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opening extract from

Jane Eyre: The Graphic Novel (Original Text)

written by

Charlotte Bronte

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Classical Comics

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~ PROLOGUE ~
NORTHERN ENGLAND IN THE EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY
NOW THAT TYPHUS HAS FELLED BOTH MY SISTER AND HER HUSBAND, WE MUST LOOK AFTER THEIR CHILD.
REVEREND EYRE
WIFE TO REVEREND EYRE


GATESHEAD HALL


ONE YEAR LATER...
PROMISE ME, MRS. REED, TO REAR AND MAINTAIN LITTLE JANE EYRE AS ONE OF OUR OWN CHILDREN.


I WILL, HUSBAND.


~ CHAPTER I ~
NINE YEARS LATER...
NO LONG WALK TODAY, SO NO NIPPED FINGERS AND TOES.


I REGRET TO KEEP YOU AT A DISTANCE, JANE,
BUT UNTIL I HAVE HEARD FROM THE NURSEMAID, BESSIE --


I LIKE IT WHEN BESSIE TELLS ME STORIES


-- THAT YOU ARE ENDEAVOURING IN GOOD EARNEST TO ACQUIRE A MORE SOCIABLE AND CHILDLIKE DISPOSITION --


-- A MORE ATTRACTIVE AND SPRIGHTLY MANNER
- SOMETHING LIGHTER, FRANKER, MORE NATURAL -
I REALLY MUST EXCLUDE YOU FROM PRIVILEGES INTENDED ONLY FOR CONTENTED, HAPPY LITTLE CHILDREN.


WHAT DOES BESSIE SAY I HAVE DONE?
JANE, I DON'T LIKE CAVILLERS OR QUESTIONERS; BESIDES, THERE IS SOMETHING TRULY FORBIDDING IN A CHILD TAKING UP HER ELDERS IN THAT MANNER.


BE SEATED SOMEWHERE; AND UNTIL YOU CAN SPEAK PLEASANTLY,
REMAIN SILENT.



*Master Reed would often call her Joan.


SHOW THE BOOK. --
-- YOU HAVE NO BUSINESS TO TAKE OUR BOOKS;
YOU ARE A DEPENDENT, MAMA SAYS; YOU HAVE NO MONEY. YOU OUGHT TO BEG, NOT LIVE WITH GENTLEMAN'S CHILDREN LIKE US, AND EAT THE SAME MEALS WE DO; AND WEAR CLOTHES AT OUR MAMMA'S EXPENSE --
-- NOW I'LL TEACH YOU TO RUMMAGE MY BOOKSHELVES, FOR THEY ARE MINE. ALL THE HOUSE BELONGS TO ME, OR WILL DO.
GO AND STAND BY THE DOOR, OUT OF THE WAY OF THE MIRROR AND THE WINDOWS.
AAH!
THUMP!
WICKED AND CRUEL BOY!
YOU ARE LIKE A MURDERER, A SLAVE-DRIVER --
-- YOU ARE LIKE THE ROMAN EMPERORS!
WHAT! WHAT! DID YOU HEAR HER, ELIZA AND GEORGIANA?
WON'T I TELL MAMA! BUT FIRST --
RAT!
RAT!
MAMA!
MAMA!


DEAR, DEAR! WHAT A FURY TO FLY AT MASTER JOHN!
DID ANYBODY SEE SUCH A PICTURE OF PASSION?


TAKE HER AWAY TO THE RED-ROOM AND LOCK HER IN THERE.


~ CHAPTER II ~


FOR SHAME, FOR SHAME!
WHAT SHOCKING CONDUCT, MISS EYRE, TO STRIKE YOUR YOUNG MASTER!
MASTER! HOW IS HE MY MASTER? AM I A SERVANT?


NO, YOU ARE LESS THAN A SERVANT, FOR YOU DO NOTHING FOR YOUR KEEP.


YOU OUGHT NOT TO THINK YOURSELF ON EQUALITY WITH THE MISSES REED AND MASTER REED, BECAUSE MISSIS KINDLY ALLOWS YOU TO BE BROUGHT UP WITH THEM.

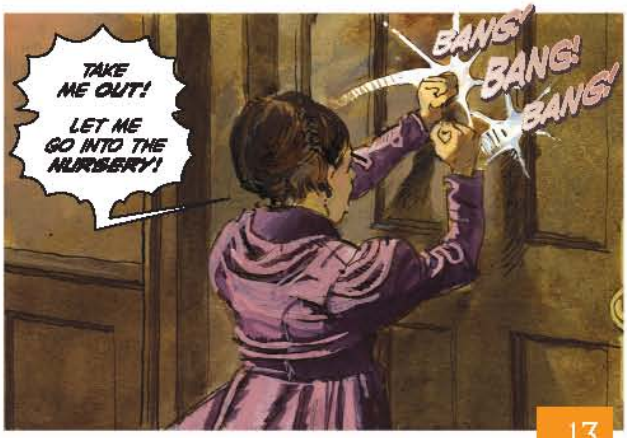

THEY WILL HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY AND YOU WILL HAVE NONE. IT IS YOUR PLACE TO MAKE YOURSELF AGREEABLE TO THEM.


WHAT WE TELL YOU IS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD.
IF MRS. REED WERE TO TURN YOU OUT, YOU WOULD HAVE TO GO TO THE POORHOUSE.


COME BESSIE, WE WILL LEAVE HER --


-- I WOULDN'T HAVE HER HEART FOR ANYTHING.
SAY YOUR PRAYERS, MISS EYRE; WHEN YOU ARE BY YOURSELF; FOR IF YOU DON'T REPENT, SOMETHING BAD MIGHT BE PERMITTED TO COME DOWN THE CHIMNEY AND FETCH YOU AWAY.
UNJUST! - UNJUST!


HUH?!?
SHREEIK!!


TAKE ME OUT!
LET ME GO INTO THE NURSERY!
BANG! BANG! BANG!