPTER I

There was no chance of taking a walk that day. The cold winter wind had brought with it clouds and rain, and a walk was out of the question. I was glad of it; I never liked long walks, especially on chilly afternoons.

Eliza, John, and Georgiana Reed were sitting round their mamma in the drawing-room by the fireside. She looked perfectly happy. She didn't let me join them, because, as she said, until she heard from Bessie, the nurse, and saw by herself that I was trying to become more sociable and childlike, she really must exclude me from privileges intended for happy little children.

'What does Bessie say I have done?' I asked.

'Jane, I don't like questioners. Besides, a child shouldn't talk about elders in such a manner. Sit down somewhere, and remain silent until you can speak pleasantly.'

A small breakfast-room adjoined the drawing-room, I slipped in there. There was a book-case. I chose a book and sat cross-legged on a window-sill. The curtain hid me completely.

There were pictures in the book, and each picture told a story; the stories were often beyond my childish understanding, but they were as interesting as Bessie's tales. I was happy; happy at least in my way. I feared nothing but interruption, and that came too soon. The breakfast-room door opened.



‘Hey! You!’ cried the voice of John Reed; then he paused: he found the room apparently empty.

‘Where is she?’ he continued. ‘Lizzy! Georgy! Jane is not here: tell mama she has run out into the rain — bad animal!’

‘It is well I drew the curtain,’ thought I; but Eliza put her head in at the door, and said at once: ‘She is in the window-seat, to be sure.’

And I came out immediately, for I trembled at the idea of being dragged forth by him.

‘What do you want?’ I asked, with awkward diffidence.

‘Say, “What do you want, Master Reed?”’ was the answer. ‘I want you to come here;’ and seating himself in an arm-chair, he gestured me to approach and stand before him.

John Reed was a schoolboy of fourteen years old; four years older than I; large and stout for his age. He ought now to have been at school; but his mamma had taken him home for a month or two, ‘on account of his delicate health.’ Mr. Miles, the schoolmaster, said that he would do very well if he had fewer cakes and sweets sent from home; but the mother’s heart turned from an opinion so cruel.

John had not much affection for his mother and sisters, and an antipathy to me. He bullied me continually; I was terribly afraid of him. There was no help for me: the servants did not like to offend their young master by taking my part against him, and Mrs. Reed was blind and deaf on the subject.

So I came up to his chair: he spent some three minutes in thrusting out his tongue at me. I knew he would soon strike, and I was afraid and disgusted. Maybe he saw it on my face; for, all at once, without speaking, he struck suddenly and strongly. I tottered, and stepped back.

‘That is for your impudence in answering mama,’ said he, ‘and for hiding behind curtains, and for the look you had in your eyes, you rat!’

I never had an idea of replying to his bullying; my care was how to endure the next blow.

‘What were you doing behind the curtain?’ he asked.

‘I was reading.’

‘Show me the book.’

I returned to the window and fetched it.

‘You have no business to take our books; you have no money; your father left you none; you ought to beg, and not to live here with gentlemen’s children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mama’s expense. The books *are* mine; all the house belongs to me, or will do in a few years. Go and stand by the door, out of the way of the mirror and the windows.’

I did so; but when I saw him lift the book getting ready to throw it, I instinctively stepped aside with a cry of alarm: not soon enough, however; the book hit me, and I fell, striking my head against the door and cutting it. The cut bled, the pain was sharp; I got furious.

‘Wicked and cruel boy!’ I said. ‘You are like a murderer — you are like a slave-driver — you are like the Roman emperors!’ I meant Nero, Caligula etc.

‘What! what!’ he cried. ‘Did she say that to me? Did you hear her, Eliza and Georgiana? Won’t I tell mama? but first —’

He grasped my hair and my shoulder. I really saw in him a tyrant: a murderer. I was bewildered. I don’t very well know what I did with my hands, but he called me ‘Rat! rat!’ and bel-lowed out aloud. Eliza and Georgiana had run for Mrs. Reed,



who was upstairs; she now came upon the scene, followed by Bessie and her maid Abbot. We were parted. Mrs. Reed said: 'Take her away to the red-room, and lock her in there.' Four hands were immediately laid upon me, and they took me upstairs.

CHAPTER II

I resisted all the way; that was a new thing for me. But, like any other rebel slave, I was desperate and ready to go all lengths.

'Hold her arms, Miss Abbot: she's like a mad cat.'

'For shame, for shame!' cried the lady's maid. 'What shocking conduct, Miss Eyre, to strike a young gentleman, your benefactress's son! Your young master.'

'Master! How is he my master? Am I a servant?'

'No; you are less than a servant, for you do nothing for your living. There, sit down, and think over your wickedness.'

They had got me by this time into the red-room, and had thrust me upon a stool: my impulse was to rise from it like a spring; their two pairs of hands stopped me immediately.

'If you don't sit still, you must be tied down,' said Bessie.

'I will sit still,' I cried.

'Mind you do,' said Bessie; then she and Miss Abbott stood with folded arms, looking darkly and doubtfully on my face.

'She never did so before,' at last said Bessie, turning to Miss Abbott.

'But it was always in her,' was the reply. 'I've often told Missis my opinion about the child, and Missis agreed with me. She's an underhand little thing.'



Bessie didn't answer. Then she said:

'You ought to be aware, Miss, that you are under obligations to Mrs. Reed. She keeps you. If she were to turn you off, you would have to go to the poor-house.'

I had nothing to say to these words. Miss Abbot joined in:

'And you ought not to think you are an equal to the Misses Reed and Master Reed, because Missis kindly allows you to be brought up with them. They will have a great deal of money, and you will have none. You must make yourself agreeable to them.'

'What we tell you is for your good,' added Bessie, in kind voice, 'you should try to be useful and pleasant, then, perhaps, you would have a home here; but if you become passionate and rude, Missis will send you away, I am sure.'

'Besides,' said Miss Abbot, 'God will punish her: He might strike her dead, and then where would she go? Come, Bessie, we will leave her. Say your prayers, Miss Eyre; for if you don't repent, something bad might come down the chimney and fetch you away.'

They went, shutting the door, and locking it behind them.

The red-room was a spare chamber, very seldom slept in. It was chill, because it seldom had a fire; it was silent, because it was remote from the nursery and kitchen; solemn, because it was known to be so seldom entered. The housemaid alone came here on Saturdays, to wipe from the mirrors and the furniture a week's quiet dust: and Mrs. Reed herself, at far intervals, visited it to review the contents of a certain secret drawer in the wardrobe. Mr. Reed died in this chamber nine years ago. And, since that day, the room was entered so seldom.

My seat was a low stool near the marble chimney-piece; the bed rose before me; to my right hand there was the high,



dark wardrobe; to my left were the muffled windows; a great looking-glass was between them. I got up and went to see if they locked the door. Alas! They did. Returning, I had to cross before the looking-glass; all looked colder and darker there than in reality: and the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a white face, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real ghost, or half fairy, half imp from Bessie's tales. I returned to my stool.

I was afraid and miserable. Why was I always suffering, always accused? Why could I never please? Why was it useless to try to win any one's favor? Eliza, who was headstrong and selfish, was respected. Georgiana's beauty, her pink cheeks and golden curls, seemed to give delight to all who looked at her. John was never punished, though twisted the necks of the pigeons, killed the little chicks, set the dogs at the sheep, stripped the hothouse vines of their fruit; he called his mother 'old girl'; and he was still 'her own darling.' I was doing my best to fulfill every duty; and I was always called naughty and tiresome, sullen and sneaking.

My head still ached and bled with the blow and fall I had received: no one had reproved John for striking me, and I had turned against him only to get farther irrational violence.

'Unjust! — unjust!' said my reason. I wanted to escape injustice. Shall I ran away? Or stop eating and drinking and die? I could not answer the question — *why* I thus suffered; now, at the distance of — I will not say how many years, I see it clearly.

I was like nobody there; I had nothing in harmony with Mrs. Reed or her children. If they did not love me, in fact, as little did I love them. They could not sympathize with a dissimilar thing, opposed to them in temperament, in capacity; a



useless thing, incapable of serving their interest, or adding to their pleasure; an insolent thing, unhappy with its position. I know that had I been a sanguine, brilliant, careless, handsome child — though equally dependent and friendless — Mrs. Reed would have endured my presence more complacently; her children would have liked me; the servants wouldn't have made me the scapegoat of the nursery.

It was past four o'clock, and it was growing dark. I heard the rain still beating on the staircase window, and the wind howling in the grove behind the hall; I grew by degrees cold as a stone, and then my courage sank. All said I was wicked, and perhaps I might be so. I was thinking of starving myself to death! That certainly was a crime. I will die, then, and be buried near Mr. Reed. I could not remember him; but I knew that he was my own uncle — my mother's brother — that he had taken care of me when a parentless infant to his house; and that in his last moments he had required a promise of Mrs. Reed that she would keep me and bring me up as one of her own children. Mrs. Reed probably considered she had kept this promise; and so she had, I dare say, as well as her nature would permit her. She found herself on the place of a parent to a strange child she could not love.

I never doubted that if Mr. Reed had been alive he would have treated me kindly; and now, as I sat looking at the white bed and dark walls I began to recall what I had heard of dead men, troubled in their graves by the violation of their last wishes. And I thought Mr. Reed's spirit might rise before me in this chamber. I wiped my tears and hushed my sobs, fearful lest any sign of violent grief might waken a ghost to comfort me. I lifted my head and tried to look boldly round the room;



at this moment a light gleamed on the wall. Was it a ray from the moon penetrating some hole in the blind? I can see now that this streak of light was a gleam from a lantern carried by some one across the lawn: but then, prepared for horror, I thought it was a sign of some coming vision from another world. Something seemed near me; I was horrified. I rushed to the door and shook the lock in desperate effort. Steps came running along the outer passage; the key turned, Bessie and Abbot entered.

‘Miss Eyre, are you ill?’ said Bessie.

‘What a dreadful noise!’ exclaimed Abbot.

‘Take me out! Let me go into the nursery!’ was my cry.

‘What for? Are you hurt? Have you seen something?’ again demanded Bessie.

‘Oh! I saw a light, and I thought a ghost would come for me.’ I had now got hold of Bessie’s hand, and she did not snatch it from me.

‘She has screamed out on purpose,’ declared Abbot, in disgust. ‘And what a scream! If she had been in great pain one would have excused it, but she only wanted to bring us all here: I know her naughty tricks.’

‘What is all this?’ demanded another voice; and Mrs. Reed came along the corridor. ‘Abbot and Bessie, I believe I gave orders that Jane Eyre should be left in the red-room till I came to her myself.’

‘Miss Jane screamed so loud, ma’am,’ pleaded Bessie.

‘Let her go,’ was the only answer. ‘Loose Bessie’s hand, child: you won’t get out by these means, be assured. I hate artifice, particularly in children; it is my duty to show you that tricks will not help you: you will now stay here an hour longer,



and it is only on the condition of perfect behavior and stillness that I shall let you out then.'

'O aunt! have pity! Forgive me! I cannot endure it — let me be punished some other way! I shall die if — '

'Silence! This passion is disgusting;' and so, no doubt, she felt it. I was a precocious actress in her eyes; she sincerely believed in my passions, mean spirit, and dangerous hypocrisy.

Bessie and Abbot having retreated, Mrs. Reed, impatient of my now frantic anguish and wild sobs, abruptly thrust me back and locked me in, without another word. Soon after she was gone, I suppose I had a fit: unconsciousness closed the scene.

CHAPTER III

The next thing I remember is, waking up with a feeling as if I had had a frightful nightmare. I heard voices, too, as if muffled by a rush of wind or water: agitation, uncertainty, and horror confused me. After a while I became aware that some one was lifting me up and supporting me in a sitting posture, more tenderly than I had ever been raised or upheld before. I rested my head against a pillow or an arm, and felt easy.

I was in my own bed. It was night: a candle burnt on the table; Bessie stood at the bed-foot with a basin in her hand, and a gentleman sat in a chair near my pillow, leaning over me.

I felt an inexpressible relief, a soothing conviction of protection and security, when I knew that there was a stranger in the room, an individual not belonging to Gateshead, and not related to Mrs. Reed. Turning from Bessie (though I liked her