



Jane Eyre

Charlotte Brontë (1816 - 1855)

Read by:	Elizabeth Klett	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
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Genre:	Romance, Fiction		

Jane Eyre was written by Charlotte Brontë and published in 1847 under the pen name “Curren Bell”. It was originally titled *Jane Eyre: An Autobiography* and charts the progress of the title character through five phases of her life in the first person narrative. Jane is first seen as a young orphan in the care of a cruel aunt, who sends her away to a harsh private school. After graduation and two years as a schoolteacher she takes a position as a governess at the estate of Mr. Rochester, which leads to an offer of marriage that is undone by an unfortunate discovery. She leaves, is taken in by strangers who turn out to be relatives, and discovers she has inherited a small fortune. After spurning an offer of marriage, she impulsively returns to Rochester, with whom she reunites.

The events of the novel are internalized and seen strictly through Jane’s eyes with an intensity more closely associated with poetry than fiction in that era. As such, the book helped revolutionize the art of the novel and stands as an early example of the bildungsroman, or novel about the overall self-development of the main character. Many consider *Jane Eyre* to be ahead of its time not only in form but in its social criticism and explorations of class, religion, and an emerging feminist perspective.

Charlotte Brontë (April 21, 1816 – March 31, 1855) was the eldest of the three surviving Brontë sisters whose novels became staples of English literature. She was the daughter of an Irish Anglican clergyman in the Yorkshire village of Haworth and was looked after by an aunt after her mother died when she was five. She and her four sisters were sent to Clergy Daughters School, where the poor conditions affected her health and hastened the deaths of her two older sisters. She and her sisters Ann and Emily were removed from the school and returned home, where they and their brother Branwell spent long hours inventing fictional worlds and chronicling the lives of their imaginary inhabitants. She had a number of positions as a governess and teacher before *Jane Eyre*, her second novel, was published to immediate success in 1847. She was at work on her follow up when her three remaining siblings died of tuberculosis in an eight month period in 1848 and 1849. She managed to finish the book, *Shirley*, and another, *Villette*, before her health declined during the pregnancy following her marriage to Arthur Bell Nichols, culminating in her death in 1855.