

CHAPTER: I

Jane's Quest for Interdependence in Marriage

Many novels reflect the perspectives of love, passion, liberty and independence. However, the most famous example of marriage is of course *Jane Eyre*. Charlotte Brontë, the writer of this novel, gives a poisonous attack to the Victorian conventionalities, concerning the issues of marriage and family. The nineteenth century Victorian conventionality and assumption over women framed on patriarchal ideology is to control them socially, politically, economically and culturally. Men make women as their dolls and puppets. They use women as objects to satisfy their needs and give no response and concerns as soon as their needs have been fulfilled. Standing against the traditional dynastic marriage backed up by Victorian ideals, *Jane Eyre* takes a turn to a novel of romantic and companionate marriage. This type of marriage exemplifies gender equalization and interdependence between partners. Brontë uses her strong character Jane to deliberate upon women's consciousness. "Marriage" in this novel is presented as a tool of equal position and responsibility between husband and wife.

The love story at the center of *Jane Eyre* between the poor, plain governess and her commanding master, is a large reason for mutual relationship. Mr. Rochester loves Jane as much as his own flesh. However, he tries to dominate Jane time and again. In the same way, St. John Rivers attempts to control Jane through his language as he proposes her. Both men use direct order to persuade Jane, but Jane is not a type of woman like that the Victorian society expects her to be. She has the strong feelings of love and companionship. In the clash between Jane's expectations and Mr. Rochester and St. John's assumptions, we find the expression of a major problem in Victorian ideals of marriage. At last Mr. Rochester realizes his mistake and enters into

mutual relationship in marriage. But St. John remains constant in his own assumption of marriage.

Jane Eyre is set in nineteenth century England, when Victorian women were expected to be neat, submissive, polite, and without opinion. But Charlotte Brontë is a pioneering woman novelist to reflect upon women's consciousness and awareness regarding their marriage and selecting right life partner. The growing awareness of companionate marriage based on mutual relationship appears in *Jane Eyre* as a dim light against the ideals of dynastic marriage based on traditional values. In other words, Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is an exploration of Jane's inner quest for gender equality and mutual relationship in relation to seeking the companionate marriage with Mr. Rochester. Jane is a passionate young woman who struggles with potentially oppressive marriages and seeks for a healthy marriage which guarantees her independent life and equal status.

Since this novel is based on the theme of marriage and love, the idea of companionate marriage takes place at the end of the story. This marriage combines both love and duty. The marriage between Mr. Rochester and Bertha is an example of traditional marriage. Though Mr. Rochester is tricked into the marriage with Bertha, we can find passion in it but he does not take care of his duty. St. John's proposal of marriage with Jane also indicates the duty without passion. The impulsive passion of Mr. Rochester leads himself into an unfulfilling marriage. Therefore, he does not care for his responsibility. Brontë tries to assert that marriage based on sexual passion and ignoring the role of duty will bring more than the loss of passion. Therefore, the focal point of this research is that married couples have to take care of responsibility along with mutual love if they want to have happiness forever. On the other hand St. John River decides not to marry Rosamond Oliver. Though they both like and love each

other, St. John shuns his passion completely and devotes himself to his word to God. St. John proposes Jane only to make his missionary role successful. He asks Jane to marry him, not out of love but out of the duty of missionary. Here Brontë depicts the picture of St. John who is thoroughly opposite to Mr. Rochester. St. John and Rochester shun passion and duty respectively.

Brontë believes that love and marriage are inseparable. Thus, Brontë's view on marriage is different in many ways from the Victorian ideal. Brontë's central idea on marriage is to balance duty with passion by both partners. Feelings of love, share and care lead to responsibility and these characteristics can be found only in Jane and Rochester's marriage at the end of the novel. Though Jane initially thinks of marrying Rochester, she cannot compromise her honor as Mr. Rochester's mistress while his mad wife Bertha is still living. She rejects to marry Rochester only because of his living wife Bertha. She finds no passion for Rochester. Jane only marries Mr. Rochester when she realizes his true love for her. She knows the truth about Rochester's life. She returns to Rochester after the death of Bertha, knowing that Rochester has become disabled. So we can find power reversal when Mr. Rochester loses his sight and as a result, depends entirely on Jane. However, Brontë does not wish to show Jane strong and Rochester weak. Jane's conscience is to be a person having mutual responsibility. She teaches Rochester this knowledge and ultimately their marriage becomes successful. Brontë, taking Jane's views into consideration of Rochester's mistake in forsaking duty and St. John's indulgence in it, presents an overall view of marriage.

Jane Eyre, Charlotte Brontë's masterpiece and first published novel, is often regarded as a semi-autobiographical novel. First of all, the character of the heroine will be looked at – Jane herself has a striking character. She does not have the looks of

a romantic heroine. She is plain and not really beautiful. But Jane Eyre is the most famous heroine, challenging the conventional definition about beauty. This plain, obscure and little heroine Jane, with her unconventional, rebellious and extraordinary life progress, causes a sensation in contemporary literary society. In the Victorian Era, women were regarded as the angels of the house and were presented in the novels accordingly. They consider getting marriage needs beauty, which Brontë projects as an act of being submissive. Jane is cast out of her aunt's home because she is plain and not glamorous.

While he loves Jane, Rochester pretends to marry Miss Blanch Ingram. Though Miss Ingram is beautiful, Rochester does not love her. He does this only to make Jane jealous of this affair so that she would love him. Therefore, Miss Blanch Ingram is presented as the tool of beauty. But for Jane, beauty comes from the inner heart and intellect. That is why, Jane is not merely a romantic heroine as she appears to be at the first sight. She is a fully conscious woman. Jane, a plain girl, meets the dark handsome and rich man Edward Rochester but she does not marry him until he accepts her ideals of marriage. She rejects the marriage proposal of St. John too. St. John could never love her the way she needs to be loved. Jane believes that marriage without love is just disrespect. She looks for a marriage full of love and companionship.

In the Victorian Era, women's status was miserable and rights were very limited. For unmarried Victorian women, society could hardly provide any opportunities. The poor women could only work as household servants, farm laborers, or factory workers to survive. The middle-class women were governesses and school teachers. Although a few women tried to make a living by writing against the strong social prejudice, the literature as a whole could not and ought not to be the business of

a woman's life. Very few, such as Charlotte Brontë, struggled much and could partially succeed in making their lives through writing. Middle-class women could only expect a good marriage, which could provide them with a better social position and economic security. Married women had far fewer legal rights and had no economic independence. No sooner had a woman married than she lost her legal rights and property; or the money she earned after marriage was transferred to her husband. Women's financial dependence on men determined their submission to men which was likely to lead to women's mental disorders. In the novel, Rochester's secretly concealed wife, Bertha Mason represents the typically miserable status of Victorian married women. With the representation of Bertha, Charlotte Brontë pointedly exposes this typical Victorian social problem.

Being a pupil, teacher, governess and an author herself, Brontë rejects Victorian society's prejudices, norms, values, moral and views to give women status. Her attitudes are exactly opposite to the idea of interpreting woman as the angel of the house. Charlotte Brontë is not a rebel but as an artist who gives more importance to the women's consciousness by using her extraordinary and challenging heroine Jane. To track out the women's consciousness, Brontë talks about the marriage which is based on the companionate relationship. She even herself feared such a restriction before her own marriage with Arthur Bell Nicholls. However *Jane Eyre* emphasizes on marital interdependence. The matter of narration is closely connected to the ending of the plot and the heroine becomes independent and confident whereas the hero turns to be dependent on his beloved Jane as he has lost his eye sight. But there comes a mutual understanding, interdependence and the fusion of passion and duty. Therefore, Jane says, " Mr. Rochester continued blind the first two

years of our union perhaps it was that circumstance that drew us so very near. That knit us so very close. For I was then his vision, as I am still his right hand"(339).

The research hypothesizes that marriage between equals is a significant breakthrough for mutual relationship and gender equality. The objective of this research is to examine how Brontë's strong character Jane reacts against traditional ideals of marriage and how she finally becomes successful to settle her life in the companionate marriage, often criticized by Victorian patriarchy. This research has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter presents background to Jane's quest for interdependence in marriage along with a critical review of literature. The second chapter will discuss about the crucial issues of Victorian marriage, women's status and Brontë's career as a woman writer. The third chapter will deal with some textual evidences to analyze the issues of marriage, and Jane's achievement of companionate marriage. And the fourth chapter will conclude the entire research with the restatement of the idea of mutual relationship in marital life.

After its publication, Brontë's *Jane Eyre* has been viewed from various perspectives. The critics' attention was drawn to his novel because of its unconventionality and distinctiveness from the mainstream of contemporary fiction. Many reviews about the sensation that *Jane Eyre* has created have appeared in various magazines and journals. They emphasize autobiographical, Marxist, feminist, psychoanalytic and post-colonialist views over *Jane Eyre*.

Observing the novel *Jane Eyre* as an extraordinary phenomenon and a realistic fiction based on marital interdependence, Andrew Sanders states:

Jane Eyre was, and remains, an extraordinary phenomenon: a totally as scored, provocation, and compelling piece of realist fiction. to its first readers, and even its publishers, it seemed to have come from however,

being ascribed to the genderless figure of 'Currer Bell', the supposed 'editor' of an obviously female narrative. It has not lost its power to surprise and provoke. However much *Jane Eyre* has established itself as a 'classic' and popular love-story, it in fact insists on independence as forcefully as it recognizes the importance of sexual and marital interdependence.(419)

Here, Sanders tries to assert that this realistic fiction published under the genderless name of 'Currer Bell' though a 'classic' and a famous love story, it deals with the importance of gender equality and marital interdependence.

Likewise, Margaret J. Arnold also comments on this novel, "In *Jane Eyre*, Jane educates Rochester so that he accepts her as an equal and as a real woman rather than an angel, elf, or sprite" (84). It is absolutely agreeable that it is Jane who makes her master accept her as an equal partner. Mr. Rochester finally knows how to love and be loved. The equalization comes when Jane demands it for her true love with companionship.

Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is such a typical heroine who does not want to depend upon others. She wants to make her own money and own destiny. She wants to be equal to her life partner. She does not want to sacrifice anything because sacrifice leads to women to be more submissive in the patriarchal society. Looking into Jane's philosophy of gender equality, Dobree claims:

But now, with her own income, with herself, not ordinarily speaking very beautiful, physically superior to her maimed and blinded husband, she is at least his equal. It is not the morbid pleasure of self-sacrifice she enjoys; she was perfectly truthful when she told Rochester that she was sacrificing nothing. (13)

Jane with economic independence, speaks smartly and asserts that she is equal to Mr. Edward Rochester. And this is obviously not her sacrifice. She does not love him with the sense of traditional sacrifice but with a consciousness towards gender equality.

Similarly, Brontë has high praise for her heroine Jane Eyre. She finds the strength of Jane's character rather than her weakness. To clarify this idea George Sampson declares:

Jane Eyre is a unique Victorian book because in it purity becomes passionate and outspoken. Gone is the 'man's woman'; here is woman herself, confronting man on equal terms. *Jane Eyre* is the first modern novel, the first to envelope the life of a plain, ordinary woman with romance. (34)

Sampson clearly asserts that, though Jane is a plain, obscure and ordinary woman but she is comparing herself to man as his equal. This is the central point of the story. In the Victorian Era, a woman was identified by her relation with her husband after marriage but Jane is a modern woman who identifies herself confronting men on equal terms.

Brontë's novel is based on her own life. Every incident and act is presented through the reflection of Jane's life. Therefore, as quoted in G.H. Lewes and Lady Eastlake, Christian Remembrance Anon states, "All the power is shown and all the interest lies in the characters. we have before intimated our belief, that in *Jane Eyre*, the heroine of the piece, we have, in some measure, a portrait of the writer. If not, it is a most skillful imitation of autobiography"(14). Here, Anon clarifies that all the action done by the central character Jane and all the problems come in her life create the image of Brontë's own life. Each and every event, and setting is interconnected to

each other. Brontë expresses her own pathetically suffered life through this semi-autobiographical novel.

Reviewing the novel, G.H. Lewes and Eastlake deal with the strong feeling of love made between Jane and Mr. Rochester. He argues, "Indeed, one may say of Currer Bell, what a contemporary has already said that her genius finds its fittest illustration in her 'Rochesters' and 'Jane Eyres'; they are men and women of deep feeling, clear intellects, vehement tempers, bad manners, ungraceful, yet loveable persons"(20).

Lewes is pointing to the love between Mr. Rochester and Jane. Though they seem to be plain and have vehement temper, but they have the deep feelings of love and extra ordinary intellect. Likewise, Sally Minogue mentions, "Whatever else, this is a great love story"(5). Minogue views that though this novel can be interpreted from various perspectives like Marxist or feminist or psychoanalytic, the grand feeling of love between Mr. Rochester and Jane is central to the novel.

Furthermore, G.H. Lewes and Eastlake praise the way Charlotte Brontë has presented such a novel like *Jane Eyre*:

Whoever may be the author, we hope to see more such books from her pen; for that these volumes are from the pen of a lady, and a clever one too, we have not the shadow of a doubt: nor can there be any question as to the reality of many of the scenes and personages so artistically depicted; the characters are too life like to be the mere creations of fancy, and sketchy as some of them are, they are windrows telling; several of them we almost feel persuaded we have met with in real life.

(13)

Lewes declares that Charlotte Brontë has such a skill and power to write this novel.

This novel speaks from the inner heart of every woman which has mingled into the reality scenes. Jane is Brontë's strongest character.

Thus, critics have explored the different approaches to this text in many ways. They have emphasized different issues like Victorian tendencies such as Jane's search for equality and liberty, and Bertha's miserable condition at Thornfield. Many critics have analyzed the marriages in *Jane Eyre* such as the marriage of Edward Rochester, Bertha Mason, Rosamond Oliver, Blanch Ingram, proposal of St. John to Jane and Jane's Marriage to Rochester. But none of them has attempted to analyze gender equality based on companionate marriage between two equal partners – Jane and Rochester. So this is what this research is oriented to.

CHAPTER : II

Victorian Society and Women's Status

Ideals of Marriage and Women's Oppression

Victorian age (1837-1901) of nineteenth century England was a period of vast social and economic differences between men and women. Women's status was considered low and their rights were limited. Victorian women, regardless of their class, were oppressed socially, psychologically, politically and economically by patriarchy. Under miserable conditions and for too little pay, women of the working class were employed in factories as work force. Women were dependent on their husband's income. Women were expected to be supreme in the house and in all domestic matter. They were confined to a limited sphere of the household.

The rise of industrialization, the urban center and the family wage helped to create a new division between the public world of work and politics and the private world of home and family. Men's positions were transformed from the organizer of family labor to the provider of wage-earned income. Women took the responsibility for the training and education of children and for the maintenance of the domesticity of home.

In addition, marriage in the Victorian period, was fully guided by the dynastic convention. Traditional dynastic marriages were of course the marriage of oppressive force that chains women to their husbands and relinquished them of their independence. This type of marriage concerns the policy, gifts, dowry, given in the form of huge piles of money, luxurious goods and territorial concession. And this dynastic marriage was possibly one of the most significant points in a woman's life in the Victorian Era. The Victorian society's view of marriage, as women's submissiveness and men's control over women, was one of the tendency of dynastic

marriage. In traditional dynastic marriage, women hold an important position as wives since they took care of the household. However from the male's point of view, women were nothing more than overly emotional and mindless creatures.

According to the Cambridge International Dictionary, marriage is a legally accepted relationship between a woman and a man in which they live as husband and wife or the official ceremony which results in the legitimate union between husband and wife.

In Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*, marriage is taken to be a means of equal position between man and woman. Therefore, the central theme is set around the focal point of companionate marriage although the Victorians were just opposite of it. The Victorians were fixed in view of women that women are the "angels of the house". Indicating the typical idea of womanhood Barbara Weller states, "the cult of true womanhood came to represent cut the purity and sanctity of family life and the idealization of the morally responsible mother, wife and homemaker" (342). As she states that the womanhood comes when female becomes a responsible mother, wife and homemaker. This idea is totally unacceptable to Brontë. Therefore, with this strong convention about marriage in Victorian Era, Brontë establishes her own concept about marriage. She implies that people, especially men's marriage for property and social status, is the marriage of dynastic legacy. Rochester's marriage to Bertha Mason is typical of this marriage. It is very difficult to have companionate marriage in the setting of dynastic marriage. However, Brontë successfully establishes the concept of companionate marriage by mutual affection and marriage between Jane and Rochester.

Middle-class women would only expect a good marriage, which could provide them with a better social position and economic security. Unlike most middle-class

boys who received an education to prepare them for a profession, most middle-class girls received a finishing school education, such as playing the piano, drawing, or speaking French to help them attract a good husband because there were no proper professions open to them. Married women had far fewer legal rights and had no economic independence. No sooner had a woman married, than she lost her legal rights and property. The money she earned after marriage was also transferred to her husband. Reflecting upon the way women's financial dependence on men determined their submission to men and the possibility of men's arbitrary abuse of women, which was likely to lead to women's mental disorders, Dorothy Parker has stated, "I cannot be just to books which treat of women as women.... My idea is that all of us, men as well as women, should be regarded as human beings: But nominalism is other inadequate doctrine, and surely woman is, like man, a human being; but such a declaration is abstract"(14). Parker worries that women have been treated as a subordinate person. She suggests that both men and women should be treated on an equal footing.

Bertha Mason as being represented in the novel, typically exemplifies the miserable status of Victorian married women. With the representation of Bertha, Charlotte Brontë pointedly exposes this Victorian social problem. Victorian women could almost never divorce their husbands as the divorce cost was extremely high and almost impossible to obtain. Married women could not own property to support themselves without depending on their husbands until Britain passed the Married Women's Property Act in 1870.

Some critics have tried to go beyond the purely economic explanation of women's oppression. They try to look at the way in which ideology creates gender divisions. Michel Barrel stresses the way in which ideology has a pivotal role in the

construction of the gender, particularly through the institution of the family and the ideology of 'familialism'. Showalter demonstrates that the Victorians support the opinion that a woman should be "a perfect lady; an angel in the house; contentedly submissive to men, but strong in her inner purity and religiosity, queen in her own realm of the home" (14). Decades later Virginia Woolf also described the Victorian idealized woman:

She was intensely sympathetic. She was immensely charming. She was utterly unselfish. She excelled in the difficult arts of family life she sacrificed herself daily. If there was chicken, She took the leg; if there was a drought she sat in it—in short... she never had a mind or wish of new own.... Above all—I need not say it—she was pure. (qtd in Newman 9)

In the eyes of the Victorians, the ideal of a feminine figure was a morally pure lady who would make a tranquil, clean and comfortable home. The ideology of separate place and submission of women was an inevitable product of patriarchal Society. Undoubtedly, it would create shock and panic for conventional Victorians if women involved themselves in the man's sphere, taking on vocations as men did and no longer being dependent on men. However, with the rise of industrial capitalism, the middle classes demanded more economic, political and cultural power. As urban industrial centers became more and more economically important, women were brought out of home, leaving their proper sphere of domesticity. This conception was especially held among the middle classes.

Unconventional Writing Spirit of Brontë

In the nineteenth century, there was a greater demand for fiction, which was used as one of the means for the middle classes to consolidate their economic,

political and cultural dominance. The female reading public also expanded as the middle-class family was equipped with domestic servants. Books and magazines could help to fill more and more of their leisure time. Facing this great demand, women were not content to remain readers only, and they were also eager to write not only to support themselves economically if they had no other income but also to contemplate their proper sphere via the novel. Very few women in Victorian time could adopt men's professions outside home. Women's creativity was highly discouraged. The Victorian social prejudice was concerned with the opinion that literature could not and ought not to be the business of a woman's life.

Furthermore, Victorian women did not have the right to vote, and married woman virtually did not exist in legal terms. Under British common law, they could not have their own property, have custody of their own children, make a will or seek for legal separation from their husbands except through some male relative like a brother or father. Emphasizing the problems of women's condition, the Victorian writers reflect miserable condition through their writing. The image of their thinking was poured through their heroine who struggled as much as she could have her position parallel to the male. Catherine Wells Cole thinks:

Victorian women's writing as an area of study has emerged in parallel with feminist criticism. This has meant not only the rediscovery of forgotten writers The Victorian heroine and the Victorian woman writer herself offer perfect image of the struggles of all women caught in patriarchal structures, be they social, linguistic or literary. (870)

Moreover, Charlotte Brontë had a difficult childhood as she lost her parents. She had to take the responsibility of the family as an elder daughter. Later, she started working as a school teacher. She also started writing which, then, was supposed to be

man's business. Brontë did not give up writing after being warned by the famous poet Robert Southey that literature could not be and ought not to be the business of a woman's life instead of their "proper duties" of pure home making. In order to justify their dominance the middle classes stressed that the representations of a woman in the novel must represent the separate sphere of domesticity. Particularly they should be represented as reflecting a woman's engaging in her "proper duties" of her proper sphere. The Victorians argued woman writer's writing should accord with this criterion if they had to accept the fact that woman had begun to write as men did. They applied "a double standard" to literary works that woman's writing should be differentiated from men's writing. As Ewbank states that a woman writer "was supposed to stay strictly within the limits of female delicacy in subject and style,...[otherwise, She might be] scolded for doing something which, had she been a man, would have been praised" (2).

The Victorians expected women's writings to reflect the feminine value they exalted, namely, "An Angel in the House": an ideal Victorian woman. Moreover, they would be offended if women's writing failed to reflect the merits of that domestic ideal. Lewes reveals this strong rigid prejudice towards women's writing:

The advent of female literature promises woman's view of life, woman's experience: in other words, a new element. Make what distinctions you please in the social world, it still remains true that men and women have different organizations, consequently different experience....But hitherto ... literature of women has fallen short of its functions owing to a very natural and very explicable weakness- it has been too much a literature of imitation. To write as men write is the

aim and besetting sin of women; to write as women is the real task they have to perform.(3)

The 'function' of women's literature, according to George Henry Lewes, is to explore "woman's view of life" and "women's experience". This is different from that of man. If women write as men do in terms of the subject matter, they will fail to fulfill that "function". Their writing should be condemned as "coarseness." With all the forces from the patriarchal society, women writers of this age were contemplating the ideal of womanhood through novels. Ewbank points out although the plots were different, the novels of this age shared the same theme "the woman as an influence on others within her domestic and social circle ...[and] the typical woman novelist of the 1840s found her proper sphere in using the novel to demonstrate woman's proper sphere" (41). Here the subject matter and style must concern woman's proper sphere in a woman's writing, otherwise she and her writing would be deemed as improper. After having probed the Victorian's criterion of a domestic ideal and their expectation that women's writing must reflect that criterion, it is clear why *Jane Eyre* was so much defamed by some of Brontë's contemporaries in terms of its subject matter, the language, and its subversive tendency.

Domestic novels of the first half of the nineteenth century dealt with homes, health, children and relationships between women and love. Domestic novels represented the home as the sphere over which the woman presided and were an important expression of "separate spheres ideology". They acted as a guide to right conduct and set good example for how women could become perfect ladies. Different from the characteristics of traditional domestic novels *Jane Eyre* traces a woman's growing progress and explores female sensibility. The worshipper of "female sensibility" was deemed as the big enemy to female writing in this age. Although

the Victorians saw women's true function as an 'influence' rather than an independent agent, in *Jane Eyre*, Jane asserts her own identity as an individual, rather than exist in terms of her influence with a domestic circle.

It was Victorian convention and custom that caused Brontë's contemporaries to see women's writings with prejudice. Charlotte Brontë also encountered the same "double standard" that Victorians applied to literary works in the reviews of *Jane Eyre*. The Victorians would have praised the book if it had been written by a man, and pronounced it 'odious' just because it was written by a woman. This shows the strong prejudice to women's writings prevalent in Victorian time. Similarly, Showalter also pointed out, "To their contemporaries nineteenth-century women writers were women first, artists second" (73). Women were always regarded as women but not the writers. After being the proper and submissive women they count as the educated woman and then they get the chance to write novel. In Victorian times, a novel by a woman was supposed to be feminine, which must concern women's proper state and eulogize a domestic feminine ideal. Otherwise the novel would be condemned improper and the women would be labeled "pretty hearty unsexed" (73).

Against the Victorian's criterion of a domestic ideal and their expectation *Jane Eyre* was defamed by some of Brontë's contemporaries, especially in light of its female authorship. Those factors condemned by the contemporaries for transcending the proper state of Victorian women. Fortunately, today we could reject those prejudices against women writers when we read the book. What we see is that Brontë portrays an indomitable female figure that sets a good example for the world's women who are currently experiencing difficulties. Moreover, by presenting a text that depicts women's consciousness, she asks people to re-examine women's value, roles and functions in the male-dominated Victorian culture.

The Victorian woman writers were prescribed by Victorian convention of woman's sphere. But Brontë was contemplating her own proper state as a woman and as a writer. Her heroine Jane, is also in the process of looking for her own status in the novel. Brontë makes Jane find finally a proper state with a companionate relationship. But more importantly, she struggles for her own independence and equality with men. This is rather unconventional within the mid-nineteenth century literary world.

Moreover, Victorian women writers like Jane Austen, George Eliot and Brontë sisters tried to gain the equal status as that of men. In writing, Brontë, however, seems more conscious about the women condition, which she has expressed more strongly than Jane Austen. Ronald Carter and John Mcrae claim, "Charlotte and Emily Brontë are in many ways both opposite to Jane Austen"(267). Therefore, Brontë's writing is not only impressive to reader but also influenced even her contemporary Mrs.

Gaskell:

One set of words was the truthful mirror of her thought; no others, however apparently identical in meaning, would do... she would wait patiently, searching for the right term, until it presented itself to her. It might be provincial, it might be derived the Latin; so that it accurately represented her idea, she did not mind whence it came... She never wrote down a sentence until she deeply understood what she wanted to say, had deliberately chosen the words, and had arranged them in their right orders. (qtd. in Lodge 88).

Brontë's writing comes from her inner feelings. Every piece of her writing is her thought which she wants to show and fight for her equality.

Jane as the Projection of Brontë's Self

Charlotte Brontë is the representation of a typical woman writer, who sees a large difference between herself and traditional perceptions about what a woman is supposed to be. What is particularly noteworthy about all of Brontë's works is the spirit of fierceness and passion. As one of the first important women writers of English literature, Brontë demands the right of women to emotional and sexual independence. This tendency can be traced in *Jane Eyre*, but it is also present in *Shirley*. Brontë wins to achieve the power to establish woman awareness in the Victorian society. Due to the sense of authenticity, inner independence and originality *Jane Eyre* distinctly shifts from presenting the traditional ideal of woman to exploring the rebellion nature of new woman. Observing how women were traditionally regarded as the weak and lacking thinking power and how they were ranked after males, Elaine Showalter points out:

Victorian physicians believed that women's physiological functions diverted about twenty percent of their creative energy from brain activity. Victorian anthropologists believed that the frontal lobes of the male brain were heavier and more developed than female lobes and thus that women were inferior in intelligence. (313)

She expresses that women are labeled to be weak not only physically but also mentally. The Victorians had an assumption that women naturally differ from men in every sense from physical to intellectual.

However Brontë's female characters in her novels are largely different from the traditional female characters in the sense that the former have growing awareness toward their position. *Jane Eyre* gives a portrayal of a woman who does not want to be suppressed by the Victorian patriarchal ideology. Therefore the idea which Brontë has created through her heroine Jane, is reflection of her instinct as a conscious woman of

nineteenth century England. Brontë gives much more emphasis to the condition of the Victorian women's position on education, social, marital and economic independence.

Brontë is, in fact, the first woman to establish the women position in Victorian patriarchal society. She belongs to new generation with social awareness and rebellion spirit. Carter and Mcrae observe, “Jane Eyre’s ‘Reader, I married him’ close to the end of Charlotte Brontë's novel that bears the character's name, shows the reversal of roles and the decision-making capacities that the new generation of socially aware women could demonstrate” (26). Brontë's idea of creating dialogue in her character Jane in the last chapter of the novel is very thoughtful. She presents a reversed role between the male and female. Brontë’s character Jane has depicted her strong position over the patriarchal society.

Similarly, Brontë herself is a conscious woman and also contemplates to have socially conscious women in the Victorian time. Jane’s dialogues throughout the novel reflect Brontë’s awareness and present her authentic voice. Appreciating Brontë’s strong and refined consciousness Virginia Wolf asserts:

I could never rest in communication with strong, discreet and refined minds, she [Charlotte] writes, as any leader writer in a provincial journal might have written; but gathering fire and speed goes on in her own authentic voice, till I had passed the out works of conventional takes her seat; it is the red and fitful glow of the heart's fire which illumines her page. (qtd. in Lodge 89)

Wolf describes Brontë as a fire to destroy the Victorian patriarchal society's assumption over women. During the Victorian period, women had been continued to be second-class citizens.

Furthermore, Women writers could not express their feelings but they express their anger through their writings. Stoneman Patsy also comments on this idea:

They read nineteenth century text by women as split between a conforming 'heroine' (like Jane Eyre) and a repressed and marginalized 'other' (Like the first Mrs. Rochester) who cannot be allowed to occupy center stage, but who nevertheless registers the author's 'unspeakable' anger. (14)

Brontë uses such a woman like Bertha Mason who makes the portrait of Sharp anger against the Victorians. When Jane is much conscious woman to take place in Victorian society, Bertha rebels directly against that society. She makes damages to Thornfield Hall and makes Rochester a disabled person. This is her anger against Victorians.

Brontë's first published novel *Jane Eyre* is appeared to be considered as an example of women who can measure herself to the man. As the novel is semi-autobiographical, Jane is the perfect image of Brontë herself. She has the thought of self-reliance. She asserts that women can also become independent in themselves. As Jane declares " I am my own mistress"(385), it indicates that she does not want to be anyone's mistress but an independent lady. She can handle her responsibility for her own life. Jane as the main character of the novel *Jane Eyre*, is perfect in her thought and idea, rules and philosophy of her own thought. Ronald Carter and John Mcrac again state:

Jane grows in maturity and understanding she becomes increasing independent and self-reliant in her judgments. Like the heroine in *Villette*(1853), she is not strikingly beautiful but plain, and on the surface at least, reticent. However, she is passionate and unafraid of

her strong feelings. In *Jane Eyre*, Charlotte Brontë sends out a signal that ordinary woman can experience deep love and began to take responsibility for their own lives. (268)

We can examine the reflection of Brontë on her character Jane. She does not run away from the obstacle that comes in her life. Rather she, being a conscious woman, fights for her rights and equality and longs for marriage between equals through her companionate marriage with Rochester.

Chapter : III

Dynamics of Marriage Between Equals

Rochester's Double Role and Jane's Urge for Mutual Relationship

As Jane is the most powerful character in the novel *Jane Eyre*, she has her own moral thoughts, law, rules and philosophy. Marriage is the central aspect of this novel. To get an appropriate husband is a major challenge for Jane in the Victorian society. Throughout the novel Jane tries to establish her own thought of marriage which represents women's consciousness for gender equality. Jane and Mr. Rochester have a sexual attraction, an intellectual bond, and a love that endures even after separation. However, the relationship is not as simple as two characters fall in love and marry. It is a bond of marriage grounded on mutual relationship and interdependence between a couple of pure souls.

The Victorians were based on the conception that women are designed to be submissive and dependent to their husband after their marriage. Reaching against this conventional dimension of marriage, Jane expresses:

Women are supposed to be very calm generally but women feel just as men feel, they need exercise for their faculties, and a field for their efforts as much as their brothers do; they suffer from too rigid a restraint, too absolute a stagnation, precisely as men would suffer, and it is narrow-minded in their more privileged fellow-creatures to say that they ought to confine themselves to making pudding and knitting stockings, to playing on the piano and embroidering bags. It is thoughtless to condemn them, or laugh at them, if they seek to do more or learn more than custom has pronounced necessary for their sex. (95)

Jane Eyre, to a very large extent, is a rebel against the domestic feminine ideal which the nineteenth-century Victorians were busy with building up. It explicitly challenges and condemns the conventions of the domestic feminine ideal. Jane releases her idea of woman's consciousness when she works as a governess in the Thornfield Hall. The idea of women as being equal to men and women's needs being the same as men's, was undoubtedly crazy and unacceptable to Victorians. Therefore, this rebellion of Jane against domestic feminine ideal creates a foundation of courage for Jane to establish her own idea and moral law.

As several scholars note, Mr. Rochester exerts control over his young governess from the moment they meet. Because of Jane's love for Mr. Rochester and her role as a governess in his household, Jane has a strong desire to please Mr. Rochester. From the society's standards, Jane is ever unlikely to marry Rochester because she is a poor and plain orphan, and herself has no plans for marriage in her life. The unlikely marriage comes about in part because of Mr. Rochester's control over Jane. In this regard, David Cecil Claims, "No Flesh and blood man could be so exclusively composed of violence and virility and masculine vanity as Mr. Rochester (100). Rochester uses his authority over Jane to his advantage by commanding her like an employer even on personal matters and putting his own desires ahead of hers. Mr. Rochester's commands and Jane's obedient responses to his control play an important role in the development of their romantic relationship.

Moreover Brontë has presented various problems connecting to marriage. One of them is the conflict between passion and reason. As David Lodge remarks, "writing which is visionary and poetic, evocative of heightened states of feeling, insisting on the value of Individual self- fulfillment won from a conflict between passion and reason conducted at an extraordinary pitch of imaginative

perception”(125).Lodge makes clear that Brontë reveals her idealistic concept of marriage by presenting the passion and reason to give value to individual self-fulfillment.

Jane Eyre is the novel based on the passionate love between Jane and Mr. Rochester. Both of them are from different backgrounds, opposite personality and experience. Since Jane is poor, obscure, plain and has no parents, she is outcasted by her aunt, Mrs. Reed. Jane's life in Gates Head Hall and at Lowood School causes many traumatic feelings physically and mentally. She becomes a social outcast. She always tries to search love in her life but she gets only the torture and hatred. The more Jane gets hatred the more she dares to fight against injustice.

Jane, who is independent, strong, forward, and radical in the sense of marriage, has made her own law in Gateshead and Lowoodschool. She has been left with Mrs. Reed in Gateshead by her uncle. The one whom Jane does not like in her life is her cruel and harsh aunt. It is very difficult for Jane to spend her life with her dishonest and liar cousin. But the tolerations of many tearful nights, frightened, and agonized days make Jane's spirit strong and fearless. Drawing upon Jane's strong personality, KatheleenTillotson asserts:

Jane is self-critical but also self-respecting; her modesty attracts while never making the reader take her at her own initial valuation. We watch a personality discovering itself not by long introspection but by a habit of keeping pace with her own experience. It is from her own explicit record that we are convinced both of her plainness and her charm, her delicacy and her endurance, her humility and her pride. (26)

Katheleen argues that Jane tolerates many frightened and agonized days but she is able to keep pace with her own experience. She is the mixture of both qualities - self-

critical and self-respecting. She is plain but pretty intellectually. She speaks fearlessly and tries to overcome every obstacle that comes in her life. Therefore, Jane in this novel is presented as a conscious woman. She thinks ideally, she looks with human eyes and she speaks like men's voice. This is the main theme that this novel tries to express. Brontë uses such an extraordinary character who can challenge the male chauvinism during the Victorian society. The concept and idea used through the character Jane is the most worthy aspect of this novel.

When Mrs. Reed is on her own death bed she recognizes her cruelty and unjust committed to Jane and now she praises Jane as the strong-hearted woman who can rebel without fear. Jane's moral concept portrays the image of fearless and brave girl. In this regard, when Mrs. Reed asks Jane who will care if she breaks the conventional rules, she asserts, "I care for myself, the more solitary, the more friendless, the more unsustained I am, the more I will respect myself"(28). This shows she is ready to fight every obstacle that comes in her life. Being an orphan from the childhood, Jane is most conscious about her role.

After leaving Gateshead and Lowood, Jane longs for a change. She says, "I desired liberty; for liberty I gasped; for liberty I uttered a prayer" (73). Jane's repetition of the word "liberty" indicates how much trapped she feels at Lowood. At this moment, what Jane wants most out of life is freedom. When Jane realizes that liberty is impossible, she cries out, "Grant me, at least, a new servitude !" (73). With this statement, Jane takes a realistic view of what she must expect out of life as a poor orphan. However, she still has hope that she can somehow make a new kind of life for herself. As Jane becomes a governess at Thornfield the novel slowly moves towards the course of marriage.

After leaving Lowood school, Jane ventures to Thornfield Hall as governess. As a governess she starts earning some money and feel some spiritual independence. Jane is satisfied with her work, but she finds the quiet life there rather boring. At the passage of time, Jane encounters with Mr. Edward Rochester, the hero of the novel. David Lodge again comments, "Early in Rochester's relationship with Jane, perceives resources of reason and moral strength in her which can control the passion"(121). Looking into the intelligence of Jane, Mr. Rochester soon falls in love with her. But he cannot directly express it to her. So he pretends to marry Miss Ingram so that she would love him out of jealousy.

Their relationship develops gradually. The conversation continues between Mr. Rochester and Jane. As the conversation continues, Mr. Rochester highlights his higher social class in that he feels no need to indulge in polite conversation. Mr. Rochester finds the well-groomed Blanche Ingram tiresome, but Jane, despite her solemnity, amuses him. Mr. Rochester asks Jane, "Do you think me handsome?", to which she replies with a straightforward, "No, sir" (114). The overly familiar question reflects the confusion of a governess's role. However, Jane's straight forward answer and honesty delight Mr. Rochester so much, so he plays off her answer by teasing her and pressing her to continue speaking.

However, Rochester longs for a masculine identity based in morality and domesticity. He detests his first loveless marriage with Bertha Mason which Jane does not know about it. He longs to make up for his past sins and become a moral man and loving husband. These are elements found at the core of Victorian middle class masculinity. On the one hand, Rochester wishes to escape his immoral gentry, masculinity and become a middle-class, domestic man and on the other, he is controlling Jane to get her using power of Victorian masculinity. He exhibits this

double role time and again until he fully realizes the value of Jane and mutual bond. His double role has given Jane an opportunity to overcome oppression and to have mutual respect and love, eventually results in the bond of companionate marriage between them.

As a gentleman, Rochester is in a position to marry up into the aristocracy (as he would have if he had actually intended to marry Blanche Ingram) or down in to the upper middle class, (as in his marriage to Bertha). Both these situations are mercenary matches because marriages between members of the elite class are often marriages of interest. Rochester is made to marry Bertha for money in return for his family name and "good race" (269). Blanche Ingram wants to marry Rochester because he is rich. Doubtless, her family desires the match for the same reason. In return, Rochester would become connected to the aristocracy. Rochester, however, does not approve of this model of marriage. Instead, he wants a companionate marriage—a marriage for love, intimacy, attachment, sharing, caring, and passion. He wants a marriage of equality and emotional attachment.

During the party, Jane sits alone while Mr. Rochester cruelly flaunts his friendship with Blanche. Yet when he sees Jane slipping away, he demands to know why she does not speak to him. As Jane's eyes fill with tears, he takes no time to comfort her and instead makes another demand, "so long as my visitors stay, I expect you to appear in the drawing-room every evening" (158). Once again he orders Jane as an employer even though the demand he makes is a personal one. Because of her role as the governess, Jane cannot say no to the request, even though it causes her pain. Nancy Jane Tyson writes of the relation, "He dominates the young governess in conversation demanding that she entertain and divert him. He spies on her and orders her from room to room with a personal interest more intense than that of employer for

employee" (97). Even though Mr. Rochester seems to have romantic feelings for Jane, he continues to order her around like an employer so that he can control her action.

Despite the pain Mr. Rochester causes Jane and the control he exerts over her, Jane falls firmly in love with him during her first few months at Thornfield. Within his controlling language, there is also love, attraction, and interest, and Jane delights in his attention. She thinks, "Gratitude, and many associations, all pleasurable and genial, made his face the object I best liked to see" (128). And even she says, "I have told you reader, that I had learnt to love Mr. Rochester. I could not unlove him now..." (162). These statements demonstrate the intense love and attraction Jane feels towards Mr. Rochester. Her feelings are so strong that she feels he is blameless for any of his negative qualities. The love Jane feels to Mr. Rochester is coupled with her awareness. Jane knows Mr. Rochester is trying to get her but the way he uses, she really does not like. She falls in between his double standard and tries to seek her position.

Jane Eyre is not a fully romantic novel. It is the classic tale of love which presents a fully conscious lady like Jane. She is very poor economically but rich intellectually. This is the love between master and governess. The marriage is the outcome of love not of money, wealth, family, beauty and society. When Mr. Rochester arranges the plan to make love by Jane to him by using Miss Ingram as tool, Jane starts to feel love to her master. She states, "I have told year reader, that I had learnt to love Mr. Rochester. I could not unlove him now, merely because I found that he had ceased to notice me because I might pass hours in his presence, and he would never once turn his eyes in my direction" (162). Slowly and gradually Jane falls in love with Rochester without knowing the secret of Mr. Rochester's married status and circumstance held in Thronfield Hall.

Eventually when Jane returns from Gateshead after meeting to her dying aunt Mr. Reed, she knows that Jane's pupil Adela is planned to be sent to school. Therefore, Jane sees the necessity of her departure from Thornfield Hall and Mr. Rochester. But Rochester reveals his invented plan to marry Miss Ingram. Rochester says he never loves Miss Ingram. He tells her that he has just invented a plan to make Jane feel jealous of Miss Ingram so that she can love him as he wished to. They express their conflicting feelings:

'Where do you see the necessity?' he asked suddenly.

'Where? You, Sir, have placed it before me'.

'In what shape?'

'In the shape of Miss Ingram; a noble and beautiful woman,- your bride.'

'My bride! What bride? I have no bride.'

'But you will have'. (222)

The conflict between Jane and Rochester comes to unfold the true love. Jane always hopes to have true love which works only by combining passion and reason.

The Victorians state that the criterion of a domestic ideal was that a pure feminine mind must know no sin, no evil, and no sexual passion. To the Victorians, Brontë obviously seems "unwomanly" against this doctrine. Jane's rebellion against oppression and subjection, her longing for equality and independence, her courage of expressing love and her true self, portray the image of Jane unlike the submissive Victorian woman. Jane's revelation about her innermost secret love to Rochester challenges the convention that women never express their love. Provoked by Rochester's tricks of pretending to marry Miss Ingram to make her jealous, Jane speaks openly of her passion for Rochester:

Do you think I am automation? a machine without feelings? and can bear to have my morsel of bread snatched from my lips, and my drop of living water dashed from my cup? Do you think, because I am poor obscure, plain, and little, I am soulless and heartless? You think wrong! I have as much soul as you.... And full as much hearts! And if God had gifted me with some beauty and much wealth, I should have made it as hard for you to leave me,... It is my spirit that addresses your spirit, just as if both had passed through the grave, and we stood at God's feet, equal....as we are!. (223)

On the other hand, Rochester echoes Jane's Language of equality, replying "As we are" (223). He truly does want a relationship of equality, though his pride and desire to control overshadows this aim for large stretches of the narrative. Mr. Rochester's damaging pride and need for control are brought to the fore by the deceptions he uses to make Jane love him. He pretends to woo Blanch Ingram, a woman for whom he has no respect. In Miss Blanch, he finds some of his more despicable qualities in order to make Jane fall in love with him. As he says, "Well, I feigned courtship of Miss Ingram, because, I wished to render you as madly in love with me as I was with you; and I knew jealousy would be the best ally I could call in for the furtherance of that end" (231).

Jane hates the idea of Rochester's trick and love for her. It makes Jane feel like a caged bird. Jane conflicts with Rochester only for her true love. But while he makes her as a cage bird, Jane wants to prove that she is not like a caged bird rather a free human being. With full of passion and emotion she says, "I am no bird; and no net ensnares me; I am a free human being with an independent will" (223). Jane indignantly asserts her own self-worth with this strong statement of independence. She

uses the word "I" twice in the statement, emphasizing that she is just a much of a person as Mr. Rochester, not a machine to be ordered around.

After Jane's declaration of love and equality, Rochester proceeds his proposal of marriage with the statement "My bride is here because my equal is here and my likeness, Jane, will you marry me?" (224). Here again, Rochester indicates that he desires for a marriage of equals. Jane is his bride because they are equal and akin to one another. Mr. Rochester attempts to marry Jane because he loves Jane so deeply that he cannot imagine life without her. However, his love does not make his action any less selfish. James Phillips argues, "Rochester wishes to marry Jane because it is through marriage that they will be able to enter a relationship of equals; he wishes to marry her precisely because he does not want to take advantage of her" (203).

Through devastating consequences, Jane will suffer if he does not tell the truth about Bertha. By proposing to Jane while hiding his marriage to Bertha, Mr. Rochester once again puts his own desires ahead of Jane. In this way, he is taking advantage of her which James Phillips comments oppositely.

Mr. Rochester knows that Jane will not marry him if he tells her about Bertha, and will leave him because of it. He cannot allow this. So despite his earlier commitment to tell the truth to Jane, Rochester continues to deceive her. If Jane leaves him, it will hurt him too much to be torn from her. Rochester's one nod toward honesty occurs when on the night before their wedding, he promises to tell Jane the truth about Grace Poole which means telling her the truth about Bertha in a year and a day. He says, "I see you would ask why I keep such a woman in my house. When we have been married a year and a day, I will tell you, but not now. Are you satisfied, Jane? Do you accept my solution of the mystery?" (251). He hopes that Jane will not

leave him after a year of marriage. He believes she will realize that the fact that their marriage is not lawful does not change that marriage in essentials.

Moreover, as an engaged couple, the dynamics between Jane and Mr. Rochester shift. But the overarching power differences remain. As Mr. Rochester's fiancée, Jane freely teases and banters with him, and he enjoys her playful side. However, while shopping for new gowns, Jane grows weary from Mr. Rochester's attempts to buy her extravagant clothes and Jewelry. She thinks, "The more he bought me, the more my cheek burned with a sense of annoyance and degradation" (280). Jane's agitation over Mr. Rochester's behavior reflects her awareness that once again he is treating her like a "machine without feeling". Her protests and embarrassment mean nothing to him because he only wants what he thinks is best. Rather than treating Jane like an individual free human being, he treats her like a generic mistress whom he can exert his will over. Thus a significant part of the novel hovers around Rochester's double roles as a passionate lover and as typical Victorian male with superior complexity and Jane's ceaseless quest for mutual relationship on equal footing.

Disclosure of Rochester's Unequal Marriage

In the words of David Lodge, the first great crisis of Jane's life comes when she is getting married with Rochester and cannot succeed in it:

Rochester is a kindred spirit passionate, vital, and unconventional. He represents for Jane the possibility of realizing her vague, romantic aspirations in a concrete human relationship. But the life of the passions is hedged about with potential danger and disaster, personified in the haunting presence at Thornfield Hall of Rochester's mad malevolent wife. (123)

Before getting a happy married life Jane and Rochester have been torn into two pieces of tragic fall. Everything about Rochester and his mad wife, is revealed. Their relation is destroyed. Rochester's mad wife, causes Jane to leave Mr. Rochester. The wedding day comes, Jane and Rochester have decided to have a private matrimony with no guests; but as they arrive at the country church, a pair of strangers come to disturb the marriage. One of them says, "the marriage cannot go on. I declare the existence of an impediment... it simply consists in the existence of a previous marriage. Mr. Rochester has a wife now living" (255). Hearing it all, Jane again feels the loneliness. Her heart breaks off with no hope to marry Mr. Rochester. Her emotion and passion for him carries nothing to mean for Jane. Mr. Rochester tries to proceed with the ceremony, but the stranger explains that Mr. Rochester is already married to Mr. Mason's sister, Miss Bertha Mason of Spanish Town, Jamaica, fifteen years ago. These two strangers are known to be Mr. Richard Mason and Mr. Briggs, a solicitor from London.

In Victorian time, middle class men also held a different view of marriage than men in the upper rich of aristocracy. Marriages among those of the upper classes had largely been arranged by one's parents and contracted for the sake of social, political, and economic gain in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. This happens to Mr. Rochester as well. He is tricked to marry Miss Bertha by his father and brother. They do this only to gain the economic status. Though Rochester's father knows about the insanity of Bertha's family but he does not reveal this to Mr. Rochester and ultimately he gets trapped into his greedy father's cage, as a result he loses his all life and locks Bertha to the third floor of the Hall. No one knows about his wife because she is mad, and Rochester keeps her locked away under the care of Grace Poole. Ultimately, Mr. Rochester confesses to Jane that he is a married man:

I now inform you that she is my wife, whom I married fifteen years ago, Bertha Mason by name; sister of this resolute personage, who is now, with his quivering limbs and white cheeks, showing you what a stout heart men may bear... Bertha Mason is mad; and she come of a mad family; idols and maniacs through three generations?...as I found out after I had wed the daughter: for they were silent on family secrets before. (258)

In order for Rochester to redeem himself and become the moral man, he must have his marriage of interest to Bertha Mason. And in order to accomplish this, his gentry pride must be destroyed. Rochester first marries for lust and for money without knowing about Bertha. Realizing his immoral act and suffering due to his wife's madness, Rochester returns to Europe from Jamaica. Having safely ensconced Bertha in the third story of Thornfield Hall, he travels to the continent to find a woman. The woman whom he could have an unlawful "marriage" of love and equality. He wants marriage of equality to avoid the mistake of his first, disastrous union. Unable to find that woman, whom Rochester is seeking for many years, he turns to dissipation and traverses Europe, acquiring and casting off mistresses. Unsurprisingly, this course of action fails to satisfy Rochester causing him to return again to England and intent on reforming. He meets Jane and finds in her a genuine personality. Something he has not found in his restless wandering, he decides to commit bigamy to be with her. He believes that her good influence will reform his dissipate ways. But as a consequence, he happens to lose Jane.

After all, when Jane knows about Rochester's insane wife Bertha, she does not like to marry Mr. Rochester and even she does not want to stay at Thornfield Hall any more. So she leaves Rochester only because of Rochester's living wife and she fears

that Rochester does not really love her. Rochester tries to convince that he is still in love with Jane. So he tells her to stay there and even he offers Jane to quit England with him for France as husband and wife. Jane refuses, though she knows it was not the fault of Rochester which brings disaster in their marriage and she states, "I would not say that he betrayed me"(261). But Jane decides not to be his mistress again.

Every dream of Jane has been broken away, as she has no hope to spend the life with Rochester. Reflecting upon her pitiful condition, the narrator comments:

Jane Eyre, who had been an ardent, expectant woman- almost a bride, was a cold, solitary girl again: her life was pale; her prospects were desolate. A Christmas frost had come at midsummer; a white December storm had whirled over Jane; ice glazed the ripe apples, drifts crushed the blowing roses; an hayfield and cornfield lay a frozen shroud. (261)

Jane's expectation of love from Rochester fails. Now her every nerve is covered with cold ice. She again becomes a solitary girl. After Rochester's confession about Bertha, Jane steps forward to leave. At the meantime, the solicitor, Mr. Brigg tells Jane that her uncle has told them to break the ceremony. Her uncle knows about Rochester's wife. So, he has immediately requested Mr. Mason to stop it.

In the Victorian Era, a wife was not allowed to divorce. Jane's relation with Mr. Rochester as wife and husband would be very problematic, unlawful and sinful as well in the sense that a man could not divorce an insane wife as per the law of England at that time. Rochester's case is also the same. He can neither divorce his insane wife lawfully nor can give up his passion for Jane. His desire is to find the intelligent girl whom he can love and this desire can only be fulfilled in his relationship with Jane as he says, "My fixed desire was to seek and find a good and

intelligent woman, whom I could love: a contrast to the fury I left at Thornfield"

(274). Though Jane loves and likes his master but she cannot find any space to accept her master. Rochester's action of keeping to Bertha in locked room and expressing love with Jane is unacceptable to Jane. Contemplating on Bertha's condition, Derek Traversi demonstrates how a Victorian married woman is treated:

Even beneath what may seem to be novel's most 'romantic' excesses as in the whole story of the Rochester and his concealed mad wife – We are made aware of a woman novelist coping with very deep phobias, barely confessable fears and pressures arising out of her female condition in a society where 'ideal' fiction connected with the institution of marriage concealed disconcerting and bitter realities.

(251)

The oppression Bertha undergoes is the most real condition of Victorian women. The fears and pressures always come in female condition. Therefore, though *Jane Eyre* is romantic novel, it bestows the real condition of the women in 19th century.

Furthermore, Mr. Rochester is in fact not aware about his duties and responsibility as well as morality. He even conceals his secret to Jane at Thornfield and forcefully tries to persuade her to marry him. Therefore, Jane leaves him for her victory of principle. She finds herself unfaithful to her master Rochester. She is potentially attached to her principle and law. She thinks marrying Mr. Rochester will be sacrificing her own integrity for the sake of emotional gratification. Therefore, she remarks:

Birds were faithful to their mates; birds were emblems of love what was I? In the midst of my pain of heart and frantic efforts of principle, I abhorred myself. I had no solace from self-approbation: none even

from self-respect. I had injured- wounded left my master. I was hateful in my own eyes. Still I could not turn, not retrace one step. (284)

This moral conflict turns Jane to leave Rochester. She is not willing to love him anymore. She does not find any duty and responsibility in Mr. Rochester though he deeply loves her. Jane finds Mr. Rochester a person without feelings. All the time Mr. Rochester tries to keep Jane in his control only for his advantage. He takes advantage of Jane to get her love. But she finds him as dishonest and unfaithful person. Ultimately, she becomes aware of him. She always has the principle of equalization, mutual relationship and independent. Jane does not want to be controlled by anyone. Her principle is so deeply rooted in her mind and soul that she cannot turn back to Rochester nor even can she retrace one step. She believes that leaving Mr. Rochester is the only option that she can live with, even she knows that it will tear her heart apart.

Reflection of Loveless Marriage in St. John's Proposal

Jane Eyre is the story of a self-made woman. Jane changes social position from member of the working class at Lowood to the middle class governess and finally to Rochester's wife. Jane actively seeks a new position when Mr. Rochester is still bound in marriage to Bertha. Jane chooses to run away only to return when she is independent. After leaving Thornfield and Rochester, Jane wanders everywhere and faces many difficulties. And at the meantime, she reaches the house of St. John River. As Jane is seeking a new life for herself, St. John offers her a marriage for dynastic purpose rather than for mutual love and companionship. Like Mr. Rochester, St. John attempts to control Jane through his language as he proposes to her. St. John attempts to persuade Jane by pointing their union as God's will.

Once when Jane teaches in Morton, she knows the relationship between St. John and Miss Rosamond Oliver, who is a wealthy heiress. Even Miss Oliver provides Jane with a cottage to live. She often visits the school and so does St. John. One day Jane suggests to St. John if he and Rosamond love each other, it will be better to marry to make his happy life as well as his missionary work. But St. John asserts that he loves Rosamond but she is imperfect for him because he needs a good missionary's wife who Rosamond cannot make him. St. John believes that holy duties are more important to him than the worldly affection. Rosamond is such a worldly affection to St. John. Therefore, he refuses to allow worldly affection to interfere with his holy duties. In this regard, St. John remarks:

It is strange, that while I love Rosamond Oliver so wildly – with all the intensity, indeed, of a first passion, the object of which is exquisitely beautiful, grateful, and fascinating – I experience at the same time a calm, unwrapped consciousness that she would not make me a good wife, that she is not the partner suited to me; that I should discover this within a year after marriage. (330)

St. John completely gives up his passion for his holy duty. He knows that if he happens to marry Rosamond, he will engage in the passion.

Jane discovers that St. John, Mary, and Dina are her own relatives. They are her cousins. It is known only when St. John gets a letter from John Eyre, Jane's uncle from the solicitor Brigg. St. John discovers Jane's true identity, and he states that John Eyre had died and left her his entire fortune of twenty thousand pounds to Jane. Overjoyed Jane behaves to St. John as a cousin but he has different attitudes. Seeing the talent of Jane, St. John wants to marry Jane to make his missionary work better. Therefore, he advises Jane to "give up German and learn Hindustani" (351). His

intension is fully guided by his reason and judgment. As he is learning Hindustani to prepare for missionary work in India, he wants Jane to learn it. He wants Jane to marry him and go to India as his missionary wife, "God and nature intended you for a missionary wife. It is not personal, but mental endowments they have given you. You are formed for labor, not for love. A missionary's wife you must - shall be. You shall be mine: I claim you - not for my pleasure, but for my sovereign's service" (356).

Here, we can find the masculine voice by St. John. He tries to keep Jane under his command. As he says Jane is "formed for labor" (356), it sounds like the Victorian tone. St. John tells Jane that he is offering a loveless marriage. This is what the Talia Schaffer calls it as the proposal of familiar marriage. Familiar marriage is concerned with no love. Hearing all this, Jane finds him very different from Mr. Rochester. St. John is proposing Jane without passion whereas she has left Mr. Rochester who has full passion for her. St. John is trying to command over Jane for the sake of God but Mr. Rochester begs Jane for his passionate feelings. Mr. Rochester summons Jane as his wife, and now St. John claims for her as his wife. Both men use direct orders to persuade Jane in personal matters.

Anyway, Jane asserts that she is ready to go with him in his missionary work to India but only as his fellow missionary not as his wife. Jane does not allow any male dominance to compel her to marry against her will. She rejects to marry St. John announcing, "I did consider, and still my sense, such as it was, directed me only to the fact that we did not love each other as man and wife should: and therefore it inferred we ought not to marry" (359). As Jane is fully conscious of her independence and equality, she can't marry St. John and rejects loveless marriage. Again and again St. John tries to convince that it is the God's will that he has to force her to marry but

Jane says, " No, St. John, I will not-marry you" (365). Even, in response to St. John's demands, Jane exerts her will and offers her own response, "I freely consent to go with you as your fellow missionary, but not as your wife; I cannot marry you and become a part of you" (365). Jane's straight forward response leaves no room for misinterpretation, reflecting how firm she is in her answer. Her use of the word "consent " shows her awareness of her own independence. St. John cannot control Jane because she does not let him do so.

Moreover, St. John being much supervised, asks Jane why she is refusing him. But Jane replies, "you did not love me; now, I reply, because you almost hate me. If I were to marry you, you would kill me. You are killing me now" (365). Even Jane claims that St. John is offering loveless marriage. This marriage would cause Jane a lot of suffering in her future. However, we can find the malevolent voice of St. John, that he is requesting Jane time and again. But Jane also has domineering power to control the people who go against her will. Andrew Sanders argues:

Her quest is to find a partner worthy of her intelligence, her judgmental wit, and her determined selfhood, one who will learn to respect her integrity and her determination. Jane's rejection of an adulterous, bigamous, and perhaps glamorous relationship with Rochester, is complemented later in the novel by her firm rejection of the far more somberly respectable prospect of life as a missionary's wife. (420)

Jane's desire is to marry a partner who is worthy of her intelligence. She is tracing such a person who can have mutual respect. Therefore, she rejects to be the wife of St. John as a missionary wife. Opposing Jane's reaction, St. John says; "Your words are such as ought not to be use: violent unfeminine, and untrue" (365). In Victorian Era male dominated power always ruled women as 'silent' and

'submissive'. We find this tendency in St. John's voice. He is completely Victorian man, trying to make Jane as the 'angel of the house'. But Brontë has powered such a character like Jane who struggles to come out of the malevolent force. Mr. Rochester offers Jane love and marriage which is passionate but socially illegal whereas St. John offers marriage without love and passion.

Diana, the sister of St. John, knows about the St. John's marriage proposal to Jane. She asks if Jane is interested to marry him but Jane replies that St. John is marrying her only for his duty. He is using her as a useful tool. She even tells to Diana that she is formed for labor but not for love and if she is not formed for love then she is not formed for marriage:

You should hear himself on the subject he has again and again explained that it is not himself, but his office he wishes to mate. He has told me I am formed for labor- not for love which is true, no doubt. But in my opinion, if I am not formed for love, it follows that I am not formed for marriage. (368)

In the clash between Jane's expectations and St. John's assumptions, we find the expression of a major problem in Victorian ideals of marriage. From Jane's perspective, marriage means simply romantic marriage—marriage for love and companionship. And St. John fails to live up to that ideal. In this regard, Margaret J. Arnold comments, "In *Jane Eyre* for instance, St. John Rivers most resembles Coriolanus as a heroic figure who is militant, true to his lovely integrity but difficult to domesticate" (77). St. John Rivers has the power of intelligent and heroic figure but as he has fully devoted himself to God, he fails to get Jane. He could not make love Jane.

Moreover, Brontë exclusively persecutes the conflict between Jane and St. John. There is struggle between them. They claim the superiority of their own principles. They both are restless and seeking the greater power that rules them. For St. John it is reason or judgment, for Jane it is passion and duty. St. John thinks that Jane as a female is a subordinate to him but not as equal. But Jane also determines that she is not formed for being dominated but for mutually complementary with her partner. Jane seeks such type of companionate marriage. Therefore, she completely rejects the St. John's proposal and escapes from St. John.

Reciprocal Reunion of Jane and Rochester

After Jane has abandoned her idolization of Rochester, she finds a family, manages a school and becomes financially independent (by means of her uncle's inheritance). But the confusion exists when Jane is on the point of accepting or refusing St. John Rivers's proposal of marriage. St. John Rivers offers her a life of service and virtue, where Rochester has promised sensual languor. Like Rochester, St. John Rivers also desires to control Jane in his own way. He would use her as a tool in his missionary efforts. He denies her passionate nature and subsumes her identity within his own massive ego. Rochester's call intercedes and saves Jane from the temptation offered by St. John Rivers. She returns to Rochester having reasserted her independence. Now she is indeed in a position to love and be loved.

Jane would not marry for money or status or even for simply a comfortable life as offered by St. John. Therefore, Jane leaves to search Mr. Rochester. She hears about the Thornfield Hall and Rochester. The Hall becomes ruined and Mr. Rochester loses his eye sight. This is caused by Rochester's mad wife. Though Jane loves Rochester, she has not become his mistress due to the existence of Bertha. But now Jane decides to Marry Mr. Rochester only for their passionate love and

interdependence. Bertha dies herself by setting the fire in Thornfield and Mr. Rochester becomes blind and disabled when he tries to save his mad wife. After hearing all these events, Jane ultimately finds Mr. Rochester her true partner. Throughout the novel, Jane struggles for the right balance between moral duty and earthly pleasure, between obligations to her spirit and attention to her body. Jane is in a long journey in search of love and equality and finds her destination in her relationship with Rochester not with St. John.

Brontë has depicted such a novel like *Jane Eyre* which can challenge the Victorian conventionalities. Jane's views and ideas are very different from the Victorian conventionalities. She has made her own conventions. Her childhood particularly influences this conventionality. Jane at first rejects Mr. Rochester's love because it would violate her moral standards. But she can only marry him when Bertha is dead and she feels equal to him in terms of passion and love. Though Jane becomes equal in terms of property, she does not count it as the measure for equalization. And the fire at Thornfield Hall turns Rochester penniless and physically dependent. When Jane becomes economically strong, she declares that "I am independent, sir, as well as rich: I am my own mistress"(385). Her choice of word signals Rochester that she is not his inferior. Through the inheritance of her uncle John Eyre, Jane becomes economically independent. But what she wants to be mutually complement is inner heart. She wants equal love and affection not equal property. Loving, caring and sharing play the vital role in gender equality which can be realized in the marital bond between Jane and Rochester.

For much of the novel, Rochester is defined by and rebels against his gentry's masculinity before finally becoming a domestic moral man. As gentleman, Rochester is bound to particular means of expressing his masculinity. Blanch Ingram, a member

of the aristocracy, provides a good sense of the attributes of gentry and aristocratic masculinity. Describing what men should be, she states, " Let them be solicitous to possess only strength and valour: let their motto be- Hunt, shoot, and fight: the rest is not worth a fillip" (157). Gentry and aristocratic masculinity are defined in relation to honor and war. Rochester hunts and rides and is described as having physical prowess. He has also kept mistresses. In many ways, Rochester typifies the gentry code of masculinity.

Rochester's masculinity closely resembles the Byronic hero. The Byronic hero wanders as Rochester wanders through Europe, vainly seeking his equal, a woman to love. The Byronic hero also suffers intense remorse for his crimes. Rochester suffers guilt for marrying Bertha though he did not love her, for keeping mistress, and for attempting to trick Jane into a bigamous marriage. The Byronic hero often meets a tragic end. But Rochester transcends the role of Byronic hero by repenting and entering into a new life as a domestic hero.

Rochester locates the beginning of his trouble in his loveless marriage to Bertha Mason of Spanish Town, Jamaica. Rochester's father desires to give whole family wealth to his elder son, Rowland, leaving nothing for his younger son, Edward. Rochester becomes destitute. Therefore young Edward Fairfax is betrayed to marry Bertha so that a good marriage can be made for him for wealth. Rochester is sent to Jamaica to marry Bertha Mason, who will bring him a fortune of thirty thousand pounds. Neither Rochester's family nor hers reveals the presence of madness in her family. Rochester thus finds himself indissolubly attached to a mad woman with "a pigmy intellect" and "giant propensities" who drags him "through all the hideous and degrading agonies which must attend a man bound to a wife at once intemperate and unchaste" (270). This is certainly not a marriage of equality and companionship.

Rochester holds two diametrically opposed views concerning this marriage: at times, he represents himself as being manipulated into Bertha's arms, and at others, he takes responsibility for his own moral failing in marrying. When he first meets Jane, he claims that he was as innocent and ingenuous as during his youth as she is now, "I was your equal at eighteen-quite your equal. Nature meant me to be, on the whole, a good man...." (118). This is all true, in that Rochester was forced on a lunatic wife, by his father and brother for the sake of money and family name.

Rochester is very self-conscious about the responsibility he bears for marrying Bertha and his own tendency to place the blame for this act on external forces. Rochester knows that he has brought the horror of his marriage down on himself. Rochester does not know he is being married off to Bertha for the sake of her money, but it must have been obvious to him that her family was *wealthy*. Rochester says to Jane, "most things freeborn will submit to anything for a salary; therefore keep to yourself and don't venture on generalities of which you are intensely ignorant"(118). He indicates that he has married Bertha, at least in part, for her money and is deeply ashamed of it. What makes Rochester most furious about his marriage is that he enters into it out of lust and not out of love. He utters, " I was dazzled, stimulate; my senses were excited and being ignorant, raw, and inexperienced, I thought I loved her" (269). Though Rochester is a member of the gentry, he feels trapped by its codes concerning masculinity. He does not want a marriage of interest but rather one of equality and love a good, true, and moral marriage. When Rochester admits that he did not marry for these reasons, he berates himself must vociferously:

Oh, I have no respect for myself when I think of that act !- an agony of inward contempt masters me. I never loved, I never esteemed, I did not even know her I was not sure of the existence of one virtue in her

nature: I had marked neither modesty, her benevolence, nor can dour, nor refinement in her mind or manners and, I married her: gross, groveling, mole-eyed blockhead that I was ! (269)

Rochester strongly feels that marriage should occur only for the sake of love, and offers a critique of the marriage of interest in which companionship, virtue, and equality matter not at all, and in which children can effectively be prostituted for the material gains of their parents.

As discussed earlier, Rochester soon finds Jane as a type of "good and intelligent woman" for which he has scored Europe and seeks to begin a relationship with her terms of equality (274). From the beginning, Rochester knows Jane that she is not like Bertha or his European mistresses. He states, "An unusual-to me- a perfectly new character I suspected was yours" (277). Jane does not posture and attend as Bertha and Blanche Ingram do; she is genuine, independent, virtuous. In order to enter into a discourse between equals, Rochester seeks to strip away social conventions that would enforce his position as master and Jane's as his dependent. He asks Jane if she will be willing to "dispense with a great many conventional forms and phrases without thinking that the omission arises from insolence" (117). Rochester wants to sound Jane's soul to see if it is like his and this cannot be done with petty conventionalities standing between them. Rochester goes on to tell Jane of his past sins. He asks her whether she thinks he is handsome and respects her when she answers truthfully. Through their exchanges, Rochester creates a relationship in which he can determine if he and Jane are suited to each other and which, he hopes, will act as a precursor to a marriage of equals. Rochester finally repents, losing Jane and being punished.

Charlotte Brontë has presented a kind of combination of passion and moral duties. Jane and Rochester's decision to have this balanced ideal is accrued only after when they think of healthy companionate marriage. As Victorians were guided by traditional dynastic marriage, Jane prefers to have companionate marriage. She is more conscious about the woman position. Companionate marriage is to make the couple satisfied with each other. They need help to each other. Mr. Rochester is now a crippled man who is dependent on Jane. But only the needs cannot fulfill the features of companionate marriage, rather there should be love and passion for each other. Rochester passionately proposes Jane to whom he gets meaning to have companionate marriage and Jane accepts his proposal quite passionately:

'Jane, will you marry me?'

'Yes, sir'

'A poor blind man, whom you will have to lead about by the hand?'

'Yes sir'

'A crippled man, twenty years older than you, whom you will have to wait on?'

'Yes sir'. (394)

Now Jane eagerly accepts his proposal because she sees no difference between Mr. Rochester and herself. She finds no domineering power over her but she thinks that to live happily, they need to be for each-other. If she needs Mr. Rochester for her passionate love, caring her and sharing feelings, Mr. Rochester also needs Jane as he is now becomes blind, crippled, poor and alone. When Mr. Rochester was economically rich and had the domineering power, Jane was penniless. She was only struggling to make her state equal to Mr. Rochester which they could understand and love each other. But now Jane has gained the power to fulfill her desire to be equal.

She does not want to be inferior to anyone. So she leaves St. John as her heart decides not to marry the loveless marriage of St. John. She voluntarily likes to live with Rochester caring his needs, instead of depending on a man for her needs. She states, "I love you better now, when I can really be useful to you, than I did in your state of proud independence, when you disdained every part but that of the giver and protector" (394).

Though Jane becomes financially strong, yet Brontë's novel is unusual in this conviction that marriage and economics should not be mixed. The reunification between Jane and Rochester at the end of the novel functions not as an acceptance of the statuesque, but rather as a portrait of marriage as a romantic and companionate union. Highlighting their true spiritual union, Willburt Cross states:

When Rochester loses a hand and an eye in trying to rescue from fire to his maniac of a wife, Jane returns to him, offer her wanderings; watches over him, marries him, and loves him the more for his mutilated arm and cicatrized visage. It is no marriage of the world or of the flesh; it is of the spirit. (230)

Ultimately, Jane marries to Mr. Rochester and she remarks, "READER, I MARRIED HIM" (397). The character of Jane is not that of the traditional heroine of that time. In many romantic novels of the Victorian era, the heroine is beautiful. Jane is described by Charlotte as "simple and plain". She also differs from the traditional heroine in her strength as a woman. Charlotte creates a woman character that is equal to the male character. Jane is not equal in status or class though she inherits the property of her uncle, but she is equal in emotional strength and maturity. This goes against society's beliefs of time because Victorians traditionally believe that women are not capable of strong emotions.

Jane has always maintained a subservient position to Mr. Rochester. However, with the inheritance from her uncle, Jane is now an independent woman and can take charge of her own destiny. Moreover, with the loss of Mr. Rochester's eyesight, he becomes vulnerable and dependent on Jane; he can no longer maintain his former position as the superior male. Thus, instead of using the subservient "He married me", in which Mr. Rochester is the dominating partner, Jane takes the superior in the relationship, "I married him". However, this inequality is resolved when Mr. Rochester regains the use of one of his eyes; Jane and Mr. Rochester are finally able to support a relationship of mutual respect and equality. Therefore, quoted in Barbara M. Onslow, Poovey comments, "representation of gender at mid-century were part of the system of interdependent images in which various ideologies becomes accessible to individual man and woman" (321).

Moreover, St. John's proposal of marriage offers common purpose that Jane knows their marriage would remain loveless. The events of Jane's stay at Moor house are necessary test of Jane's autonomy. Only after proving her self-sufficiency, she can marry Rochester and not be asymmetrically dependent upon him as her "master". The marriage can be one between equals as Jane says, "I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine.... To be together is for us to be at once as free as in solitude, as gay as in company.... we are precisely suited in character- perfect concord is the result" (399).

Rochester's corrupting pride is finally destroyed by providence in the fire, Bertha sets at Thornfield Hall. He is maimed and blinded and forced for the first time to rely on others and to seek help from God. Rochester is freed from his pride and his mad wife, finally fit to be a suitable marriage partner for Jane. He finally enters into the domestic, companionate marriage which he has longed for. Both Jane and Rochester have reached the end of their own personal pilgrimages, which parallel

each other in several ways. Jane and Rochester can now enter not only into a marriage of middle-class companionship, but a radically egalitarian manifestation of such an ideal, “No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am : ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh” (399). Jane records in the closing pages of the novel.

Thus, Brontë depicts such a character like Jane with extra- challenge and like Rochester who is a victim and is ashamed of his past wrongs. He longs to marry for love in true domestic fashion. Rochester commands over Jane and his action to lock Bertha is extremely rejected by Jane. Rochester truly loves Jane but at times attempts to keep Jane under his command. Such a great mistake is found in him. After all Rochester repents his great mistake and disrespect to Jane. He is made to learn the mutual respect and love to lead the companionate marriage. And this is the knowledge he gains from Jane.

CHAPTER : IV

Companionate Marriage as an Initiative to Familial Intimacy

The companionate marriage that Brontë has created in the novel *Jane Eyre*, is not an appropriate practice of marriage for British families as well as for whole world. It has been the subject of critical debate. Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre* offers a sustained critique of the exchange of male financial support for female sexual availability that often characterizes Victorian marriages. However, Brontë's novel does not simply criticize marriage as a system of sexual or economic exchange, but also suggests an alternative model of marriage based solely on love between equal partners backed up by reason and justification.

If passionate feelings were the sole basis for their love, bond between Jane and Rochester would inevitably weaken since all emotions are temporal. Thankfully, their mutual devotion does not lack deeper justification; strong reasons bind the pair together despite their differences. They love each other in such a way that would never separate each other. They are longing for romance with better understanding to each other. Jane and Rochester meet each other's essential needs through their complementary strengths. In another way, they don't fall in love blindly; on the contrary, their love is founded on mutual respect and full acceptance of each other's plans. Finally, through embracing humility they achieve a healthy interdependence. These are realistic qualities of Jane's and Rochester's relationship that provides the groundwork for a fervent and enduring love.

Rochester's marriage to the mad woman Bertha nearly two decades before still plagues him, resulting in a bitter, negative view of life. Jane's gentle disposition and hopeful outlook contrast sharply with his brooding tendencies. A thoughtful examination of their relationship reveals a mature and undeniably realistic

love. Jane and Rochester are ideally suited to meet each other's emotional needs because of their complementary natures and life experiences. For Jane, who has suffered much abuse and neglect, Rochester provides loving friendship and intellectual stimulation. At the age of eighteen, Jane's desire for liberty and experience of the world leads her to assume the position of governess at Thornfield which happens to be the event for Rochester's attraction to Jane.

Rochester's attraction to Jane is more complex and stems from his desire to escape the misery and solitude caused by his mad wife. His wretched experience with the unchaste and offensive Bertha Mason convinces him to value virtuous character and intellect above physical beauty. For ten years he has searched for "an intellectual, faithful, loving woman" (274). When he meets Jane, he is refreshed by her good sense and spirit. Discovering her to be also intelligent and pure of heart, he soon comes to consider her his "good angel" (278). After a life "passed half in unutterable misery and half in dreary solitude", he discovers in Jane a good woman that he can truly love (278). Jane and Rochester's complementary strength makes their attachment natural and understandable. Each fills a void in the other wrought by years of loneliness and longing.

The passionate love between Jane and Rochester is further founded on a mutual understanding and respect for each other's character. They do not experience love at first sight; rather they examine each other's character and learn to appreciate each other's strengths and weaknesses. Jane is fully aware of Rochester's flaws; he is "proud, sardonic, and harsh to inferiority of every description"(128). Nonetheless, she earnestly believes him to be "naturally a man of better tendencies, higher principles, and purer taste than such as circumstances had developed"(128). Through conscious of his weaknesses, she recognizes his potential and encourages reform.

Moreover, Rochester has made the mistake of marrying Bertha Mason without knowing it but he soon develops genuine affection and respect for the young girl Jane in the course of his meeting her at the Thornfield. Though Jane and Mr. Rochester are very different in age and experience of the life but in maturity and intellect she is his equal. Her self-confidence enables her to converse frankly with him despite his seniority. Rochester also admires Jane's virtuous character. Ultimately it is her power of integrity which saves their relationship from disaster. Jane's strong sense of right and wrong prompts her to depart from Thornfield after Bertha's existence is revealed.

In remaining true to her conscience, Jane makes their eventual reunion and lawful marriage possible. Their mutual respect and acceptance of each other's flaws form the foundation of a lasting love. Finally, the conspicuous imbalance in Jane and Rochester's relationship resolves into a healthy interdependence as a result of Rochester's physical crippling. In a successful marriage both partners must be able to give and receive love. A lack of such mutuality inevitably leads to marital dissatisfaction. Before the tragedy, Rochester's willfulness and pride in his own masculinity lead him to dominate the relationship. After a fire at Thornfield deprives Rochester of his sight and the use of his left hand, his and Jane's roles shift noticeably. His pride and independence are shaken by his physical loss. When Jane returns to him following Bertha's death, she finds him considerably humble. He confesses that "hitherto I have hated to be helped to be led ...but Jane's soft ministry will be perpetual joy"(395). His dependence on her for visual guidance forces him to accept and provides Jane with the opportunity to express her love in a practical way. After their marriage, Jane reflects that "It was that circumstance which drew us so very near that knit us so very close!"(399). Truly, through embracing humility and learning to

give and receive from each other, they achieve the interdependence necessary for healthy marriage.

Mr. Rochester is convinced that he can only undo his past mistake by entering into a mutually loving relationship, though his pride and sense of entitlement lead him into further error. Therefore, Brontë's *Jane Eyre* is a captivating, tale of love found in unexpected places. The two truly are opposites who discover in each other the complementary qualities each seeks for fulfillment. They find true comfort and companionship in each other. They acknowledge each other's imperfection and past mistakes; yet nevertheless choose to love and respect each other. Both grow in experience and wisdom throughout the narrative. At the end they are able to live interdependently while at the same time retaining their identities as independent individuals. Without doubt, these realistic qualities of Jane and Rochester's relationship are the elements to establish and form the companionate marriage at Victorian Era. And their relationships are what give *Jane Eyre* its emotional impact and lasting relevance.

Furthermore, against the Victorian's criterion of a domestic ideal and their expectation that women's writing must reflect that criterion, *Jane Eyre* is just opposite of this idea. Some of Brontë's contemporaries also disagree with this novel, especially in light of its female authorship. Those factors condemned by the contemporaries for transcending the proper sphere of Victorian women are actually the great feminine consciousness of the author embodied in *Jane Eyre*. Fortunately, today we could reject those prejudices against women writers while reading the book. What we see is that Charlotte Brontë portrayed an indomitable female figure that sets a good example for the world's women who are currently experiencing difficulties. She provides an important text that reflects woman consciousness.

Therefore, in *Jane Eyre*, Rochester's pride and control and St. John's stagnation for God have been unacceptable to Jane. She fights for mutual and complementary relationship which she gets from Mr. Rochester. Rochester recognizes his pride and mistake but St. John keeps his constant norm and value about marriage. Consequently, Rochester finally fits to be a marriage partner for Jane as she wishes to have companionate marriage. He finally enters into the domestic, companionate marriage he has longed for. In this way, Brontë depicts a hero who is a victim and ashamed of his past wrongs, and longs to marry for love in companionship. Jane's moral idea about mutual love and companionship, turns Rochester to be engaged with her in a marriage of interdependence, mutual support and respect.

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