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FAERY AND THE BEAST

By

Abigail Heiniger
B.A., University of Louisville, 2007

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate School of the University of Louisville
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Humanities Division
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky

May 2008

Faery and the Beast

By

Abigail Ruth Heiniger
B.A., University of Louisville, 2007

A Thesis Approved on

February 7, 2008

by the following Thesis Committee:

Professor Elaine O. Wise
Thesis Director

Dr. David Anderson

Dr. Alan Leidner

Dr. Tamara Yohannes

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my parents

Mr. Stephen Heiniger and Mrs. Mary Heiniger

who have believed in my dreams

and to

Dr. Tamara Yohannes

who has guided and encouraged my quest to find

fairy heroines during the past three years.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Tamara Yohannes for making her expertise as a Brontë scholar available to me during the past three years. Her insights have been a trustworthy and brilliant *ignis fatuus*, guiding my trek through the moors of Brontë scholarship and thesis writing. Her encouragement has been the wind that fills my sails. I would also like to thank the other committee members, Prof. Elaine Wise, Dr. David Anderson, and Dr. Allen Leidner, for their comments and assistance during the past semester and throughout my academic career at the University of Louisville. They have invested in my dreams and opened new worlds for me. I would like to thank my entire family for all their love and support, especially my mom, Mary. When I was six, she read Jane Eyre to me before she tucked me into bed; for the past semester, she has read drafts of my thesis instead of going to bed.

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ABSTRACT

FAERY AND THE BEAST

Abigail R Heiniger

7 February 2008

This thesis is an exploration of the changeling heroine in Charlotte Brontë's novel Jane Eyre. Its purpose is to demonstrate that Charlotte Brontë reworked the traditional "Beauty and the Beast" fairy tale motif through the creation of the changeling¹ heroine, Jane Eyre. The changeling heroine in Jane Eyre is juxtaposed with the typological characters often employed in Romantic literature: the Angel, the Fallen Angel, and the Byronic hero. Specifically, the changeling heroine creates a liberating alternative to the Romantic ideal of the beautiful Angel. The triumph of the changeling in Jane Eyre simultaneously demonstrates the failure of these conventional typological characters and the Victorian values behind them.

Brontë was fascinated with the "Beauty and the Beast" motif; it appears prominently in her juvenilia. The first four chapters of this thesis contain an overview of the "Beauty and the Beast" tale type and explore the ways in which Brontë utilizes this plot in her juvenilia. Inside of this traditional fairy tale plot structure, Brontë's early writing is shaped by the Romantic world view and the aesthetics promoted by Romantic giants like John Ruskin. Most importantly, Brontë employs the Romantic typological characters of the Angel, the Fallen Angel, and the Byronic hero. These three types of

¹ In the Western folklore tradition, the changeling is a foundling who is both fairy and human (OED).

characters fit easily into the “Beauty and the Beast” plot. The Byronic hero is the Beast, the curse that makes him bestial is usually connected to the hag, wicked fairy, or Fallen Angel. He is redeemed by the Angel, who is the Beauty. Chapter Four makes a close analysis of these typological characters in Brontë’s early work.

Brontë’s typological characters in her juvenilia are heavily influenced by the works of Byron and Milton; in fact, she names both authors explicitly in her early stories. These sources are also explored in Chapter Four. As Brontë revisits the “Beauty and the Beast” motif with these three typological characters in her juvenilia, she works out the Romantic ideals to their logical ends and discovers that the typological characters are ultimately unsuccessful. The Beauty cannot save the Beast. Brontë responds to this dilemma by breaking out of the Romantic feminine ideal of the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy. Thus, Brontë creates a new type of heroine for her novel Jane Eyre, a heroine who can have a long-term, successful relationship with the re-humanized Beast: the changeling, Jane Eyre. The changeling is able to break out of the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy because it comes from an entirely different literary tradition.

Chapters Five, Six, and Seven analyze the character of the changeling and the folklore tradition behind her. To establish this, these chapters demonstrate the importance of fairy tales in Brontë’s early life and her access to the oral fairy tale tradition of the North Country². It is significant that Brontë’s changeling heroine is a product of fairy lore she heard and read in Haworth; this fairy lore tradition is very different than that of the Victorian fairy, which is discussed in the Conclusion.

² The research for Chapters Five, Six, and Seven was made possible by the Brontë Library at Haworth. It has been an invaluable resource, especially their collection of Blackwood’s Magazine articles from the early nineteenth-century.

Chapter Eleven analyzes the role of the changeling heroine in Jane Eyre. It demonstrates why the addition of this “perfectly new character” (Jane Eyre 276) is so important. This chapter explores nine different episodes in the novel where Jane’s changeling nature manifests itself, beginning with young Jane’s triumph over her Aunt Reed at Gateshead and concluding with the changeling heroine’s reunion with Rochester at Ferndean. As a changeling, Jane Eyre is a spiritual potent character whose beauty is entirely internal. Later chapters explore how this changeling functions to defy the spiritual and physical limitations that define the typological Angel or Beauty.

In the creation of her new heroine, Brontë also works out Ruskin’s theory of the idea of abstract beauty. Chapters Ten and Twelve explore Brontë’s treatment of the theme of Beauty. By daring to create a heroine who is less than lovely, Brontë deviates from the established Romantic tradition. According to nineteenth-century reviews of the novel, this was a bold and jarring narrative decision. However, Brontë’s changeling challenges the theories about beauty in a deeper way. The traditional Beauty is more than a typological character, she is embedded in Romantic aesthetic theory. Just as the changeling presents an alternative to the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy, she presents an aesthetic alternative to the physical manifestation of inner beauty. Jane Eyre allows the reader to contemplate the persistent power of an ideal of beauty that is abstract and internal.

The happy ending of Jane Eyre is more than a fairy tale trope; it is the triumph of the changeling heroine over the angelic Beauty. Unlike the stereotypical Romantic heroines in Brontë’s juvenilia, this changeling is strong enough to achieve her own happy

ending. Chapter Fourteen explores the significance of Jane's triumph, contrasting it with the fate of Brontë's early heroines.

Moreover, it is not only the heroine who must overcome the Romantic ideal of femininity, the Beast also needs to be aware of the insufficiency of the conventional Beauty. Rochester, the Beast in Jane Eyre, is a Byronic hero type who has concluded that the Beauty does not satisfy. He does not know what he needs, but he recognizes her when she comes. Thus, Brontë finally works out the dilemma of the "Beauty and the Beast" through the addition of a new type of heroine, the changeling.

Chapter Fifteen concludes the thesis with a brief examination of the after-life of the changeling heroine in literature and film. Fairies and changelings appear frequently in Victorian literature. Brontë herself returns to the character of the changeling in her later novel, Villette. However, this later novel anticipates the Victorian fairy; it does not tap into the fairy tale tradition which inspired the heroine in Jane Eyre. The Victorian fairy tradition saps the changeling heroine of her power in Villette and transforms this character into another manifestation of the angelic Beauty. The conclusion explores how the changeling heroine in Jane Eyre is distinct from later Victorian fairies and how this character is overlooked in film versions of the novel. It also examines how the Angel and Fallen Angel typologies persist in the twenty-first-century. Thus, the dichotomy-breaking message of Jane Eyre still has the potential to speak to readers today.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this thesis is to demonstrate that Charlotte Brontë reworked the traditional “Beauty and the Beast” fairy tale motif in her novel Jane Eyre through the creation of a changeling¹ heroine, Jane Eyre. The changeling heroine in Jane Eyre is juxtaposed with the typological characters often employed in Romantic literature: the Angel, the Fallen Angel, and the Byronic hero. Specifically, the changeling heroine creates a liberating alternative to the Romantic ideal of the beautiful Angel. The triumph of the changeling in Jane Eyre simultaneously demonstrates the failure of these conventional typological characters and the Victorian values behind them.

Brontë was fascinated with the “Beauty and the Beast” motif; it appears prominently in her juvenilia. Inside of this plot structure, her early writing is shaped by the Romantic world view; for example, she created a patriarchal social and spiritual hierarchy in the imaginary world of Angria that reflects Romantic ideals. Moreover, she conforms to the Romantic aesthetics promoted by Romantic giants like John Ruskin. Most importantly, Brontë employs the Romantic typological characters of the Angel, the Fallen Angel, and the Byronic hero. These three types of characters fit easily into the “Beauty and the Beast” plot. The Byronic hero is the Beast; the curse that makes him bestial is usually connected to the hag, wicked fairy, or Fallen Angel. He is redeemed by the Angel, who is the Beauty. In fact, these typological characters often necessitate this sort of plot structure.

¹ In the Western folklore tradition, the changeling is a foundling who is both fairy and human (OED).

Brontë's typological characters in her juvenilia are heavily influenced by the works of Byron and Milton; in fact, she names both authors explicitly. As Brontë revisits the "Beauty and the Beast" motif with these three typological characters in her juvenilia, she works out the Romantic ideals to their logical ends and discovers that the typological characters are ultimately unsuccessful. The Beauty cannot save the Beast. Brontë responds to this dilemma by breaking out of the Romantic feminine ideal of the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy. Thus, Brontë creates a new type of heroine for her novel Jane Eyre, a heroine who can have a long-term, successful relationship with the re-humanized Beast: the changeling, Jane Eyre. The changeling is able to break out of the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy because it comes from an entirely different literary tradition.

In the creation of her new heroine, Brontë also expands upon Ruskin's theory of the idea of abstract beauty. By creating a heroine who dares to be less than lovely, Brontë deviates from the established Romantic tradition. According to nineteenth-century reviews of the novel, this narrative decision was a bold and jarring one. However, Brontë's changeling challenges the theories about beauty in a deeper way. The traditional Beauty is more than a typological character; she is embedded in Romantic aesthetic theory. Just as the changeling presents an alternative to the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy, so also she presents an aesthetic alternative to the physical manifestation of inner beauty. Jane Eyre allows the reader to contemplate the persistent power of an ideal of beauty that is abstract and internal.

Moreover, it is not only the heroine who must overcome the Romantic ideal of femininity; the Beast also needs to be aware of the insufficiency of the conventional

Beauty. Rochester, the Beast in Jane Eyre, is a Byronic hero type who has concluded that the Beauty does not satisfy. He does not know what he needs, but he recognizes her when she comes. The Beast is also forced to acknowledge the role he has played in his curse; he is not the innocent victim of malevolent female powers. For that reason, the Beast cannot simply be redeemed by the sacrifice of an Angelic Beauty. He must work towards his own redemption. Thus, Brontë finally works out the dilemma of the “Beauty and the Beast” through an enlightened Beast and the addition of a new type of heroine, the changeling.

II. THE “BEAUTY AND THE BEAST” TALE TYPE – 425A

Brontë’s work is part of a literary tradition in the “Beauty and the Beast” tale type; in Western literature the “Beauty and the Beast” tale type has conventions which make the story recognizable in all its different retellings. In the early-twentieth-century, Antti Aarne began to codify these motifs. His work, together with that of Stith Thompson, has resulted in the index of folk lore motifs The Types of the Folktales. In this index, which is discussed in Stith Thompson’s The Folktale, the 425A tale type includes a hero who is cursed and married to a beautiful girl (Thompson 98). Although tales vary widely in their explanations of why the husband is a beast, he is often cursed by a malevolent female power (Thompson 99). All the tales converge on the final point: the beast is disenchanted or redeemed by the sacrifice of a beautiful girl who agrees to marry him (Thompson 98). In the article “Beauty and the Beast” from the Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales, Ruth Bottigheimer defines this tale as:

a fairy tale of the modern world, [which] is related in plot to Apuleius’ 2nd-century Latin “Cupid and Psyche” in *The Golden Ass*... [The plot of the European tale arises] from a narrative requirement that characterizes modern but not medieval stories; namely, that a beautiful woman accept and love an ugly husband. (Bottigheimer 45).

Thompson also traces the Western tradition of the 425A tale type to this Classical source. In The Folktale, he attempts to map its evolution from the Latin text to later Italian versions (99 – 100).

Brontë did not have the Aarne-Thompson index to guide her study of this traditional fairy tale. Rather, her understanding of the story was garnered from the tale

itself. Brontë clearly had a Classical education; even if she did not read “Cupid and Psyche” from Apuleius’ The Golden Ass, she should have been familiar with it. Thus, this version of “Beauty and the Beast” may be useful in analyzing Brontë’s treatment of the 425 tale type.

Apuleius’ Latin text re-emerged in the late Middle Ages, and the 1469 edition of this tale spread across the continent. The tale picked up vernacular traditions as it was translated. In the Classical version of the story, the mortal Psyche is condemned for her beauty by Venus. Venus has Apollo send a plague on Psyche’s city. To lift the plague, Apollo demands that Psyche be dressed like a corpse and placed on a mountain top to await marriage to a terrifying serpent. Cupid is sent to curse her, but instead he becomes enamored with her and keeps her in his palace. He visits her there each night in the dark. Believing Cupid to be a giant serpent, Psyche eventually becomes afraid that he will eat her. Prompted by her fear, she disobeys Cupid’s order that she must never look at him. Her curiosity ultimately separates her from Cupid and earns Venus’ wrath. Psyche appeases Venus by performing a series of impossible tasks, thereby earning the right to be made Cupid’s immortal bride (Morford and Lenardon 203 – 206). Thus, “Cupid and Psyche” is distinct from the later “Beauty and the Beast” tales, but Psyche begins the tradition of the beautiful bride sacrificially married to a bestial husband to relieve a curse or appease a malevolent power. This is an important precedent. There are other similar motifs in “Cupid and Psyche” and later 425A tales: the curious woman, the mysterious bridegroom, and the taboo of identification (Morford and Lenardon 202). Brontë incorporates all of these motifs in her version of the tale.

Mme Leprince de Beaumont's French tale was also a popular version of this tale in the late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century.² According to Maria Tatar, this version is the "best known" to Anglo-American audiences (26), and it has become the canonical version (27 – 28). Her tale is also important to understanding Brontë's place in the "Beauty and the Beast" tradition. In Madame de Beaumont's "Beauty and the Beast," the prince is condemned by a wicked (female) fairy "until some beautiful girl should consent to marry [him]" (132). Again, the heroine's marriage to the beast is presented as an act of self-sacrifice (despite the fact that she loves him). The dichotomy of female powers is more pronounced in this tale than in the ancient myth.

If Brontë was not familiar with more famous versions of "Beauty and the Beast," she was probably aware of local tales. In fact, her father made a habit of collecting them. Ellen Nussey, Brontë's friend from Roe Head school, recalled how Mr. Brontë "would collect strange stories from the 'oldest inhabitants of the parish'" (Alexander 412). The Brontë family shared a special interest in folklore, which the Reverend Patrick Brontë had inherited from his father, Hugh Brunty, who was a storyteller in Ireland (Cannon 15 – 19). "The Black Bull of Norrøway" is a Scottish version of the tale with which Brontë may have been familiar.

The story of "The Black Bull of Norrøway" is two-fold. First, the heroine agrees to marry the Black Bull, and through her marriage, she helps to break the curse and rehumanize him. However, like Psyche, she also breaks a taboo imposed on her by her husband and she is separated from him. In order to be reunited with him, she must

² Madame de Beaumont's 1757 tale was based on a longer Baroque tale by Mademoiselle Gabrielle-Suzanne de Villeneuve (Tatar 26). Although Maria Tatar suggests that the motif of the sacrificial beauty and the dichotomy of good and bad women crystallized in de Beaumont's tale in The Classic Fairy Tales, these themes did not originate with her.

perform a series of tasks and overcome the curse of the “witch washerwoman” (Philip 71). This story can be summed up by the heroine’s final song and the hero’s response:

“Seven long years I served for thee,
The glassy hill I climbed for thee,
The bloody shirt I washed for thee –
Will you not waken and turn to me?....”

[Then] he told her all that had happened to him, and how he had been enchanted into the shape of a black bull until he could find a girl to love him, and beat the devil. (Philip 72).

Like the French tale, this story has a clear dichotomy of good and wicked women. The prince is not initially enchanted by a malevolent female power, but at the end of the story a “witch washerwoman” and her ugly wicked daughter try to prevent the happy union of the beautiful and virtuous heroine with her rehumanized beast.³

Despite regional differences, all of these stories support the motifs enumerated by Stith Thompson. All three heroes are under a curse that can only be lifted by the sacrificial devotion of a good and beautiful woman. All three stories operate around a female dichotomy; the Beauty is juxtaposed with a malevolent female power. Brontë incorporates these plot conventions into her juvenilia, where she creates her own version of “Beauty and the Beast.”

³ It is significant that this story merges Christian and folk traditions. In Charlotte Brontë: the Evolution of Genius, Winifred Gèrin argues that Charlotte was especially influenced by fairy tales that resonated with her Christianity (38 – 39). Fairy tales infused her religious beliefs with wonder and beauty. However, in her juvenilia, Brontë does not merge Christianity with fairy tales; there is a remarkable absence of Christianity in her juvenilia (Gèrin 33).

III. THE “BEAST AND THE BEAUTY” IN CHARLOTTE BRONTË’S JUVENILIA

In Brontë’s juvenilia, the story “Albion and Marină (1830)⁴ initiates the tradition of a hero-centered plot in which the man demands the sacrificial love of a beautiful woman (Gèrin 90 – 91).⁵ However, Brontë’s story “The Spell” (1833) is explicitly in the tradition of “Beauty and the Beast.” In “The Spell,” Zamorna is under a curse which makes him act in a bestial manner (5 – 6).⁶ Throughout the story, he is in search of the woman who will restore him (17 – 18). Although he is not initially cursed by a malevolent woman, but rather by a Quaker from Hell (123 – 25), the curiosity of his wife Mary excites the curse and endangers his life (56 – 59). In fact, Mary functions very similarly to Psyche in the first half of Apuleius’ tale. However, unlike Psyche, Mary lacks the power to restore her lost lover (62 – 63). Zamorna is redeemed by another beautiful, submissive woman (74), as the terms of the curse demand (74, 122 – 25). Even the title, “The Spell,” characterizes this story as a 425A tale type; the spell it refers to is the curse that makes Zamorna a bestial groom who must be redeemed by a beautiful woman.

In “The Spell,” Zamorna’s first marriage ends tragically, but the story itself concludes with a happy second marriage and Zamorna’s disenchantment (116); it is the traditional fairy tale happy ending. However, Brontë does not leave the reader there; the

⁴ The dates for Charlotte Brontë’s early writings come from Christine Alexander’s An Edition of the Early Writings of Charlotte Brontë, Vols. I, II, and III.

⁵ The narrator of the story hints that Albion and Marina are actually Zamorna and Marian under different names.

⁶ The 425A tale type does not demand that the groom be a physical monster. In “The Spell,” the beast exists within the handsome Zamorna.

saga of Zamorna continues in other tales where she works out the after-lives of Zamorna and his second wife, Mary. After his disenchantment in “The Spell,” Zamorna does not run around in an animal-like manner, but his inner character is too well developed to be metamorphosized by a magic word (Gèrin 130). Since the beast has not been inwardly changed, he finds Mary no more satisfying than he found Marian. Thus, Brontë continues to pursue the theme of appeasing the beast in other stories, searching for a relationship that will rehumanize Zamorna.

“Mina Laury” (1836) Brontë’s last juvenile story (Gèrin 90), concludes with broken lives and an unregenerated Beast. In “Mina Laury,” Zamorna’s unhappy wife, Mary, meets Mina Laury again for the first time.⁷ While the relationship between Mina Laury and Zamorna remains vague in earlier stories like “The Spell,” she is clearly labeled Zamorna’s mistress in “Mina Laury” (291). Both Mary and Mina Laury are hurt and deceived by their bestial lover in Brontë’s later story, “Mina Laury.” However, since neither woman is strong enough to change the character of Brontë’s beast, he continues to use both women and maintain his bestial lifestyle: “By dint of lies and laughter [Zamorna] at last succeeded in getting all things settled to his mind...” (“Mina Laury” 299). Thus, the saga of Zamorna ends with the beast continuing his adulterous charade because no Angel has been found who is powerful enough to completely disenchant him.

In “‘That Kingdom of Gloom’: Charlotte Brontë, the *Annals*, and the Gothic,” Christine Alexander explores the Romantic or Gothic conventions at work in these early works. Alexander claims that Charlotte Brontë uses the Gothic, gleaned from the ‘*Annals*’ to achieve two apparently contradictory ends:

⁷ In Mina Laury, Brontë has forgotten or disregarded the previous meeting of Mary and Mina Laury in “The Spell”.

on the one hand to imitate the *Annuals* and indulge in her love of the exotic, the licentious, and the mysterious, and increasingly to indulge in her fascination with the darker recesses of the mind and its relationship to natural phenomena; and on the other hand to assume the anti-Gothic stance that Heilman noted was so characteristic in the novels (427).

Although I agree with Alexander's initial statement about Brontë's complex relationship to the Gothic, Alexander cannot fully support the claim of parody. She argues that the typological characters of *Zenobia* (427) and *Zamorna* (429 – 30) are a mockery of the Gothic rather than an acceptance of conventional typological characters. However, she does not support these claims with textual proof from Brontë's early writings. Much of Alexander's argument rests on her interpretation of the tone of the narrators. For example, Alexander claims that the narrator (and author) of the story "Albion and Marina" mocks Gothic conventions. However, the text she uses only demonstrates Brontë's use of Gothic conventions, not their mockery. She also claims that the narrator of "The Spell" has a scornful tone (428) and that the literary persona of Lord Charles generally uses satire and comedy (429). She does not offer textual support for these assertions. Thus, I do not believe there is sufficient evidence to argue that Brontë's juvenilia is a mockery of the Gothic so much as a working out of the Gothic to its inevitable ends. According to Gèrin, Brontë believed in Romantic conventions (91 – 92). I would like to expand on Gèrin's statement: Brontë embraces Romantic conventions in her juvenilia, but through those stories she comes to realize that the typological characters in Romantic fiction are unable to achieve truly happy-endings. Specifically, she discovers that the Beauty cannot appease the Beast.

In most nineteenth-century, literary versions of "Beauty and the Beast," the heroine and her female audience are the focus of the plot according to Maria Tatar in The

Classic Fairy Tales (26). She claims that eighteenth- and nineteenth-century literary versions of “Beauty and the Beast” were intentionally written to reconcile young women to the custom of arranged marriages, and “brace them for an alliance that required them to efface their own desires and to submit to the will of a ‘monster’” (Tatar28). This didactic tradition is evident in Madame de Beaumont’s tale, which transformed the fairy tale into a vehicle for indoctrinating young women:

...the lessons and moral imperatives inscribed in Beaumont’s “Beauty and the Beast” pertain almost unilaterally to the tale’s young women, who, in the coda, are showered with either praise or blame. As [Angela] Carter points out, the moral of Madame de Beaumont’s tale has more to do with ‘being good’ than with ‘doing well’ ... (Tatar 26).

In “The Spell,” Brontë accepts the didactic message behind many literary nineteenth-century “Beauty and the Beast” tales: women must submit to the will of their husbands and live to serve them. However, Brontë’s “Beauty and the Beast” has a male-centered plot in her juvenilia; thus, the purpose of Brontë’s story is slightly different than that of her nineteenth-century contemporaries. Instead of trying to teach a woman how to be the ideal wife, she is searching for the woman who will appease her beloved beast. Brontë runs Zamorna through a series of at least three women, searching for the one who can maintain a relationship with her hero. Each of these women is a variation on the ideal Angel and Beauty.

Instead of seeking to appease the beast in her adult novel, Brontë focuses on a heroine who makes her own happy ending. In Jane Eyre, Brontë creates a real woman. This new, independent heroine is strong enough to love and rehumanize the beast. When Brontë returns to the “Beauty and the Beast” tale type in Jane Eyre, she defies the

established didactic tradition. She makes a counter-cultural statement about the type of woman who makes the ideal wife – a real woman.

IV. BRONTË'S TYPOLOGICAL CHARACTERS: Beast, Angel, and Fallen Angel

THE BEAST

As stated earlier, Milton's Satan and the Byronic hero comprise the Romantic typology that inspires Brontë's Beast in her juvenilia. In 1819, Samuel Coleridge characterized Milton's Satan:

The character of Satan is pride and sensual indulgence, finding in self the sole motive of action.... It exhibits all the restlessness, temerity, and cunning which have marked the mighty hunters of mankind from Nimrod to Napoleon.... Milton has carefully marked in his Satan the intense selfishness, the alcohol of egotism, which would rather reign in hell than serve in heaven.... But around this character he has thrown a singularity of daring, a grandeur of sufferance, and a ruined splendour, which constitute the very height of poetic sublimity. (391).

The Byronic hero is a typological Romantic character derived from Milton's Satan, widely considered the father of all of Byron's heroes. Gèrin describes this Byronic hero as Charlotte Brontë's "Ideal Hero": "The Ideal Hero must be saturnine, faithless, proud, disillusioned, masterful, melancholy, abrupt, a man of mystery with a past that can only be conjectured." (Gèrin 88 – 89).

Brontë's primary protagonist is Zamorna; he is the Beast through which she works out the typological character of the Byronic hero. In her juvenile story, "The Spell," Brontë explicitly connects Zamorna to Milton's Satan through Zamorna's wife, Mary:

superhuman... as tall as Milton's Satan, as bright as his Ithuriel.... It was so new, so fascinating, to behold my hero, my royal lyrist.... Everything he did, everything he said... possessed enchaining interest in my eyes.(32).

However, Mary also mentions Zamorna's artistic brilliance, which specifically links him to the Byronic hero, the frustrated artistic rebel (Gèrin 91 – 92).

It is not this quote alone that identifies Zamorna as the Byronic hero. Both his internal and external characteristics perpetually recall his typological characterization. According to the character sketch of Zamorna in Brontë's "A Peep into a Picture Book" (1830), his appearance affirms the association of Zamorna with Byron and with Milton's Satan:

...thunderbolt... Keen, glorious being... scimitar at his side.... What eyes... Satan gave them their glory to deepen the midnight gloom that always follows where their luster has fallen most lovingly.... Young demon! (117).

Although Zamorna looks very different than Milton's divine antagonist, his appearance clearly reflects descriptions of Satan in Paradise Lost. Milton describes Satan as a thunderbolt, fallen from heaven (1.44-49) and a magnificent being whose glory is not obliterated by his fall (1.270-330). The scimitar, however, is a reference to the famous "Portrait of Lord Byron" by Thomas Phillips (London, National Portrait Gallery). It is also important to note that Brontë adopts the science of physiognomy in "A Peep into a Picture Book." Zamorna is a Byronic hero because he looks like one.

Zamorna's personality is a reflection of his typological characterization. Like Satan in Paradise Lost, Zamorna has an absence of remorse: "I know not what remorse is!" ("The Spell" 17). Zamorna also exhibits the powerful divine agency ascribed to Satan. His spiritual potency earns the worship of the women around him. Lady Zenobia, another one of Brontë's heroines, claims that he is "more than a man, as an angel, a demigod..." ("The Foundling" 61). When asked about her devotion to Zamorna, Mina

Laury simply states: “Yes, I worship and obey him” (“The Spell” 41). Mary describes the female adoration of Zamorna most eloquently:

Who would have thought that Zamorna – the godlike Zamorna, our idol, the idol of me and all my sex – would have died by the hand of one of his worshippers, his chief priestess as it were.... Yet it is true that, I, his wife, have been his Atropos.... No, that would be rather too bad, I should be a fiend and not a woman. (“The Spell” 62).

Zamorna also recognizes his own spiritual power. He acknowledges it to Father Gonsalvi, a Catholic priest, when he claims Mina Laury as his own:

Holy Father, that is a lamb that can never be gathered to the one true fold. Sir, Miss Laury is mine. Therefore, take notice, she cannot be a disciple of our blessed Mother Church. You understand me? (“The Spell” 97).

This statement has several applications for the purpose of this thesis. It reinforces the idea that Zamorna is “of the Devil’s party,” a phrase Bryon used to describe Milton. It also exemplifies Brontë’s uneasy treatment of the Christian faith in her juvenilia. She cannot reconcile spiritually potent characters like Zamorna with her personal religious beliefs.

In “The Spell,” Zamorna challenges Fate (59) and death (53), like Satan in Paradise Lost. However, Zamorna is not Satan; he is the cursed Byronic hero. He succeeds in defying both Fate and death in “The Spell” with the help of his angelic redeemer (74). In “The Spell” specifically, Zamorna is a bestial Byronic hero. He is described as prowling the city like a beast or observing it like an eagle in its eyrie (10 – 11). His actions are characterized by violence or mania, especially towards women: he “ravages” (33) Zenobia’s room and bruises Mary with his grip on her hand (90).

As in many versions of “Beauty and the Beast,” Zamorna instinctively senses that his curse is the result of a wicked female power. He states: “... the work of a woman,

some impulse of malignant curiosity. Thus they have always overthrown the greatest fabrics of man's construction!" ("The Spell" 56). Mary reiterates her husband's condemnation: "I saw that Zamorna was wasted, weary and wan. The curse, then, had fallen on him, and I was the cause.... [and I was] conscience-stricken..." ("The Spell" 52). Like the traditional curse, the characters in "The Spell" hope for the traditional cure; they believe that the angelic, passive Beauty will free Zamorna. Dr. Alford believes that the sight of "so beautiful a creature" (61) as his wife will free him. However, it is another beauty, Mina Laury, who redeems him with the word, "Ransomed" (74). Zamorna's character and his interaction with others is consistent with the typological character of Byronic hero and Beast. In her juvenilia, Brontë is faithful to the tradition she inherited.

INFLUENCE OF BYRON AND MILTON ON BRONTË

The influence of Byron and Milton on Brontë's early writings cannot be overstated. Both Byron ("A Peep into a Picture Book" 118) and Milton ("The Foundling" 19, "The Spell" 32) are explicitly named in Brontë's juvenilia. However, the influence of Byron and Milton on Brontë is not limited to these overt statements. Before Brontë wrote "Peep into a Picture Book," her father acquired Illustrations to the Life and Works of Lord Byron, which included the famous portrait of him with his scimitar (Gèrin 49 – 50). Gèrin's list of books in the Brontë library at the parsonage in Haworth demonstrates that the range of literary works to which Brontë had access included Milton and Byron:

Besides Homer and Virgil in the original there were Milton's works, Johnson's Lives of the Poets, Thomson's Seasons, Goldsmith's History of Rome, Hume's History of England, Scott's Life of Napoleon Bonaparte, and, last but not least, the works of Byron, Southey, and Cowper. With Byron's works Charlotte was fully acquainted at 13... (Gèrin 24).

Gèrin emphasizes the fact that Brontë's childhood spanned the "height of the Romantic Movement in literature, art, and music" (41), and she had unrestricted access to her father's library during this time (41).

Other secondary sources on Charlotte Brontë unfailingly mention the influence of these two literary figures. John Cannon claims that Milton's Paradise Lost was a favorite of Patrick Brontë, Charlotte Brontë's father. Thus, Milton was not only part of the Brontë library, his works were central to their collection. Furthermore, in "The Kingdom of Gloom: Charlotte Brontë, the Annuals, and the Gothic," Christine Alexander claims

that Charlotte Brontë had indirect access to Milton through excerpts and images in the “Annuals” (417).

Byron was also featured in the “Annuals” (Alexander 413); Alexander claims that the combination of Byron’s poetry and John Martin’s⁸ paintings in the “Annuals” (printed between 1826 and 1837) made a powerful impact on the Brontë children (412 - 13).

Gèrin states that Byron was one of the public figures featured in serious periodicals, like Blackwood’s Magazine, which was avidly read at the Brontë’s parsonage (41). In analyzing Byron’s influence on Brontë, she states that Brontë’s conception of the hero with his moral imperfections is based on Byron and especially on Milton’s Satan:

Above all, what distinguished Charlotte’s conception of the hero both in her juvenilia and adult writing, was her acceptance of his moral imperfections. Such an acceptance, though doubtless derived in part from the Calvinist creed in which she was reared, was present on every page of Byron, and in every embodiment of his heroes.... But in the last resort it derived from the father-figure of all Byron’s heroes – Milton’s Satan himself.

...The grandeur of the satanic figure (familiar to the young Brontës through Martin’s illustrations to ‘Paradise Lost’ in particular), both in beauty of physique and force of mind, more than half captivated Byron and... captivated Charlotte Brontë as well. (Gèrin 89 – 90).

The juxtaposition of literature and illustration was especially powerful for Brontë;

Alexander claims that it “fed her imagination” (413). Gèrin states that it “enlarged” (43) her world. Even at school, Brontë’s peers were impressed with her ability to read the meaning in pictures and illustrations (43).

Thus, the Beast in Brontë’s juvenilia is the cursed Byronic hero, the product of Brontë’s fascination with both Byron and Milton. She loved that character and began developing him when she was fourteen (Gèrin 53). This love is important. Although Brontë fails to find a Beauty who can appease her beast, she does not give up on him.

⁸ According to Christine Alexander in “That Kingdom of Gloom,” John Martin was a popular Romantic painter known for his “fantastic sublime landscapes” (416), and because of the dramatic nature of his paintings, they were often featured in the Annuals (14). The Brontës also had four of his large engravings in their parsonage (16).

BEAUTIFUL WOMEN AND UGLY HAGS: Angels and Fallen Angels
 NINETEENTH-CENTURY TYPOLOGIES

The typological characterizations of the Angel and the Fallen Angel came to the forefront in nineteenth-century art and literature. According to Nina Auerbach in Woman and the Demon, this typology remained unopposed until it was critiqued by Virginia Woolf at the turn of the twentieth-century (73). However, Charlotte Brontë's rejection of this typology predates Woolf by several decades. Although in her juvenilia Brontë accepts this Romantic typological dichotomy, she challenges it in her 1847 novel, Jane Eyre.

In Woman and the Demon, Auerbach traces the creation of the typological dichotomy of the Angel and the Fallen Angel. She states that it was not until the nineteenth-century that angels were consistently portrayed as women in the visual arts (70 – 72). Auerbach connects this artistic shift to the Victorian cult of the Angel in the House, in which the sacred was displaced onto the secular figure of the woman (73). Coventry Patmore described the selfless nineteenth-century ideal of womanhood in his popular poem, The Angel in the House. As Auerbach states, Patmore displaces the sacred onto the woman:

Her disposition is devout,
 Her countenance angelical;
 The best things that the best believe
 Are in her face so kindly writ
 The faithless, seeing her, conceive,
 Not only heaven, but hope of it... (Patmore 1.4.1.11 – 16).

It is important to note that the spiritual power described here is passive. In fact, her spirituality is superficial in this passage; the woman inspires spiritual devotion through her appearance.⁹ Thus, the typological figure of the Angel was not a spiritually potent figure; rather, she is passively good and religious. In a later passage, the lover warns this Angel that she must take the religion of her husband (1.7.4. 1 – 4); thus, the typological Angel is the site of displaced religion, but she has no spiritual independence.¹⁰

The Angel is also selfless and domestic in Patmore's poem. She finds her fulfillment in the happiness of her husband:

The gentle wife, who decks his board
And makes his day to have no night,
Whose riches wait upon her lord,
Who finds her own in his delight... (Patmore 2.10.2.18 – 20)

Auerbach contrasts the domestic boundaries of the Angel in the House with the traditional mobility of masculine angels:

To be an angel, then, is to be masculine and breathtakingly mobile: traditional angels take possession of infinite space with an enviable freedom that later Romantic poets dare attribute only to such birds as albatrosses.... As heir of this tradition, the Victorian angel in the house seems a bizarre object of worship, both in her virtuous femininity with its inherent limitations – she can only exist within families, while masculine angels existed everywhere – and in the immobilization the phrase suggests. In contrast to her swooping ancestors, the angel in the house is a violent paradox with overtones of benediction and captivity. Angelic motion had once known no boundaries; the Victorian angel is defined by her boundaries. (71 – 72).

Brontë adheres to these domestic boundaries in her juvenilia. In fact, when the Angel ventures beyond domestic boundaries, her angelic status is jeopardized. Similarly, in the

⁹ Even the reference to “Her disposition” (1.4.1.11) may be a description of her appearance rather than her mood. “A frame of mind or feeling; mood, humor” is the sixth definition for “disposition” in the OED.

¹⁰ Nina Auerbach's *Woman and the Demon* enumerates the differences between the spiritually powerful, mobile, masculine angels of traditional Christian angelology and the Victorian cult of the Angel in the House. This shift appears in literature and the visual arts (70 – 72).

“Beauty and the Beast” tradition, when the Beauty steps outside the magic circle in “The Black Bull of Norway,” she loses her rehumanized husband.

Finally, like Honoria in The Angel in the House whose beauty keeps her lover from sleep (Patmore 1.3.1.13 – 18), Brontë’s Angels are also Beauties. Although Gilbert and Gubar do not name beauty as a characteristic of the typological Angel, it is a recurring theme in Patmore’s poem and in Brontë’s early works. Moreover, Auerbach’s research into the shifting portrayal of angels in nineteenth-century visual arts suggests that beauty was an assumed trait of the typological Angel.

It is important to note that the philosophy behind The Angel in the House was not original to Patmore. In the Norton Anthology of Literature by Women, Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar trace the selfless nineteenth-century feminine ideal back to popular literature being written in the mid-eighteenth-century. Thus, Brontë would have been aware of the typological characteristics of the Angel in the 1830s before they were codified by Patmore in 1854. The connection between Patmore and Brontë demonstrates that they were both adhering to the same established conventions and typologies.

BEAUTIFUL ANGELS IN BRONTË'S JUVENILIA

Although appearance is an important characteristic of all the central characters in Brontë's juvenilia, it is especially important to the characterization of women. For women, external appearance is indicative of internal character. Old, ugly hags are unfailingly bad, and all good women are also beautiful. Thus, the typological categorizations of Angel and Fallen Angel, correspond to the Beauty and the Hag in Brontë's early works. Gèrin recognizes the connection between the appearance of Brontë's juvenile heroines and their temperaments. She claims that the heroines' characters were "first conjectured from their physical traits" (50).

Beauty is the primary characteristic of heroines in Brontë's stories. Almost without exception, it is the first characteristic mentioned whenever a woman appears in the narrative. Lady Emily Charlesworth's beauty is the first attribute described to the audience of the Green Dwarf (13). Dr. Alford's first observation of Mary Wellesley is a description of her "perennial... loveliness" ("The Spell" 61). Beauty is the first characteristic of Lady Julia Wellesley noted by her lover, Sydney ("The Foundling" 23 – 24). It is also the first attribute that comes to mind when he thinks of her: "Still he could think but of one subject: of Julia, her beauty, her goodness" (70). This statement also implies that Julia's goodness, her angelic quality, is connected with her beauty. Even in a letter about the impending death of his young son, Zamorna comments on Mina Laury's beauty ("The Spell" 9); beauty is paramount.

The beautiful Mina Laury especially fits into the typological Angel characterization because she is the spiritual redeemer in “The Spell”; she breaks the curse that makes Zamorna bestial (74). Mina Laury recognizes her angelic role in Zamorna’s life when she tells his wife Mary: “Zamorna’s work wants a heart and a mind different from yours, beautiful patrician” (“The Spell” 42). However, Mina Laury’s spiritual role is still relatively passive, like that of the typological Angel in the House. Her spiritual power is harnessed to do “Zamorna’s work,” not her own.

Moreover, throughout “The Spell,” Mina Laury never appears outside of the domestic sphere.¹¹ In the first chapter, she is nursing Zamorna’s infant son (8 – 9). At the Douro Villa, she is in an enclosed garden watching Zamorna’s nephew and niece (38 – 43). Even when she saves Zamorna from his curse, she is in the house beside his sickbed (74). Like the heroine depicted in Patmore’s famous poem, Mina Laury’s angelic goodness is expressed in the domestic sphere.

Gilbert and Gubar’s analysis of the typological character of the Angel in the House led them to the nineteenth-century fascination with the dying woman. Patmore’s poem was written in memory of his dead wife (Gilbert and Gubar 289). Auerbach lists several tragic Victorian angels, including Dickens’ Little Nell (72, 82 – 88). In fact, Auerbach claims that even “[i]n her own time the tragic and grotesque implications of the angel in the house did not go unexplored” (73); nineteenth-century writers were aware of the connection between the Angel in the House and the fascination with dead women. Thus, Gilbert and Gubar claim that the Angel is eventually “killed into passivity” (290). True to these conventions, one of Brontë’s heroines in “The Spell” dies in her passivity.

¹¹ Mina Laury is shown at the funeral of the young Marquis. Although this is outside the home, the grave is another area regulated to women and angels.

Florence Marian Wellesley,¹² Zamorna's first wife, dies as an ethereal, good Angel by submitting to her husband and accepting his rejection and divorce without a fuss in "The Spell" (15 – 17). In Albion and Marina,¹³ Marian is explicitly called an "angel" (74). She is a beautiful, pure, domestic woman who dies in her passive acceptance of Zamorna's abandonment ("The Spell" 15). This label is reiterated in A Peep into a Picture Book which glorifies Marian's fatal, demure acceptance of Zamorna's rejection (116).

¹² Florence Marian Wellesley will hereafter be referred to as Marian, her most common name in Brontë's juvenilia.

¹³ In this story, written in 1830, Brontë was experimenting with the Marian's name: Marina – Marian.

UGLY HAGS IN BRONTË'S JUVENILIA

For women, ugliness is indicative of evil in Brontë's juvenilia. Unlike the Byronic hero, who maintains his glory even after the Fall, the Fallen Angel's appearance is repulsive. In The Green Dwarf, the beautiful Emily is thwarted by the hag, Bertha (66). Bertha's appearance gives away her character; she is a "hideous crone" (The Green Dwarf 67) who "looked for all the world like a witch" (110). Similarly, Marian's evil governess, Miss Foxley, is ugly (The Secret 7, 10). Both of these Fallen Angels attack the heroes indirectly, through the women in their lives. In The Secret, Zamorna claims that Miss Foxley tried to pose as the *femme fatale*, and lure him away from Marian (12). Having failed, she is now the deceiver who tries to force Marian to leave Zamorna (10). Similarly, Bertha causes St Clair to despair by holding his beloved Emily hostage (108).

In Brontë's juvenilia, the Fallen Angels are easily recognizable, but the general typological character of the Fallen Angel in nineteenth-century literature is difficult to define. Auerbach states: "In Victorian literature female demons often assume... broader identity..." (75) because the Fallen Angel is everything that is not the Angel. She somehow violates the pure, domestic, or beautiful boundaries that define the Angel; it is the nature of the typological dichotomy.

By defining women through these supernatural extremes, the cult of the Angel in the House eliminated the middle-ground, human classification of femininity. In Woman and the Demon, Auerbach claims that in Victorian visual art and literature there exists an "interchangeability" (65) between the woman and the creature or monstrosity:

Victorian iconography abounds in less canonical alliances between women and fairies, goblins, mermaids, vampires, and all varieties of creation's mutants; the Victorian universe crawls with anomalies from whose weird energy only man is excluded (65).

The connection between women and the monstrous is more pronounced because it does not extend to men, as Auerbach states above. Men are the default humans; thus, they are not linked to the same supernatural extremes as women.

THE SPLIT IN BRONTË'S JUVENILIA: Angel and Fallen Angel

Although the dichotomy of the Angel and Fallen Angel is defined by the assumed boundaries between these two extremes, these typologies are not as exclusive as they appear. In fact, the connection between the Angel and the Fallen Angel haunted Romantic literature. Gilbert and Gubar state:

The anxious notion that the angel and the whore might be counterparts was a crucial one.... As if to warn against such female insubordination, nineteenth-century novelists and poets, in both England and America, frequently counterpointed glowing portraits of angelic ladies with fearful depictions of demonic madwomen and murderesses.... For both sexes, these sometimes stereotypical figures originated in an ideology of femininity that stipulated the moral possibilities of 'woman's sphere' by defining conflicting extremes: angel and monster, virgin and whore. (291).

According to Auerbach, the dichotomy of Angel and Fallen Angel is fluid because the extreme typologies cannot be maintained by human characters, even in fiction:

The nineteenth-century woman's angelic and demonic identities are not as exclusive as they may seem: her being extends as well through the magical and the monstrous realm of more-than-human earthly life (64 – 65).

Most of the heroines in Brontë's earliest writings usually adhere to the typological extremes of the Angel and Fallen Angel. As a stock Romantic *femme fatale*, Lady Zenobia (Alexander 429) oscillates between the two extremes in stories like The Bridal. However, with later characters like Mary in "The Spell," this oscillation is more sophisticated. Mary demonstrates the fact that exclusion from "'normative' maleness" (Auerbach 66) creates the "titillating alliance" (Auerbach 66) between the Angel and the Fallen Angel. Furthermore, Brontë's treatment of the Angel and Fallen Angel is also

shaped by the conventions of the “Beauty and the Beast” tale. Since Apulius’ “Cupid and Psyche,” the Beauty has often doubled as her lover’s bane, according to Stith Thompson in The Folktale (99). As a Psyche-like heroine in “The Spell,” Mary is overtly characterized as both Angel and Fallen Angel.

At the beginning of the story, Mary’s appearance associates her with “Madonna” (“The Spell” 45). Moreover, she aspires to be the perfect Angel in the House; pleasing her husband and providing him with the perfect domestic refuge are her highest goals:

...[C]ertain inconsistencies in the Duke’s conduct that at times puzzle me most painfully. Since our marriage it has been my constant study, the business of my life, to watch the unfolding of his strange character, to read his heart, to become acquainted with all his antipathies that I might avoid them, and all his inclinations that I might continually follow them.... I have studied his likes and dislikes, and rigidly striven to gratify the former and avoid the latter. It was natural for me then, when I became the wife of one whom I loved so inexpressibly as Zamorna, to exert every effort to please him. (“The Spell” 35).

Thus, Mary’s angelic domestic ministrations are further compelled by Zamorna’s bestiality or “inconsistencies.” She subscribes to the theory of the domestic Angel and the redeeming Beauty. Even though she does not know the true nature of Zamorna’s enchantment, she hopes that her sweetness and love will somehow restore him. However, like Psyche, Mary’s good intentions are thwarted by her “cursed woman’s spirit of inquisitiveness” (“The Spell” 57). By going to Douro Villa and trying to determine if Zamorna is cheating on her and keeping a mistress hidden there, Mary excites the curse (57 – 58). It is significant that Mary brings about the curse by leaving the domestic sphere. Her violation is similar to that of the heroine in the Scottish version of the folktale, who walks outside the bounds of the magic circle and is thus separated from her husband (Philip 70).

After her trip to Douro Villa, Mary is condemned as a Fallen Angel by both Zamorna and herself. Mary herself is “conscience-stricken [by her]... foolish jealousy” (52). However, Zamorna states it best: “[Mary] Henrietta Wellesley, my white witch, my seraphic hypocrite!” (“The Spell” 65). He claims that she is both Angel and Witch. This characterization remains until the curse is finally lifted. Once Mina Laury saves Zamorna with the word “ransomed” (74), Mary is restored to the place of Angel. Unlike the Fallen Angels who curse mankind deliberately, Mary’s sin is an inherent part of the female gender. Zamorna states: “I cannot help smiling at the whole female character, so finely epitomized in you, [Mary]: weakness, errors, repentance” (“The Spell” 58).

Thus, Brontë is beginning to work out the implications of the typological dichotomy through the character of Mary in “The Spell.” Earlier heroines, like Marian in The Secret (1833) and Lady Emily in The Green Dwarf (1833), remain firmly Angelic; they do not oscillate between the two poles of the typological female dichotomy¹⁴. Mary’s oscillation demonstrates a dawning recognition of the connection between these two extremes that is apparent in the works of other nineteenth century authors and artists like the Pre-Raphaelites, whose “female demons bear an eerie resemblance to their angelic counterparts” (Auerbach 75). However, Brontë does not continue to wrestle within the confines of this dichotomy in Jane Eyre; she overtly rejects the myth of the Angel in the House. This is especially remarkable because it predates other explicit

¹⁴ Juliana Wellesley enters the imaginary world of Angria as an angelic beauty. Throughout The Foundling (1833) she steadily retains this characterization. However in The Secret, the couple begin to experience some marital discord (5 – 7), and eventually the marriage is dissolved and they both end up with different partners (The Scrap Book: A Late Occurrence (1836) 341 – 351). The evolving characterization of Juliana reflects Brontë’s analysis of the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy. It works in short stories, but does not pass the test of time.

rejections of this myth. Auerbach claims that Virginia Woolf was the first feminist critic to reject the Angel in the House:

Beginning with Virginia Woolf, our characteristic response to her has been homicidal; some critics diffuse this impulse by regarding the angel herself as homicidal, undermining 'masculine' energy and activity (Auerbach 73).

However, Brontë's work predates Virginia Woolf by several decades. Moreover, she does not simply kill the Angel; she provides a replacement story for it: the changeling. This changeling is a being who is fully human and yet endowed with feminine mystique. Brontë's changeling is able to break out of the dichotomy because it belongs to a different tradition than that which produced Victorian angelology and the cult of the Angel in the House (Auerbach 70 – 72).

V. *JANE EYRE*: THE FAERY AND THE BEAST

The character behind Jane Eyre, the changeling, does not appear in Brontë's juvenilia. However, all the other typological characters in the romantic plot of the novel emerged in Brontë's early work: Rochester, St. John, Blanche, and Bertha. Rochester is a mature version of Zamorna; he is the Byronic Hero or Milton's Satan. St. John seems to be derived from the character of Brontë's villain, Sir Percy, another Satan-figure.¹⁵ Both St. John and Sir Percy share character traits and have similar appearances. Blanche is the typological Angel, and Bertha is the typological Fallen Angel. In *Jane Eyre*,¹⁶ these typologies appear more subtly than in Brontë's early work, but they are just as firmly established. However, Brontë is no longer confined to these typologies; she shatters the mythology surrounding these character types within the "Beauty and the Beast" plot through the introduction of a new type of character: the changeling.

The character of the changeling emanates from a different tradition than the typological characters that Brontë experimented with in her juvenilia. Although Auerbach suggests that the Victorian fairy evolved into another version of the Angel in the House in later nineteenth-century literature, the fairy lore behind Brontë's changeling is very different than the literary traditions surrounding the domesticated angel. In Brontë's life, fairy tales were mainly part of oral tradition received from Tabby Ackroyd,

¹⁵ In "A Peep into a Picture Book," Percy Northangerland is described as a passionless Satan figure: "the vessel is without flaw.... Never was humanity fashioned in a fairer mould... all those classic lines of face and form... Phidian nose.... In my opinion this head embodies the most vivid ideas we can conceive of Lucifer, the rebellious archangel." (113 – 15). In contrast, Zamorna is a passionate Satan, wild as a tempest with glorious eyes (117).

¹⁶ The text used here is from the third edition, published in 1848 and reprinted in the Norton Critical Edition of *Jane Eyre*, edited by Richard Dunn (1986).

her father, and the local inhabitants of Haworth where the family lived. Even the fairy tales she read in magazines like Blackwell's claim to be part of the local lore of strong female powers. Thus, Brontë's fairies are distinct from the domestic fairy in Victorian literature. Furthermore, the extended metaphor of the changeling in Jane Eyre is not simply one of the "less canonical alliances between women... and all varieties of creation's mutants" (65) described by Auerbach. Rather, through the changeling, Brontë breaks the typological dichotomy of Angel and the Fallen Angel and thus expresses a message about the true nature of womanhood.

The changeling heroine is the most prominent character in Jane Eyre; the narrative is told in her voice. She even addresses the reader directly at crucial moments in the text. The ambiguous male editor is silent.¹⁷ This silence sets Jane Eyre apart from all Brontë's previous writing, which is told in the voice of Brontë's prominent male personae. This shift in narrative voice is indicative of the changing power dynamics that characterize the message of the novel. The changeling heroine and the fairy lore behind her are the hinge which enables this radical turn.

Since the character of the changeling draws on a new tradition, it has the power to break the traditional Romantic female dichotomy of the Angel and Fallen Angel. Jane defies this dichotomy with all her character traits, including her mobility, spiritual potency, and plain appearance. The strength of the changeling heroine is the element that alters the traditional "Beauty and the Beast" plot that Brontë has been experimenting with since she began writing. In Jane Eyre, the changeling heroine is surrounded by the typological characters Brontë uses in her juvenilia: the Angel, the Fallen Angel, and the

¹⁷ Charlotte Brontë wrote Jane Eyre under the pseudonym of the editor, Currier Bell. In her 1847 review of the novel, Elizabeth Rigby questioned the gender of Currier Bell (442).

Beast. Thus, Brontë finally works out a successful relationship with the Byronic hero: it is a relationship of equals. To achieve this, it is the man who must change and recognize the error of his ways rather than have the woman apologize for her spiritual independence.

In creating the character of Jane Eyre, Brontë draws on a fairy lore tradition in which fairies are not typically depicted as beautiful creatures. Jane is certainly a radical departure from the beautiful heroines that populate Brontë's juvenilia. In the context of the "Beauty and the Beast" plot, Jane's absence of physical beauty is especially meaningful. In fact, Jane redefines beauty as a quality that is entirely internal.¹⁸ This is an extension of the Ruskin's theory of Vital Beauty, in which Ruskin defines the beautiful as an internal, emotional quality.¹⁹ George Landow articulates this aspect of Vital Beauty in The Aesthetic and Critical Theories of John Ruskin:

This conception of moral sympathy allows us to see how vital beauty conforms to Ruskin's general statements concerning the beautiful.... depending on whether he is writing about beauty as emotion or beauty as quality which produces this emotion, Ruskin considers beauty to be either a feeling of disinterested pleasure or a quality which produces this feeling of disinterested pleasure. (2 – 3).

This is the type of beauty that the Jane Eyre harbors within herself; it is an unseen, invisible power that emotionally or spiritually affects those around her. Thus, Brontë is not simply deconstructing the "Beauty and the Beast" tale; she is crafting a new, empowering alternative.

¹⁸ Although Beauty is commended for her internal qualities of goodness and wisdom in tales like de Beaumont's "Beauty and the Beast," Brontë redefines beauty as entirely internal.

¹⁹ Charlotte Brontë had access to Ruskin through essays published in Blackwood's Magazine. This will be discussed further in Chapter Ten.

VI. THE CHARACTER OF FAIRIES AND CHANGELINGS

Unlike the Angel and Fallen Angel, the changeling is not a fixed typological character; it cannot be defined with a set of conventions. This is especially true of the changeling heroine in Jane Eyre because Brontë is not basing her heroine on the domesticated fairy lore of other nineteenth-century writers. In Fairies in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature, Nicola Bown explores the representation of fairies in the Victorian era, about a decade after the publication of Jane Eyre. Bown claims that Victorian fairies fascinated men while “women were largely indifferent to them” (3). Brontë’s changeling is distinct from this male-dominated tradition that emerged later in the century. Thus, the best definition of Brontë’s changeling heroine is based on her description of this character and its attributes.

Jane Eyre is first aware of her changeling identity when it provokes her to resist the abuses of her cousin John Reed. It is that essential “something” (4) she senses rising from the recesses deep inside of her. Immediately afterwards, Jane is locked in the Red Room, and when she sees herself in the mirror, she thinks she is seeing a fairy:

All looked colder and darker in that visionary hollow than in reality: and the strange little figure there gazing at me, with a white face and arms specking the gloom, and glittering eyes of fear moving where all else was still, had the effect of a real spirit: I thought it like one of the tiny phantoms, half fairy, half imp, Bessie’s evening stories represented as coming out of lone, ferny dells in moors and appearing before the eyes of belated travelers. (11).

This passage establishes appearance and character of fairy creatures in the folk lore tradition Brontë utilizes in Jane Eyre. Fairies are “strange” small creatures. They are

associated with local tales and local natural settings, like dells and moors. They especially appear at night and in the moonlight. Finally, fairies are lonely creatures, and they are connected with travelers who are lost or searching for something. These characteristics resonate with the local fairy lore of Yorkshire, England. In North-Country Folklore, Jessica Lofthouse cites accounts of fairies being small and strange looking. If they are beautiful, it is only from a distance (23). This passage in Jane Eyre also resonates with the fairy lore in “Fairies, Brownies, and Witches” in Blackwood’s,²⁰ a story with which Brontë was familiar. In this story, the changeling’s fairy nature came to the forefront when she was endangered by the man she loved (215-17). Moreover, this heroine’s power is also location-specific and it is associated with nature (217, 219).

Throughout the course of the novel, Jane fulfills all the criteria described in the Red Room. In fact, whenever the fairy side of her changeling nature surfaces, these characteristics surface as well, and they are recognized by other characters. For example, Jane’s fairy side waxes powerful during her last days at her first home, Gateshead. Jane confronts Mrs. Reed, and frightens her aunt with her power. Mrs. Reed does not recognize the changeling identity behind the power, but she sees the effect of it. This fairy power is a response to her cousin’s abuse and her aunt’s cruelty towards her. Like the heroine in Blackwood’s, her fairy nature protects her. This demonstration of fairy power is accompanied by a description of Jane as a strange, small, local, lonely creature associated with travelers: Bessie calls Jane “a strange child... a little, roving, solitary thing....a queer, frightened, shy, little thing.” (33). This combination of physical fairy-like characteristics and demonstrations of fairy power is reiterated when Rochester

²⁰ “Fairies, Brownies, and Witches” was published in Blackwood’s Magazine in 1828, and it is a story with which Brontë was familiar. It will be discussed at length in a latter section Chapter Seven.

proposes to Jane in the garden (222), and again when Jane returns to Rochester at Ferndean (384 – 86).

It is very important that Jane identifies herself as a changeling when she looks in the mirror at the onset of the novel (11); it is an identity she assumes, it is not imposed upon her. Jane's initial self-identification also justifies an internal definition of the changeling in Jane Eyre. Jane's understanding of the changeling is based on the oral tradition she received from the maid Bessie. Since Charlotte Brontë's changeling is distinct from other fairy creatures in Victorian literature, it can be assumed that her changeling is also based on the oral tradition of fairy tales in which we know she participated (Gèrin 30).

VII. CHARLOTTE BRONTË'S EXPERIENCE OF FAIRY TALES AND FOLK LORE

In the article "The Function of Folklore in 'Jane Eyre' and 'Wuthering Heights,'" Jacqueline Simpson claims that the association of folk lore with the heroine makes these two Brontë novels distinct from their contemporaries.

Unlike those novelists who, while using folklore, carefully dissociate themselves from it by relegating it to secondary, humorous or ignorant characters, the Brontës here make it an essential part of the minds of their heroes and heroines, use it at climactic moments, and link it to their central themes (47).

Brontë's unique use of folk lore demands an explanation. Although many nineteenth-century writers, like Sir Walter Scott, were using fairy tales and folk lore in their novels, Brontë was not influenced by her contemporaries. Brontë used folk lore as a vehicle of power; other novelists did not according to Simpson (47). Her personal experience of fairy tales shaped her use of fairy tale material in Jane Eyre and her creation of the changeling heroine.

Brontë's use of fairy tales sets the entire character of her novel apart from that of other novels. In "Jane Eyre: The Temptations of a Motherless Woman," Adrienne Rich describes Jane Eyre with one word – tale: "*Jane Eyre* is a tale" (463). Rich contrasts this with the "mythic" Wuthering Heights or novels like Persuasion and Middlemarch (462 – 463). Rich describes the genre of "tale" defining its purpose as "soul-making":

The world of the tale is above all a 'vale of soul-making,' and when a novelist finds herself writing a tale, it is likely to be because she is moved by the vibration of experience which underlies the social and political, though it constantly feeds into both of these (463).

Thus, a tale is an intensely personal genre in which a soul is created. Although Rich does not associate Brontë's tale with her use of fairy tales, I believe it is the fairy tale tradition which enables Brontë's novel to strike a chord that resonates in the psyche of her readers.

Some theorists have suggested that fairy tales have endured because they are entertaining (Lüthi 1). However, tastes in entertainment change over time. In The Uses of Enchantment, Bruno Bettelheim claims that fairy tales' enduring power is in the enchantment which continues to reach children symbolically and help them work through the unconscious psychosexual stages in life (24 – 28). I concur with many critics who believe that fairy tales are timeless because they express the timeless fears and dreams which people share. Moreover, it was Brontë's experience of this power that allowed her to recreate it in her novel and in the character of Jane Eyre.

Gérin claims that Brontë's unique educational experience at home allowed her to simultaneously develop her mind in the real world as well as in her imaginary realm of fairies and genii²¹:

Typical of such an education was the opportunity given her to evolve simultaneously upon two planes: a child still believing in fairies and the eastern genii, yet grasping the significance of contemporary politics and taking an adult's interest in the world about her.... Thus, as she grew, all the matter of which she gained knowledge became, like the old rusty lamp in the tale, a passport to fairyland. (30).

The connection between reality, imagination, and fairy tales is crucial to understanding Brontë's use of fairy tales in Jane Eyre. Unlike the Romantic conventions and typological characters that she worked out in her juvenilia, Brontë believed in the power of fairy tales at some level. Since childhood, it had been one of her tools for interpreting

²¹ Genii are the primary supernatural beings in Brontë's early stories, like "The Foundling" and "The Spell."

reality. For Brontë, fairy tales were an expression of the deepest realities; there was true life in fairy lore.

Brontë's changeling in Jane Eyre is the product of a tradition as rich as that of the typological characters Brontë used in her juvenilia, but it is largely oral rather than literary. Haworth, the town in Yorkshire where Brontë spent most of her life, had a rich folk lore tradition. Patrick Brontë made a deliberate effort to gather these local stories from the oldest members of the parish (Alexander 412). For example, the Gytrash, a fairy beast alluded to in Jane Eyre (98) is among the local traditions Brontë absorbed into her novel. According to Branwell Brontë's notes, the Darkwell Gytrash was a local fairy beast specific to a family and home in Haworth:

A Gytrash is a spectre neither at all similar to the ghost of those who once ware [sic] alive nor to the fairies and sylvan creatures nor to demons and the power of the air. It does not confine its forms to the human, and indeed most seldom appears in such a form. A black dog dragging a chain, a dusky calf, nay, even a rolling stone or a self-impelled cart-wheel are more commonly the mortal coil of the sullen spectre; but the Darkwell Gytrash was known by the form of an old dwarfish and hideous man, as often seen without a head as with one, and moving, at dark, along the naked fields which spread round the aged house. (leaf 11, verso).

Traditional family stories were also a source of fairy tale material for the Brontës. For example, there was a "foundling" story woven into Brontë family lore. Hugh Brunty, Patrick Brontë's father, told a story about how his grandfather Welsh was a foundling discovered on a boat and adopted by the Brunty family (Cannon 25 – 40). Although the children never met Hugh, it can be assumed that Patrick passed this story on to his children, because the foundling reappears in several of their stories. Most notably, Emily Brontë's Wuthering Heights is remarkably similar to her grandfather's tale. Branwell also claimed to have written a story about a foundling (Cannon 32 – 33). In Jane Eyre,

Charlotte Brontë charged the foundling with the power of the fairies: changelings are foundlings left by the fairies (OED). Gèrin claims that Brontë “not only believed in but *participated* in childhood” (27) in the enchantment of fairy tales. For Brontë, fairy tales were a life experience. The Brontë children not only shared stories, but also acted them out alone in their rooms at night (Gèrin 31).

Tabitha Ackroyd, the Brontë’s housekeeper, was probably Charlotte Brontë’s greatest source of fairy tales and fairy lore. Both Simpson and Gèrin acknowledge the magnitude of her influence. Tabby arrived at the Brontë parsonage at a very significant time in Charlotte Brontë’s early life, when Brontë returned from Cowan Bridge in 1825, where she had lost both of her beloved older sisters (Gèrin 19). At this traumatic time in her life, it can be assumed that Charlotte Brontë and her siblings were especially open to Tabby’s influence. They were looking for the hope and wonder her fairy tales had to offer.

While the journals of the Brontë children demonstrate the central role Tabby played in their lives, Charlotte Brontë’s most revealing tribute to Tabby is through her creation of the character of Bessie in Jane Eyre. According to Simpson, Bessie’s belief in folklore reflects the influence of Tabby Aykroyd (47). Bessie is not a major figure in Jane Eyre, but she reappears in Jane’s life and thoughts at a few crucial moments. However, if the character of Bessie is based on Tabby Ackroyd, as scholars like Simpson and Gèrin suggest, Bessie demonstrates the importance of Tabby’s fairy tales in shaping Brontë’s psyche and her novel. Fairy tales are the primary link between Bessie and Jane; Jane likes Bessie because she reads the children fairy tales at night (7). However, like

Tabby, Bessie is also part of the oral tradition of fairy tales, and fairy lore is mixed into her spiritual world view (16).

Bessie is Jane's first source of spiritual understanding: Jane interprets her traumatic experience in the Red Room through a conversation she overhears between Bessie and another servant (16). Only Bessie recognizes the supernatural element of Jane's experience in the Red Room – she saw her Uncle Reed's ghost or the Gytrash (16). As an adult, Jane recalls "Bessie's tales" (98) when she hears Rochester approaching on the road to Thornfield. She reflexively returns to those stories to explain her world. Finally, it is Bessie who first recognizes Jane's fairy-like qualities and encourages Jane to "be bolder" (33). If Bessie is a reflection of Tabby, this suggests that Tabby's stories influenced Brontë's creation of a bolder heroine. Through Tabby's fairy tales, Brontë tapped into a tradition she could use to create a bold heroine.

Furthermore, Tabby filled their everyday life experiences with the magic and wonder of the fairy tales surrounding their moor-side home. Tabby claimed to remember a time in Haworth before the nearby factories drove the last of the fair folk underground (Gèrin 37). Most importantly, Tabby's fairy lore coexisted with her "Robust Methodist" (Gèrin 37) Christianity. She offered Brontë a way to link the wonder and beauty of fairy tales with the religion she professed.

Tabby was one of the sources Brontë used to create the remarkable spiritual power of *Jane Eyre*. The dichotomy of the Angel and the Fallen Angel dictated that women who rejected the Victorian feminine role imposed upon them fell outside the Christian tradition entirely. Any transgression a woman made against the Angelic typology had spiritual connotations. Tabby's combination of Christianity and fairy lore

offered Brontë a way to break out of this dichotomy and create a new spiritual space for the spiritually potent changeling heroine.²²

Blackwood's Magazine was one of the literary sources of fairy lore available to Brontë. The Brontës received Blackwood's Magazine from the local Haworth doctor in the 1820s (Alexander 412). It was Patrick Brontë's favorite magazine; in a letter, Branwell later described the powerful impact it had on him and his siblings when they were children (Gérin 28). A search of the extant Blackwood's available at the Brontë library revealed two stories in the January – June 1828 issue explicitly involving fairies. As avid readers of Blackwood's and lovers of fairy tales, the Brontë children undoubtedly read these stories. Moreover, the conventions in these stories appear in Charlotte Brontë's work: the fairy lore of Fairies, Changelings, Brownies, and the Gytrash are all established in folk tales recorded in this magazine.

In the stories from Blackwood's,²³ fairies are strong female characters. In “Fairies, Deils, and Witches,” the Lady of the Moor protects Colin Hyslop from Catholics and evil powers (516). In “Fairies, Brownies, and Witches,” the heroine Mary Burnet is either the Queen of the Fairies or a changeling. She drives her own chariot, controls her own destiny, and takes vengeance on John Allanson for his sins against her and womankind (224). Both of these women are independent and spiritually potent. Although they interact primarily with men, they are in no way controlled by these men. In fact, when John Allanson tries to use magic to control Mary, it breaks him and

²² Spirituality in Jane Eyre will be discussed in Chapter Thirteen.

²³ Blackwood's Magazine: “Fairies, Brownies, and Witches” (214 – 221) and “Fairies, Deils, and Witches” (508 – 515), vol. XXIII, January – June 1828. This volume of Blackwood's Magazine is a part of the Brontë library at Haworth because it is among those read by the Brontës. There may have been other stories about fairies published in Blackwood's during the 1820s, but these are the only ones that turned up in a search of the extant issues in the Haworth library.

provokes her to manifest her fairy power (218 – 19). These fairy women are very different from the spiritually passive Angel in the House.

Unlike the Angel in the House, neither Mary Burnet nor the Lady of the Moor are domestic figures. Throughout their narratives, these female powers remain outdoors where they exercise their powers through words and actions. Even though Mary Burnet bears two children, she is not a domestic figure. These children only appear in the narrative when they are with her in her chariot as she leaves to reign over her fairy realm (226 – 27).

It is also significant that these fairies are local powers. For example, Mary Burnet's power is specific to the woods and loch of Kirkstyle, and the township Moffat in Annandale, Scotland ("Fairies, Brownies, and Witches" 219, 221, 225). The power of the Lady of the Moor is especially potent in the fairy circle on the top of Feathan-hill in Traquair Peebles, Ireland ("Fairies, Deils, and Witches" 512). Brontë's juvenilia is characterized by exotic settings and Classical allusions, such as Verdopolis, a city in Africa and filled with Neoclassical buildings and Eastern genii. By contrast, the fairy lore in Jane Eyre is local, like the fairy lore in Blackwood's. The difference in location reflects the difference in tradition.

FAIRY LORE AND FAIRY TALES IN BRONTË'S JUVENILIA

Sally Vickers characterizes the collection of short stories in The Secret as “fairy tales” (“Forward” vii) because of the brevity, two dimensional characters, and the prevalence of magic; however, Brontë did not draw on traditional Irish, Welsh, or British fairy tale characters and motifs in these stories. Rather, her early works are characterized by Romantic conventions and typological characters. Aside from the “Beauty and the Beast” plot, the fairy tale conventions in Jane Eyre have little precedent in her juvenilia. The changeling heroine is certainly unprecedented.

Still, glimmers of the character of Jane Eyre may be detected in the personas through which Brontë writes her early works: Charles Wellesley and Captain Tree. Captain Tree, Brontë's earliest persona (Alexander 431), is also the title character of The Green Dwarf. The Green Dwarf is a small, ugly, conniving character who is associated with the supernatural without being explicitly magical. His size, lack of beauty, and association with the supernatural are all traits he shares with Jane Eyre.

However, the character of Charles Wellesley is closer to that of the heroine, Jane Eyre. Jane's fairy-like physique recalls that of the elfish Charles – they share a diminutive size and plain appearance. Charles is named an “imp” in “The Spell” (100), and repeatedly referred to as “elfish” (“The Spell” 19, 27); Jane is also referred to as “half-imp half-fairy” (11) and Rochester claims she comes from “Elf-land” (235). Elfish is more than a casual descriptor; Charles has a knack for discerning the uncanny and supernatural. In “The Spell,” his father states: “You must be aware of his elf's

disposition! Don't lay a finger on him! He would find you out by one of your hands.”
(27).

The excerpt above demonstrates that Charles' power is threatening to the society around him in Brontë imaginary world of Angria. It is significant that for both authorial personae, the fairy allusions have negative connotations. The fairy lore at work in these characters is not the domesticated fairy lore that appears in later Victorian literature (Auerbach 65 – 66); it is something wild and uncivilized. In fact, when Brontë constructs the ideal Romantic society in Angria, the fairy lore surrounding Charles is rejected by that Angrian society. The character that may inspire Jane Eyre is empowered by a fairy lore that Romantic society shuns.

The fairy lore surrounding both authorial personae is distinct from the Romantic conventions surrounding other characters. It is certainly not ideal; Brontë's treatment of both her literary personae is ironic and derisive. Throughout her juvenilia, the two personae are in sharp competition with each other and each describes the other as a ridiculous imbecile (Alexander 426 – 33). Charles and Captain Tree are neither heroes nor noble villains but rather weak men who reside within the second rung of society. However, by the time she reconciles aspects of her personae with the character of Jane Eyre, her tone is no longer mocking.

Both Jane and Charles have been interpreted as representative of Brontë. Charles Wellesley is also called Charles Thunder in some manuscripts; Gèrin claims that this is a masculine form of Charlotte Brontë's own name. Charles for Charlotte and “thunder” is the literal translation of the name Brontë (Gèrin 82 – 83). Thus, the fairy power that first glimmers in Charles and is exhibited full-blown in Jane, might be an expression of

Brontë's perception of herself. It is as if she has come to terms with fragmented parts of herself and harnessed her power in the character of Jane Eyre through fairy magic.

VIII. "CINDERELLA" OR "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST"

Both Lori Lefkowitz and John Seelye find the fairy tale plot of "Cinderella" at the heart of *Jane Eyre*. In *The Character of Beauty in the Victorian Novel*, Lefkowitz states:

"As Gilbert and Gubar, among others, have shown, *Jane Eyre* is also a kind of Cinderella..." (Lefkowitz 152). In *Jane Eyre's American Daughters* Seelye claims:

That Jane is an updated Cinderella is obvious from the first chapter of the romance, in which Jane Eyre is treated by her guardian – her aunt through marriage to her mother's brother – as a wicked stepmother (23 – 24).

While certain elements of "Cinderella" are presented in this novel, like the wicked stepmother, I suggest that the plot conventions of "Beauty and the Beast" resonate with the most significant themes in *Jane Eyre*.²⁴

In the Aarne-Thompson *Index of Folklore Motifs*, "Cinderella" is a 510 tale type,²⁵ and it is listed under the heading of "Supernatural Helpers."²⁶ Although different characters come alongside Jane throughout the novel, these characters do not help her gain Rochester's love and attention; Jane Eyre has no external supernatural helpers.

Although the fairy side of Jane's nature responds to the moon throughout the novel, the

²⁴ The role of the Reed family in *Jane Eyre* has been read as an allusion to "Cinderella." However, vindictive family members are also an obstacle to the heroine in "Beauty and the Beast" tales like "Cupid and Psyche," and Mdm. Beaumont's tale. In fact, Psyche's mother-in-law, Venus, is the ultimate wicked step-mother figure.

²⁵ Seelye claims that *Jane Eyre* may exhibit both 510A and 510B motifs. He states: "Any number of critics have pointed out the presence of the Cinderella story inside *Jane Eyre*, but seldom I think have the parallels to the ancient tale of incestuous desire [510B] been emphasized" (25).

²⁶ In the Aarne-Thompson index included in Thompson's *The Folktale*, "Supernatural Helpers" covers tale types 500 – 559, it is not exclusive to the 510 tale type. However, this designation separates "Cinderella" from "Beauty and the Beast," which is in the category "Supernatural or Enchanted Husband (Wife) or Other Relatives." Moreover, this Aarne-Thompson designation suggests that the presence of supernatural helpers is a defining motif for the 510 tale type while an enchanted or supernatural husband defines "Beauty and the Beast."

moon is not an external helper. Rather, moonlight evokes the fairy power within Jane; the changeling heroine's most significant source of power is internal. On one occasion, when Jane is caught in a dream-like state, the moon appears to her as her mother. The return of the dead mother is a 510 tale trope (Thompson 127). However, this maternal moon does not help Jane secure a union with Rochester; instead, she urges Jane to flee Rochester and Thornfield (281). This is a reversal of the traditional role of the magic helper in "Cinderella." There is also a suggestion that a "kind fairy" (75) prompted Jane to advertise for a position as governess. However, this oblique reference is offered in a facetious tone, and it seems to reflect on the reemergence of Jane's own fairy nature after the repressive atmosphere at Lowood rather than to suggest that Jane has external helpers. Finally, in The Folktale Thompson concludes his characterization of the 510 tale type by stating "Cinderella" also involves a special or magical object which brings about the heroine's identification and reunion with Prince Charming (127); there is no such object in Jane Eyre.

Moreover, the plot conventions of "Cinderella" cannot account for the significance of Rochester or the role of beauty in Jane Eyre. Rochester is not a two-dimensional Prince Charming. Brontë has been fascinated with the character behind Rochester since she created Zamorna (Gèrin 53)²⁷; the time she has invested in the creation of this character is returned by the reaction of critics. Although Jane is the primary character in Jane Eyre, critics like Elizabeth Rigby have been remarking on the power of Rochester since the novel was first written (Rigby 440 – 41). Furthermore, he is explicitly portrayed as a beast, especially after the fire razes Thornfield (384 – 85). He

²⁷ Gèrin is one of the many critics who recognize the connection between Zamorna and Rochester. This will be explored in more depth later (See Chapter Nine: "Rochester as the Cursed Beast").

is also referred to as a “brownie” (385) and “Gytrash” (98), which are traditional fairy beasts. The typological Beast has no place in the “Cinderella” tradition. Rochester is the enchanted husband²⁸ who most clearly defines Jane Eyre as a 425 tale type.

Brontë’s treatment of beauty also demands attention because it defines Jane Eyre as a 425 tale rather than a 510 tale. According to Bottigheimer’s summary of “Beauty and the Beast” tales, beauty has been a central theme of European tradition since the second-century tale of “Cupid and Psyche” (45). Beauty is more than a theme in Jane Eyre; it is at the heart of the story’s message: Jane Eyre is not beautiful. Jane’s plain appearance is a recurring issue; it tests the character of those around her. Their reactions to her appearance serve to reveal their inner character. Moreover, Jane’s plain figure is juxtaposed with the beautiful people surrounding her. It may be argued that Jane’s lack of beauty places Jane Eyre between the traditional “Beauty and the Beast” and its companion tales in which a man marries an ugly bride. Ruth Bottigheimer claimed that these companion tales disappeared when the oral tradition of fairy tales was replaced by the literary tradition after the Middle Ages (45 – 47). However, since Brontë was a part of the oral tradition of fairy tales preserved by women like Tabby Ackroyd, it is not inconceivable that she would have been aware of these companion tales. Either way, the fairy tale conventions in the plot of Jane Eyre seem to place this novel firmly in the tradition of “Beauty and the Beast,” despite opinions to the contrary.

Although Thompson defines the 510 tale type as one in which the heroine achieves a happy marriage through the aid of magical helpers, this tale type often features

²⁸ The supernatural or enchanted husband is a defining characteristic of the 425 tale type according to the Aarne-Thompson index.

a heroine who rises from rags to riches through marriage to a prince (Thompson 128).²⁹ While Jane does rise from poverty to financial independence, she does not achieve this through marriage. In fact, her financial independence is secured during her period of separation from Rochester (337). However, even before she received an inheritance, she expresses her intention to maintain financial independence from Rochester by continuing to teach Adele, taking care of her own needs with her own salary (237 – 38). Jane is explicitly opposed to gaining financial security through marriage.

Thus, Jane Eyre clearly lacks some of the essential features of the “Cinderella” tale. Most significantly, it gives no prominence to supernatural helpers. The changeling heroine’s power comes from within herself. Even when the maternal moon appears to Jane (281), this apparition seems to be an extension of Jane’s inner spirit rather than an external supernatural helper because the moon’s advice resonates with a decision Jane had already made within herself (261 – 62, 278 – 79). Rather, Brontë’s novel satisfies the criteria of the 425 tale type. Rochester is clearly not Cinderella’s Prince Charming; he is a Beast in need of rehumanization. However, Jane is not the typological Beauty; Brontë replaces the traditional heroine of the “Beauty and the Beast” story with the changeling, a character whose beauty is primarily internal. Thus, the “Beauty and the Beast” tradition is reworked with a heroine strong enough to secure her own happy ending.

²⁹ Ruth Bottigheimer’s analysis of the “rise tale” in Fairy Godfather, supports Thompson’s generalizations regarding the heroine’s changing fortunes in “Cinderella.” Bottigheimer defines the formulaic structure of the rise tale: “In terms of timing, poor heroes and heroines achieved wealth in these tales *after* a royal marriage. Each of these tales of social rise followed the same pattern” rags – magic – marriage – riches.” (5). However, Bottigheimer does not limit this formulaic structure to the “Cinderella” tale. She suggests that all European rise tales follow this pattern. Thus, Jane’s acquisition of fortune in Jane Eyre is anomalous to the rise tale tradition.

IX. TYPOLOGIES IN BRONTË'S REVISION OF "BEAUTY AND THE BEAST"

JANE EYRE AS A FAIRY LIKE CHANGELING

Jane has the physical characteristics that mark her as a changeling heroine; first and foremost, her name. According to Jessica Lofthouse in North-Country Folklore, Jennet was the queen of the fairies; she reigned in a place called Jennet's Foss. The entrance to her kingdom was in a cave behind the falls on the moors (21), a site very similar in appearance to the falls slicing through the moors outside the Brontë parsonage. Lofthouse states: "Old folk-tales make it a gateway of Faery, and Jennet its queen." (Lofthouse 21). The visual and verbal connections between the name Jane Eyre and Jennet, queen of the Faery are apparent. Brontë further enhances this association with Rochester's pet name for Jane: "Janet" (227). He is the only character who gives her this name, and his use of it seems to be another indication that he recognizes the fairy side of her changeling nature. The significance of the name Eyre is also emphasized through variations and distortions. Adela mistakes Eyre for the French word "aire," which means "air" or "dragon's nest." (89). Later, an "eyrie" (181)³⁰ is mentioned in connection with Bertha's scream. In fact, Bertha's tower room might be considered an eyrie, the home of a pyromaniac monster. Thus, Jane's name links her with fairies and air sprites, as well as the darker side of the fairy realm.

Jane's physique further reveals her character as a changeling. Jane is ageless. Rochester is unable to guess her age: "...I should hardly have been able to guess your

³⁰ Although eyrie usually refers to an eagle's nest, the term may also be defined as a dragon's lair (OED). The later definition corresponds with the context of the term in Jane Eyre.

age. It is a point difficult to fix where the features and countenance are so much at variance as in your case.” (109). Jane’s palm has no lines, like the hands of elves and changelings (McGraw 148). Moreover, Rochester cannot read her fortune on it, conveying the fact that Jane will be mistress of her own destiny: “I can make nothing of such a hand as that; almost without lines: besides, what is in a palm? Destiny is not written there.” (173). Rochester also claims that she has “fairy-like fingers” (227) and feet: Jane’s fairy feet are contrasted with Rochester’s beast-like feet: “...wherever I stamped my hoof, your sylph’s foot shall step also” (228).

Jane has a fairy-like power of mobility comparable to a “blue *ignis fatuus*³¹ in a marsh” (215). Her mobility, like her unlined palms, is more than a physical ability. It is a spiritual and personal independence. Jane has the strength of character and independence to lead. This is explicitly brought to the reader’s attention when Jane walks back to Thornfield on foot (214 – 15). Fairies are traditionally characterized by the fact that they do not ride horses or use beasts of burden (Lofthouse 12 – 3, 23).

Rochester recognizes this connection and elaborates on it:

Yes – just one of your tricks: not... clattering over the street... like a common mortal, but steal into the vicinage of your home alone with twilight, just as if you were a dream or a shade... (215).

Jane’s entrance into Thornfield also demonstrates her personal independence and her love of nature. Jane moves by her own will and with her own power.

³¹ According to the Oxford English Dictionary, an *ignis fatuus* is “a phosphorescent light seen hovering or flitting over marshy ground, and supposed to be due to the spontaneous combustion of an inflammable gas (phosphuretted hydrogen) derived from decaying organic matter; popularly called *Will-o'-the-wisp*, *Jack-a-lantern*, etc. It seems to have been formerly a common phenomenon; but is now exceedingly rare. When approached, the *ignis fatuus* appeared to recede, and finally to vanish, sometimes reappearing in another direction. This led to the notion that it was the work of a mischievous sprite, intentionally leading benighted travelers astray. Hence the term is commonly used allusively or fig. for any delusive guiding principle, hope, aim, etc.”

Rochester describes Jane's appearance at Fern Dean as fairy-like mobility. He fears it because he cannot control it and does not understand it:

Yet how, on this dark and doleful evening, could you so suddenly rise on my lone hearth?... How can it be that Jane is with me, and says she loves me? Will she not depart as suddenly as she came? To-morrow, I fear, I shall find her no more.... Where is the use of doing me good in any way, beneficent spirit, when, at some fatal moment, you will again desert me – passing like a shadow, whither and how to me unknown; and for me remaining afterwards undiscoverable? (385).

In her relationship to Rochester, Jane's fairy mobility follows the tradition of fairy brides. In the Anglican fairy tradition, when mortal men transgress the laws of their fairy wives, their wives leave them. For example, the fairy Meliora leaves her hero lover, Partenopex, when he defies her by trying to learn her identity (Clouston 84). Similarly in "Melusine," the fairy Pessine leaves her husband when he disobeys her (Clouston 84 - 85). The transgressing spouses of immortals are usually sentenced to temporary banishment. Moreover, mortals must earn fairies' forgiveness because fairies are traditional quick-tempered and unforgiving. In Celtic fairy tales like "The Hump Back and the Fairies," collected and recorded by Evans-Wentz at the turn of the twentieth-century, fairies are quick to take offense and heap abuse on blundering mortals (Evans-Wentz 92). Although Rochester links Jane's power of mobility with that of fairy brides, Jane is not vindictive or unforgiving. Jane's forgiveness of Rochester is a deliberate break from this tradition; she forgives him fully and freely. Rochester does not earn his forgiveness (262). It is this human love that makes Jane a changeling and not merely a fairy.

Jane's appearance repeatedly associates her with fairies and changelings. She characterizes herself as: "poor, obscure, plain, and little" (222). Rochester claims that when he first met her, she looked like a winged "linet" (275), which is a little flying fairy creature. Even as a child, her reflection specifically reminds her of the changeling, who

is “half-fairy, half-imp” (11). Jane’s appearance is more than a physical indicator of her changeling identity because appearance defines the typological characters in the traditional “Beauty and the Beast” plot, which Brontë uses in the novel. Thus, Jane’s appearance is a crucial element of the novel’s message; Brontë uses Jane’s lack of beauty to break the established female dichotomy of the Beautiful Angel and Ugly Hag.

Jane’s physical association with fairies and changelings extends to the physical environment for which she searches. Jane loves the natural setting traditionally inhabited with fairies and associated with them and their power. For example, when the fever hits Lowood, Jane is sent outside with the healthy children. Jane links her time outside in the moonlight with her growing spiritual insight (68 – 69). Moonlight is an integral part of fairy activity (Lofthouse 20). It is featured in episodes where Jane’s fairy powers wax powerful, and will be discussed at length later.

Jane’s connection with nature is more explicit at Thornfield; after a few months cooped up inside the house, Jane’s changeling spirit demands an excursion outdoors (95 – 102). On this trip to the post, Jane finds herself on a deserted road at sunset (97). It is significant that the hawthorn and hazel bushes are bare and white in this winter landscape (97) – these are plants used to ward off fairy mischief (Lofthouse 23). Since they are not in season, they cannot inhibit fairy powers. Jane “lingers” (97) there until sunset, like a fairy waiting to beset lonely travelers in Bessie’s stories (11). Moreover, Jane waxes powerful in this setting. Rochester later describes her as having been a strangely authoritative little fairy who beset him on the road. It was on that road, bathed in moonlight, that Rochester first realized Jane’s power exceeded her diminutive stature (275).

Like her appearance, Jane's fairy power breaks out of the stringent spiritual dimensions established by the typological Angel and Fallen Angel. Like these typological characters, the changeling is a spiritually potent being occupying a liminal spiritual space. Its role is not a part of the Christian canon; however, by the nineteenth-century, the fairy is not condemned as a pagan power outside the Christian tradition, either. In Fairies in Nineteenth-Century Art and Literature, Nicola Bown describes the ways in which the later Victorian fascination with fairies differed from interest in other forms of the supernatural (2). Fairies were safe supernatural beings. They were not associated with the dreadful power of deities or the awakened dead. Although fairies could be mischievous and even malicious, they were generally forces of life and nature rather than dangerous supernatural powers of death and damnation. Furthermore, fairies did not interfere with other religious beliefs because fairies did not require belief:

Finally, and most importantly, belief in fairies was not required in order for them to act as a consolation for modernity. Most Victorians who dallied with the fairies did not believe in them.... Unlike heaven, hell, or the 'other side', the idea of fairyland could be entertained *as if* one believed in it without actually doing so. In a period when many were tormented by religious doubt, such 'as if' belief in supernatural beings whom one knew perfectly well did not exist must itself have been a consolation. (2).

Thus, Brontë is able to merge fairy lore and Christianity to create a spiritually potent heroine.³² This heroine is firmly inside the Christian tradition and yet she has the power to defy other spiritual forces of death and darkness that also lurk within the Christian tradition because she is empowered by the accepted life-giving power of fairies.

³² This merging of Christianity and fairy lore is not distinct to Brontë among nineteenth-century authors. However, it does separate Brontë's juvenilia and her adult work. Brontë's juvenilia is marked by its lack of Christian religious material. This will be discussed further in Chapter Thirteen.

ROCHESTER AS THE CURSED BEAST

Like the traditional beast in the 425 tale type, Rochester claims he was an innocent young man who had been “cursed” (120) and turned into a beast (116). Following the fairy tale tradition of bestial grooms, Rochester has spent the last decade searching for a beautiful young woman whose love will break his curse (125). Rochester’s description of his life during an evening conversation with Jane recalls a “Beauty and the Beast” narrative:

...fortune has knocked me about since: she has even kneaded me with her knuckles, and now I flatter myself I am hard and tough as an Indian rubber ball.... Yes: does that leave hope for me?... Of my final re-transformation from India-rubber back to flesh? (116).

According to Auerbach in Woman and the Demon, the beast was a broad category in nineteenth-century literature; it referred to anything not strictly human (65). Thus, Rochester’s statement above would have been understood to as an allusion to himself as a beast.

Rochester is undoubtedly a beast and a Byronic hero like Zamorna in Brontë’s juvenilia. Gèrin claims that Rochester cannot be fully appreciated without understanding his earlier incarnation in the character of Zamorna:

To ignore Zamorna is to lose the very concept from which Rochester sprang – the love not only of Charlotte’s adolescence but, as time would show, in all essential traits, of her life (Gèrin 53).

However, Rochester’s bestial side is more thoroughly developed than that of Brontë’s earliest Byronic beast, Zamorna. Jane’s first impression of Rochester connects him to

the fairy beast, Gytrash (97). Unlike Zamorna, Rochester's prototype in Brontë's juvenilia, Rochester is not handsome (129). In fact, his appearance explicitly associates him with a beast, especially after he is burned in the fire that razes Thornfield (384 – 85). Rochester describes himself crunching and smoking, like a dragon in its lair, awaiting the return of the unfaithful Celine Varens³³ (124). He compares himself with Job's leviathan wrestling with the old hag, destiny (125).

Rochester even uses fairy tale allusions to describe his situation:

I transformed myself into a Will-o'-the-wisp.... I pursued wanderings as wild as those of the March-spirit.... 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. (273).

However, Rochester is not just a fairy tale beast; he is also a "wandering and sinful" (192) Byronic hero, like Zamorna in Brontë's early writings. Unlike Zamorna, Rochester is now "rest-seeking and repentant" (192).

Thus, Rochester's curse sets up the traditional female dichotomy of the Angel and Fallen Angel. Bertha, Rochester's mad, demonic wife, is the malevolent power who has cursed Rochester. Although he claims he wanted a "good and intelligent woman" (273) to rehumanize him, Rochester looked for externally beautiful women throughout his wild wanderings (272). The women he chose to be his mistresses demonstrate that he had subscribed to the theory behind "Beauty and the Beast," he believed a beautiful woman could transform him back into a man. However, after nearly a decade of searching, Rochester fails to find the angelic beauty who can rehumanize him. He returns to Thornfield bitter, disillusioned, and suspicious of all woman-kind because he has accepted the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy and it has proved false (275).

³³ Celine Varens was Rochester's French mistress, and the mother of Adele. Celine Varens is another Fallen Angel who is juxtaposed with Jane throughout the novel.

Rochester's experience demonstrates the falsity of the typological dichotomy, but Rochester never explicitly rejects it. In fact, he occasionally reverts back to his belief in it and tries to mold his perception of Jane to the typology of the beautiful angel. Nevertheless, by the time he meets Jane, Rochester knows he needs something more than the typological Beauty to restore him (126). He recognizes that internal beauty and strength of character are most important. Moreover, when Rochester meets Jane, he realizes that she is different than the Angels and Fallen Angels he has encountered, and her difference attracts him. Although Rochester was not looking for a changeling to save him, he immediately acknowledges Jane for what she is and he knows that this changeling has the power to save him (276).

Jane's role in Rochester's rehumanization proves to be complex. Although Rochester was initially cursed by the beastly Bertha, his beast-like nature truly surfaces when he loses Jane. He is described like a dragon who has been robbed of his treasure. First he "sought her as if she had been the most precious thing he had in the world" (376), then he became bestial in his loss, "he grew savage – quite savage on his disappointment: he never was a wild man, but he got dangerous after he lost her." (376). The connection between Jane's absence and Rochester's bestiality is at the heart of the "Beauty and the Beast" plot in Jane Eyre; Jane is the un-beautiful heroine who can rehumanize the beast.

Jane is immediately set up as the alternative to the traditional Beauty in her relationship with Rochester. Brontë conveys this to the reader by contrasting Jane with Celine Varens, the first Beauty Rochester sought in his quest for rehumanization (125 – 27). Rochester had hoped Celine's love and beauty would redeem him (125). Celine encouraged Rochester's belief; she flattered him and told him that he was handsome

(123). By contrast, Jane is not beautiful (232), and she refuses to flatter Rochester (115). However, Jane does have the power to make Rochester handsome: love. Like the heroine in Perault's "Ricky of the Tuft,"³⁴ Jane no longer sees Rochester as ugly because she loves him: "And was Mr. Rochester now ugly in my eyes? No, reader. Gratitude, and many associations, all pleasurable and genial, made his face the object I best liked to see...". (129).

Jane's ability to rehumanize Rochester is connected to her fairy power, which Rochester recognizes when he first puts his hand on her shoulder after falling off his horse on Hay's Lane (275). He expresses his willingness to follow Jane, comparing her to a "blue *ignis fatuus*" (215). He realizes that she has the power to lead him out of the dangerous wilderness or further in, to his doom. In Rochester's metaphorical account of his engagement to Jane, he identifies her as the fairy who has the power to make his dreams come true. In a reversal of the traditional courtship practice, in which a man offers his fiancé a ring, the fairy in Rochester's story is the one who offers him a magical ring that has the power to save him (234 – 35). Thus, Rochester recognizes Jane Eyre's fairy power as the alternative to the power of the Beauty.

Rochester assumes that Jane's power to save him is specific to her fairy nature when he asks her to make him handsome: "Tell me now, fairy as you are, – can't you give me a charm... to make me a handsome man?" However, Jane's response springs from her changeling nature; she recognizes that it is not fairy magic but human love that will make Rochester "handsome enough" (215) for his beloved. Although Jane does not speak all of this out loud, Rochester seems to read her "unspoken thoughts" (215).

³⁴ "Ricky of the Tuft" is characterized as a 425 tale type.

Thus, Brontë offers Jane a more complex role than that of a good fairy or that of the domestic Beauty described by Ruth Bottigheimer in “Beauty and the Beast.” In fact, Jane inhabits a unique spiritual space as Rochester’s redeemer; she is both Christian and fairy. For example, Jane pits herself against what she believes to be demonic forces in order to save Rochester from burning to death in his bed. She “baptizes” (130) Rochester with water from the night stand. Once the fire is extinguished, Rochester’s first exclamation is: ““In the name of all the elves in Christendom, is that Jane Eyre?”” (131). Elves are not traditionally associated with Christianity; Brontë uses Rochester’s juxtaposition of these two spiritual powers to establish Jane’s unique role as a changeling who can rehumanize Rochester as a fairy and a human.

Most importantly, Jane recognizes the man beneath Rochester’s hard, beast-like exterior; Jane sees the man that everyone else misses (129). In “Beauty and the Beast” tales like Mdm Beaumont’s, the heroine does not see the man beneath the beast-like exterior. She must accept the beast at face value. Mdm Beaumont’s Beast tells Beauty that the evil fairy who condemned him to a bestial form also barred him from revealing himself to her (41). Brontë accepts this convention in her early story “The Spell,” in which Mary does not see the man beneath Zamorna’s bestial exterior, although she hopes she may be able to bring it out (31 – 34). However in Jane Eyre, Jane is driven by something deeper than the heroines in “The Spell” because she knows the man beneath the beast.

Although Jane truly loves Rochester and wants to marry him, she rejects the idea that one person can save another. When Rochester asks if a man is right in seeking out a relationship with someone who can save him, Jane states:

... a wanderer's repose or a sinner's reformation should never depend on a fellow-creature. Men and women die; philosopher's falter in wisdom, and Christians in goodness: if any one you know has suffered and erred, let him look higher than his equals for strength to amend, and solace to heal. (192).

This is of paramount importance to Brontë's message in Jane Eyre. The typological character of the Angel and the Beauty in Victorian culture was a passive, domestic savior who saved men with spirituality expressed through physical beauty (Patmore 1.4.1.11 – 16). With her response to Rochester, Jane rejects the mythology behind both the nineteenth-century "Beauty and the Beast" and the Victorian cult of the Angel in the House.

When Jane returns to Rochester at Ferndean, she immediately recognizes Rochester as a beast. Jane calls him a "brownie" with a "shaggy black mane" (385). And claims that he has "'a faux air' of Nebuchadnezzar"... your hair reminds me of eagle's feathers..." (384)³⁵. More importantly, she is not afraid of him and his bestiality. Jane also knows that their situation has changed; she recognizes that he is in need of a rehumanization that she can effect because it is emotional, not spiritual.

But in his countenance I saw a change: that looked desperate and brooding – that reminded me of some wronged and fettered wild beast or bird, dangerous to approach in his sullen woe. The caged eagle, whose gold-ringed eyes cruelty has extinguished, might look as looked that sightless Samson.

And, reader, do you think I feared him in his blind ferocity? – if you do, you little know me. A soft hope blent with my sorrow that soon I should dare to drop a kiss on that brow of rock... but I would not accost him yet. (379).

Jane "accost[s]" Rochester with the fullness of her "mocking changeling" (386) nature. Her strategy is diametrically opposed to the strategy of the traditional heroine in the "Beauty and the Beast" plot. Unlike the heroines in Brontë's juvenilia who tried to

³⁵ Jane is alluding to the biblical account of King Nebuchadnezzar's transformation into a beast (Daniel 4:1 – 37).

appease the beast by suppressing their own personalities and living to please him (“The Spell” 31 – 34), Jane matches Rochester’s “ferocity” with her own power.

THE ANGELIC BEAUTY

Jane is suspicious of the angelic characterization of any humans throughout the novel. For example, Jane overtly rejects the myth of angelic children in a direct statement to the audience, which interrupts the flow of the narrative:

This, *par parenthèse*, will be thought cool language by persons who entertain solemn doctrines about the angelic nature of children, and the duty of those charged with their education to conceive for them an idolatrous devotion: but I am not writing to flatter parental egotism... I am merely telling the truth. (95).

Through Jane, Brontë challenges the angelic typology on all levels. She is aware of the danger of that false characterization: the Angel inevitably falls because humans cannot maintain that characterization.

In a thinly veiled allusion to Jane, Rochester describes his ideal female redeemer as an “angel.... a disguised deity” (120), stating that his heart will be her “shrine” (120). Although Jane does not realize he is casting her as the typological Angel, she instinctively rejects it and tries to convince Rochester to do the same. However, just as Jane cannot initially convince Rochester that the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy is false, Brontë is aware that Jane’s words will not initially convince the reader to reject this established dichotomy. Thus, Brontë creates these typological characters in her novel so that she can demonstrate their deconstruction.

Blanche is Jane’s angelic, beautiful foil. As such, her appearance is of paramount importance in the construction of her typological character:

Tall, fine bust, sloping shoulders, long graceful neck; olive complexion, dark and clear; noble features; eyes rather like Mr. Rochester’s, large and black, and as

brilliant as her jewels. And then she had such a fine head of hair, raven-black, and so becomingly arranged; a crown of thick plaits behind.... She was dressed in pure white, an amber-colored scarf was passed over her shoulder and across her breast... it contrasted well with the jetty mass of her curls. (139).

Like the heroines in Brontë's juvenilia, Blanche's appearance in the narrative is almost always accompanied by a description of her appearance. In fact, the connection between Blanche's appearance and that of the heroines in Brontë's juvenilia is striking. Lady Zenobia Ellrington, one of Brontë's earliest heroines, is "a tall dark handsome woman" ("The Foundling" 48). Mina Laury, one of Brontë's last juvenile heroines, is especially similar to Blanche:

[Mina Laury had a] tall form, black eyes and hair, and clear brunette complexion.... Handsome she certainly is ... but her perfect elegance is more astonishing. ("The Spell" 40).

Moreover, Mina Laury fulfills the role of the angelic beauty in "The Spell," Brontë's early retelling of "Beauty and the Beast."

Although Gèrin states that the heroines in the juvenilia exhibited a broad range of physical characteristics (50), Brontë had a single ideal of female beauty: tall, dark, and majestic. For example, a heroine like Lady Marian Wellesley, who is small with auburn hair, is treated as if her beauty is immature. When she is contrasted with the tall, dark, majestic beauties around her, there is an implied lack on her part ("The Foundling" 47). It is very significant that Brontë revives this early ideal in the creation of Blanche. Since appearance is of paramount importance to the character of the Angelic Beauty, the connection between Blanche and the appearance of the angelic beauties of Brontë's juvenilia demonstrates their shared typological identity. Although Brontë's audience in Jane Eyre may not recognize it, Blanche looks like Brontë's ideal Angelic Beauty; in

Brontë's mature reworking of "Beauty and the Beast," Blanche is a placeholder for Brontë's earlier heroines.

Although the audience of Jane Eyre could not have recognized the significance of Blanche's appearance as the feminine ideal of Brontë's youth, Brontë surrounds Blanche with other markers to distinguish her as the Beauty. Blanche looks like both an angel and a Classical goddess. For example, Blanche has a "Grecian neck and bust" (141). Both her name and her attire associate her with the color of angels and goddess, white (152). Another trait Blanche shares with the Classical goddess is height; according to Barry Powel's Classical Myth, goddesses are eight and nine feet tall (228). All the women in Blanche's party are tall, but she is among the tallest: "Mary was too slim for her height, but Blanche was moulded like a Dian³⁶" (151). Blanche even states that she wants to be the exalted, unrivaled goddess of her house (158). Finally, the women, including Blanche, descend the stairs at Thornfield in a "bright mist," like goddesses off Olympus. In fact, all the ladies at Thornfield are described like a crowd of Classical deities:

Some of them were very tall, many were dressed in white, and all had a sweeping amplitude of array that seemed to magnify their persons as a mist magnifies the moon.... They dispersed themselves about the room, reminding me... of a flock of white plummy birds. Some of them threw themselves in half-reclining positions on the sofas and ottomans.... (150).

Thus, Brontë's audience would have recognized Blanche's appearance as that of an angelic beauty.

In order to further establish Blanche's typological characterization, Brontë slathers Blanche in conventional labels. For example, Blanche presents herself and is accepted as a "sovereign" (157). Although the queen is not associated with the beautiful

³⁶ "Dian" is a reference to the Olympian goddess Diana. This allusion further demonstrates that Blanche's physique, and especially her height, connect her with Classical goddesses.

Angel in Brontë's juvenilia, Auerbach claims that the typological character of the queen is comparable to that of the Angel in Victorian culture (63 – 65). Lady Ingram's address to Blanche makes this more explicit:

“You see now, my queenly Blanche,” began Lady Ingram, “she encroaches. Be advised, my angel girl...”
 “Show her into the library, of course,” cut in the ‘angel girl’.... (169).

The mocking repetition of “angel girl” deliberately brings this label to the audience's attention. Thus, Blanche's titles demonstrate that she is the ideal Victorian heroine: angel, beauty, and even queen.

Furthermore, Rochester explicitly sets up Blanche as the typological “Beauty” in his “Beauty and the Beast” plot scenario: “... I believe I have found the instrument for my cure, in – you have noticed my tender penchant for Miss Ingram: don't you think if I married her she would regenerate me with a vengeance?” (192). A discussion of Miss Ingram as Rochester's regenerator leads into a discussion of Blanche's beauty Rochester states: “... I can talk of my lovely one.... A strapper – a real strapper, Jane: big brown, and buxom; with hair just such as the ladies of Carthage must have had...” (193). Thus, Blanche is the typological angelic Beauty in the “Beauty and the Beast” plot of Jane Eyre; people assume her beauty will be the power that rehumanizes Rochester.

If Blanche has any spirituality as the typological angel, it is even more superficial than that described in Patmore's poem (1.4.1.11 – 16); there is not any evidence of any spiritual activity with Blanche. However, Rochester does suggest that the ideal woman should exhibit angelic goodness. Jane rejects this unrealistic spiritual demand because she recognizes that no human can maintain divine goodness. The spiritual demands on the typological Angel are as unrealistic as the ideal of beauty imposed upon the

typological beauty. Moreover, the superficial nature of the angel's spirituality links the spiritual and physical appearance of their typological characters. The changeling does not try to attain divine goodness; rather, it is a spiritual power of light and life. The changeling's active spiritual role is a stark contrast to the spiritual dearth of the angel.

FALLEN ANGEL

Bertha is the Fallen Angel in Jane Eyre. According to Susan Gilbert and Sandra Gubar, many Victorian writers were afraid that the Fallen Angel might be the counterpart to the Angel. Brontë emphatically states that this connection does exist and this is the fallacy of these typologies which Brontë highlights. The Angel becomes the Fallen Angel when she cannot maintain the unrealistic expectations imposed upon her. In Jane Eyre, Brontë makes this connection explicit through the link between Bertha and Blanche; the typological Angel and Fallen Angel in her novel. Rochester claims that Bertha was once as beautiful as Blanche:

“...but he told me Miss Mason was the boast of Spanish Town for her beauty: and this was no lie. I found her a fine woman, in the style of Blanche Ingram; tall, dark, and majestic.” (268).

While all the typological characterizations imposed upon the Angel are unrealistic, Brontë emphasizes the fact that the standard of beauty is both impossible and misleading. Rochester’s curse is indirectly the product of his belief in the myth behind “Beauty and the Beast;” he believed that beauty was an accurate measure of a woman’s character. Prompted by Blanche’s beauty, her family, and general social pressure, Rochester married a woman he did not love, esteem, or “even know” (269). Bertha’s beauty belied her inner character.

Bertha’s identity as a Fallen Angel is cemented through the labels other characters assign her. Jane calls her a “Fiend” (135) and characterizes her laugh as “demoniac” (130), wondering if she is “possessed with a devil” (130). Even Bertha’s appearance

eventually corresponds with her typological characterization: Bertha looks like “the foul German spectre – the Vampyre.” Bertha’s role in the “Beauty and the Beast” plot of Jane Eyre may be best described in the comparison between Bertha and a “Fury” (185). The Fury was a malevolent female power in Classical mythology sent to plague transgressors. The Fury describes Bertha’s active role as the dark feminine power that curses Rochester. Rochester claims that he is “little better than a devil” (256) because of his “bad, mad, and embruted partner!” (257). Unlike the superficial spirituality of the typological angel, the Fallen Angel is a spiritually potent being. Within the established female dichotomy, this suggests that spiritually potent women are inherently dangerous. Brontë challenges this with the spiritual power of the changeling. However, Bertha is not the spiritual adversary of Jane; Brontë does not create a new dichotomy of female spirituality. Jane contrasts Bertha, but the spiritual adversaries she faces are men.

Although Bertha is the malevolent power that curses Rochester, the precise role she plays in this curse remains ambiguous. She is an active agent of evil: “...she is so cunning: it is not in mortal discretion to fathom her craft” (258). However, Rochester also claims “I transformed myself” (273) into a beast in order to escape an “infernal union” (268) with Bertha. Thus, it is unclear whether Bertha enforces Rochester’s curse, or it is self-inflicted in response to Bertha’s malevolent power.

Bertha’s characterization as a Fallen Angel merges with that of the beast. Just as the typological Angel in the House makes the domestic circle into a heaven, the Fallen Angel curses the domestic sphere: “...that third-storey room, of whose secret inner cabinet she has now for ten years made a wild beast’s den – a goblin’s cell”(272). Bertha’s speech also links her characterization as a beast and Fallen Angel: Bertha uses a

“a tone of demon-hate” (271) to curse Rochester and she makes “wolfish cries” (271).

While Bertha’s obsession with fire links her with hell and fallen angels, her attack against her brother is decidedly bestial:

“...there have been teeth here!”
 “She bit me... She worried me like a tigress...” (186).

Moreover, Bertha looks like a beast. Appearance is of paramount importance for Bertha; it defines her the same way it defines Blanche because both women believe in the power of beauty. They have bought into the myth behind “Beauty and the Beast” and the cult of the Angel in the House, and now it controls them. When Jane first sees Bertha in full daylight, she cannot tell what type of creature Bertha is: “beast or human... groveled, seemingly, on all fours... snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing...” (257 – 58).

Bertha is an astute portrayal of the typological Fallen Angel; she is everything the Angel is not. She is the embodiment of the reason Jane emphatically rejects the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy; these typologies exist outside the pale of humanity. Women who allow themselves to be labeled Angels will become Fallen Angels when they fail to uphold the unrealistic expectations surrounding the typological Angel. Jane clearly articulates all of this when Rochester tries to classify her as an angel:

“And then you won’t know me, sire; and I shall not be your Jane Eyre any longer...” I laughed at him as he said this. “I am not an angel,” I asserted; “and I will not be one till I die: I will be myself. Mr. Rochester, you must neither expect nor exact anything celestial of me – for you will not get it, any more than I shall get it of you: which I do not at all anticipate.” (228).

X. THE THEORY OF BEAUTY IN *JANE EYRE*

The reigning theory of beauty in the “society” created by Brontë in Jane Eyre is articulated by Blanche Ingram: “I grant an ugly *woman* is a blot on the fair face of creation; but as to the *gentlemen*, let them be solicitous to possess only strength and valour...” (157 – 58). Thus, Blanche defines the ideal woman with her words and her appearance. Her statement also establishes the aesthetic principal behind the nineteenth-century “Beauty and the Beast” tradition. Women must be beautiful; it is their defining quality. As Blanche states, beauty is the “special prerogative of woman – her legitimate appendage and heritage!” (157).

Brontë takes this theory of beauty in Jane Eyre a step further with the pseudoscience of physiognomy. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, physiognomy is:

The study of appearance. The study of the features of the face, or of the form of the body generally, as being supposedly indicative of character; the art of judging character from such study. (OED).

Since beauty is specifically associated with women, physiognomy is also applied most heavily to female characters. It is explicitly used to judge Jane Eyre at Thornfield: Mrs. Ingram claims that she is a competent “judge of physiognomy” (155) and therefore she can “see all the faults of her class” (155) in Jane and claims that she “looks too stupid” (160) to play charades with everyone. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the “science of palmistry” (170), which Rochester practices at Thornfield when he pretends to be a gypsy, is also related to physiognomy. This is also exclusively applied to the

women at Thornfield (169 – 70). It is important that Rochester is unable to read Jane's hand (171); she defies preconceived ideas about beauty and its significance.

As a result of the acceptance of physiognomy by the characters in Jane Eyre, appearance merits treatment. This is established in the first chapter of the novel. Sitting in the Red Room, Jane concludes that if she had been beautiful, the Reeds would have loved her. Her appearance determines people's response to her:

I know that had I been a sanguine, brilliant, careless, exacting, handsome, romping child – though equally dependent and friendless – Mrs. Reed would have endured my presence more complacently; her children would have entertained for me more of the cordiality of fellow-feeling; the servants would have been less prone to make me the scapegoat of the nursery. (12 – 13).

Bessie and Miss Abbot also agree that a beautiful child in Jane's position would be easier to sympathize with and better treated (21).

According to Lori Lefkowitz in The Character of Beauty in the Victorian Novel, physiognomy was an accepted convention in nineteenth-century novels; Victorian fiction uses beauty to define characters. Physical attributes correspond to the inner spirit of the character. Moreover, the overwhelming use of this technique in Victorian literature had an impact on the beliefs of its audience.

Victorian fiction is rich in physical description, and heroes and heroines, who are usually the most fully described characters in a novel, invariably develop into standards of beauty. This book considers how physical descriptions function as a strategy of characterization in the realist novel and how descriptions of beauty translate the essential values of a text into a visual aesthetic. Important social implications emerge: in the description of heroes and heroines, novelists promote those cultural values that the idealized figures embody, and description is a significant way in which sexual difference is encoded in literature and enforced by society. (Lefkowitz 1).

Since beauty had meaning in Victorian fiction, Lefkowitz claims that characters who challenged ideals of physical beauty could break out of typological characterizations like that of the *femme fatale* (19).

In fact, Lefkowitz claims that Brontë is deliberately subverting the convention of heroism corresponding with beauty through the unattractiveness of Rochester and Jane (146). Since they do not correspond to accepted ideals of beauty, they jar the reader out of other accepted conventions (Lefkowitz 146 – 49). Jane’s triumph over her beautiful female foils should cause the reader to “reassess” (Lefkowitz 149) conventions of beauty. While it is difficult to determine whether readers understood the fullness of Brontë’s message about beauty, the jarring affect of the appearance of Jane and Rochester is recorded. Nineteenth-century critics like Elizabeth Rigby condemned the book because she was confused by the lack of beauty (Lefkowitz 146). Characters in Jane Eyre are confused by Jane’s lack of beauty. According to the group assembled at Thornfield, Blanche deserves Rochester’s love because she is “handsome” (176), and even the kindly Mrs. Fairfax cannot see any charm in Jane’s person strong enough to merit Mr. Rochester’s love: “She surveyed my whole person: in her eyes I read that they had there found no charm powerful enough to solve the enigma [of Mr. Rochester’s love]” (232). Rochester is the only character at Thornfield who truly recognizes that Jane’s merit is not connected to her physical appearance; her beauty is entirely internal (228 – 29).

Lefkowitz claims that the role of beauty in the descriptions of characters functions on an unconscious level:

Readers have not suspected these powers of description because we have actually been trained to ignore descriptions of beauty; accordingly, we rarely interpret them as vehicles for meaning or as aspects of characterization. From Aristotle’s

dictum that ‘character is action’ through contemporary critical theory, character has consistently been defined with respect to plot. (Lefkovitz 1).

However, the meaning of beauty was explicitly discussed by popular nineteenth-century theorists like John Ruskin. Although Ruskin may not accept the pseudoscience of physiognomy, he does suggest that goodness and intelligence are reflected in the appearance of people. For example, Ruskin states:

For there is not any virtue the exercise of which, even momentarily, will not impress a new fairness upon the features; neither on them only, but on the whole body, both the intelligence and the moral faculties have operation, for even all the movement and gestures, however slight, are different in their modes according to the mind that governs them, and on the gentleness and decision of just feeling there follows a grace of action, and through continuance of this a grace of form, which by no discipline may be taught or attained. (Ruskin 29).

Moreover, Ruskin was interpreted by his contemporaries as supporting an aesthetic theory approaching physiognomy. Nineteenth-century reviews of Ruskin, such as the *North British Review*, link physical beauty with truth and goodness; Ruskin’s Modern Painters is interpreted as granting beauty a power that extends into the moral and divine spheres (Tuthill xix – xx). Furthermore, we know that Brontë read Ruskin; his critical essays were among those published and commented on in the Brontës’ favorite magazine, Blackwood’s (Tuthill xviii). Brontë accepts Ruskin’s aesthetics in her juvenilia where goodness is always externally manifested. However, she challenges popular interpretations of Ruskin in Jane Eyre, where internal beauty is not reflected in the appearance of the heroine.

XI. ANALYSIS OF THE CHANGELING'S FUNCTION IN *JANE EYRE*

There is continuity between the typological characters of the Beast, the Angel, and the Fallen Angel in Charlotte Brontë's juvenilia and her novel Jane Eyre. However, in her novel, Jane breaks the established female dichotomy with the creation of a new character, the changeling. Having established the existence of these typologies, this section will proceed to analyze the role of the changeling in Jane Eyre.

The fairy power of the changeling in Jane comes to the forefront for the first time when Jane confronts her Aunt Reed after the meeting with Mr. Brocklehurst. Aunt Reed is not only abandoning Jane, she has lied about her (26 – 27). After Brocklehurst leaves, Jane retaliates for the first time in her life (previously she had defended herself against her cousin's physical attack, but she had not retaliated). Jane consciously gathers her inner power and exerts it in a verbal assault:

Speak I must; I had been trodden on severely, and *must* turn: but how? What strength had I to dart retaliation at my antagonist? I gathered my energies and launched them in this blunt sentence: - "I am not deceitful: if I were, I should say I loved *you*; but I declare I do not love you: I dislike you the worst of anybody in the world except John Reed; and this book about the liar, you may give to your girl, Georgiana, for it is she who tells lies, and not I." (30).

The fairies in both fairy tale stories in Blackwood's Magazine exercised verbal acuity; fairies traditionally exercise verbal power. However, Jane's verbal assault is the culmination of Jane's burgeoning fairy nature. Both before and after her confrontation with Aunt Reed, Jane's appearance explicitly associates her with changelings. She

reminds herself of an impish fairy when she sees her reflection in a mirror (11) and when Bessie finds her later she looks like a small, wandering fairy in the garden.

Aunt Reed is so frightened by Jane's verbal assault that she runs away, leaving Jane the victorious fairy tale heroine:

I was left there alone – winner of the field. It was the hardest battle I had fought, and the first victory I had gained: I stood awhile on the rug, where Mr. Brocklehurst had stood, and I enjoyed my conqueror's solitude. (32).

However, Jane's verbal confrontation of Aunt Reed moves from the fairy tale triumph of the little heroine over the wicked step-mother figure through a recognition of the transient nature of that triumph. Hatred must pass; love is necessary for human interactions.

Something of vengeance I had tasted for the first time; as aromatic wine it seemed, on swallowing, warm and racy: its after-flavour metallic and corroding, gave me a sensation as if I had been poisoned. (32).

Jane moves beyond the traditional fairy tale triumph and into life and love (32). Through this first confrontation, Brontë creates a heroine who is truly empowered by the fairy tale tradition. The changeling heroine exercises fairy-like power, but she also has the insight to move beyond the prescribed boundaries of the fairy tale.

Jane's first encounter with Rochester on the lane leading to Thornfield is liberally laced with fairy tale allusions and motifs. In this meeting, Jane waxes powerful in her fairy power (97 – 101). This is especially significant because it marks the beginning of a new era in Jane's life, and it is an answer to her desire for "intercourse with her kind" (95). The fairy tale motifs in this passage coincide with the beginning of a new order in Jane's life.

The setting is distinctly the type associated with fairies in tales. It is a lonely, natural setting when moonrise coincides with sunset. Brontë emphasizes the moon in this scene, it is mentioned three times (97, 99, and 100). Jane enjoys the setting and the moonlight; she is at peace in this setting that others would find intimidating (100), as if it is her natural element. She states: "...I am not at all afraid of being out late when it is moonlight..." (100). Jane's thoughts are shaped by fairy tales as she walks along the moonlit road. When she first sees Rochester and Pilot, she immediately thinks about the story of Gytrash; this story is specifically a local tale Bessie has told her (98).

In fact, Jane waxes powerful in this setting. She has the ability to verbally deal with Rochester (98 – 99). She resists his commands to go home (98) and stays to assist him. She has the courage to approach his horse and then help him to the animal (99 – 100), something she would not normally have done. Moreover, Jane revels in her actions; she enjoys exercising the active, fairy side of her changeling nature: "... [I]t marked with change one single hour of a monotonous life.... it was an active thing, and I was weary of an existence all passive" (101).

Jane implies that the ease she feels around Rochester is connected to this fairy-like nature of their meeting (103). Rochester's fairy-tale connections draw Jane to him and allow Rochester recognizes Jane's fairy nature (107). Like her, he is a part of this fairy-haunted place (101). Brontë makes this explicit; Jane is inspired to use heath as a metaphor for Rochester:

"Like heath that, in the wilderness
The wild wind blows away"

Heath is not a fairy plant, but it covers the moors where fairies live. This is the poetic phrase Jane uses to describe Rochester's disappearance down the road. Jane's immediate

comfort in Rochester's presence is also related to his appearance. She is comfortable with his lack of beauty as well as his rough manners (99 – 100).

Jane's return to Thornfield after the death of her Aunt Reed parallels her first meeting with Rochester (213 – 16). Again, their conversation is laced with allusions to fairy lore, and the meeting itself seems to be an allusion to the fairy tale "Tamlane." "Tamlane" is a traditional English fairy tale in which the hero, Tamlane, is saved from enchantment by his betrothed, Burd Janet (Kathleen Ragan 40). Tamlane was enchanted by the Queen of all Elfland, and he is doomed to be sacrificed by her to the devil (40). Burd Janet saves Tamlane by identifying him, pulling him into a circle of holy water, and holding on to him until he turns into a man (41).

When Jane meets Rochester upon her return to Thornfield, she sees him across a hedge of roses (214) and realizes that he makes a place her "only home" (216). The hedge of roses may be an allusion to the reunion of Burd Janet and Tamlane, which also occurs beside a rose bush. Rochester begins their meeting by naming Jane: "And this is Jane Eyre.." (214). Rochester truly recognizes her for who she is; he proceeds to recognize her fairy identity: "a dream or a shade... you elf... blue *ignis fatuus* light in a marsh... Queen Boadicea... fairy as you are... Janet..." (215 – 16). Jane will similarly name and identify Rochester later in the garden. Identification is a trope that recurs in fairytales, and is central to the action in "Tamlane."

When Rochester names Jane, he identifies her fairy powers through Queen Boadicea and Janet. Queen Boadicea was the ancient queen of the Britons who rebelled against Roman domination. As an ancient, local, female power, she parallels Janet, or

Jennet, queen of the fairies (Lofthouse 21). It is significant that the changeling heroine in Blackwood's "Fairies, Brownies, and Witches" was also connected with the figure of the fairy queen (224).

As the fairy queen, she has the power to face death, return to the land of the living, the power to charm Rochester, and disenchant him. Rochester expands on the extent of Jane's fairy powers when he asks her for a "charm, or a philter, or something of that sort, to make me a handsome man" (215). He knows she can rehumanize him, just as Tamlane knew that Burd Janet could save him. The verbal exchange between Rochester and Jane is also important; it demonstrates that communication and understanding is at the heart of their relationship. In fact, the element of communication between Rochester and Jane is an extension of the identification trope: they know each other.

The fairy tale allusions in Rochester's meeting with Jane by the rosebush become explicit in Rochester's metaphorical retelling of this event in the carriage ride with Adèle³⁷ after the engagement. Rochester states:

"It was a little thing with a veil of gossamer on its head. I beckoned it to come near me.... I never spoke to it, and it never spoke to me, in words: but I read its eyes, and it read mine; and our speechless colloquy was to this effect: – It was a fairy, and come from Elf-land, it said; and its errand was to make me happy: I must go with it out of the common world to a lonely place – such as the moon, for instance – and it nodded its head towards her horn, rising over Hay-hill: it told me of the alabaster cave and silver vale where we might live. I said I should like to go; but reminded it, as you did me, that I had no wings to fly.'

"'Oh,' returned the fairy, 'that does not signify! Here is a talisman will remove all difficulties;' and she held out a pretty gold ring. 'Put it,' she said, 'on the fourth finger of my left hand, and I am yours, and you are mine; and we shall leave earth, and make our heaven yonder.' She nodded again at the moon...."

"...Mademoiselle is a fairy," he said, whispering mysteriously. (235).

In this account of their meeting, Jane is explicitly named a fairy. Gateshead and the "land of those who are dead" (215) parallels "Elf-land" (235). Although Rochester interprets

³⁷ Adèle is Rochester's ward and Jane's pupil.

the situation as centered around him and his happiness, like the traditional “Beauty and the Beast” plot, he recognizes that the power lies with Jane. She has the power to make him happy; moreover, that power is active. In this account, Rochester is the passive recipient of Jane’s proposal just as Tamlane is the relatively passive recipient of Burd Janet’s proposal and rescue. However, Jane only has this power in his retelling of it where he recognizes her as a fairy. In his first retelling of it during the carriage ride, he is active and she is passive. Even Adèle recognizes that as false. Thus, Jane’s fairy identity is paramount to her power in her relationship with Rochester. Isolation and rings are traditional fairy tale objects. Initially, Rochester claims these are his tools, then he acknowledges that they are Jane’s.

It is especially significant that Jane is portrayed as giving Rochester a ring. This is a reversal of the traditional courtship ritual in which the woman is the passive recipient of gifts. However, Jane’s active role in her relationship with Rochester does place her in the tradition of fairy brides. Fairy brides set the stipulations for their relationship with their husbands, and they cannot be bound against their will.

Rochester describes his curse as “a misfortune that befell me long ago...” (235). Jane speaks to him with her eyes and offers to take him to the moon with the power of a magic ring. Rochester repeatedly desires to escape the world and make his own, isolated heaven with Jane. This cannot happen; they must make their happiness in this world; that’s what fairies do. Although fairies exercise their power in moonlight, they are earth powers; fairies do not live on the moon. According to Bown, the local, earth-bound nature of fairy power is one of the defining characteristics of fairies. It sets fairies apart from all the different supernatural powers that fascinated the nineteenth-century British

public (Bown 2). However, for Brontë, this was more than a convention; the local nature of Jane's power is an integral part of Brontë's message. Jane Eyre is not an escapist fantasy; it is about a heroine who makes her happy ending in this life. Susan Gilbert explores the significance of this in her essay "A Dialogue of Self and Soul." Through Jane's happy ending, Brontë rejects the passive acceptance of "inequities on earth, one of the many tools used by patriarchal society to keep, say, governesses in their 'place'" (Gilbert 483). Jane's fairy power allows her make a happy ending and overcome the unhappy "place" patriarchal society allots to governesses.

Rochester's proposal and Jane's response to him are heavily invested with fairy motifs. Both Rochester and Jane recognize her identity as a changeling. Jane specifically waxes powerful in the garden that night; both the time and place are traditionally associated with fairies. The scene opens with an allusion to Shakespeare's play A Midsummer Night's Dream which defined the modern British concept of fairies as secularized, small, benevolent beings who were not incompatible with Christian beliefs (Avery 69 – 74). Bown claims that Romantic artists and authors often referred to this Shakespearean play, but they did not model their fairies after his active, mischievous creatures (6 – 7). By contrast, Brontë's alludes to Shakespeare's play because her heroine shares several traits with the fairies in A Midsummer Night's Dream.

The proposal chapter in Jane Eyre opens with the phrase: "A splendid Midsummer shone over England: skies so pure..." (217). The capitalization of "Midsummer" further suggests Shakespeare's play. Moreover, Rochester specifically proposes "On Midsummer-eve" (217). The next morning, Jane wonders if it has all been

a dream (226), echoing the characters in Shakespeare's drama. For the characterization of Jane, it is important that Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream defines fairy women as fierce, independent spirits who choose their own lovers (2.1.62 – 85).

The natural garden setting is significant because both it, and Jane's relationship to it, are described through allusions to fairy tales and fairy lore. Jane goes to the most "sheltered, ... Eden-like, ... nook" (217) in the garden to avoid the cigar-smoking dragon, Rochester. Jane states: "I felt as if I could haunt such a shade forever" (218). Jane has finally found a place where she feels at peace, where her fairy nature is appeased. This is extremely significant in Brontë's creation of a fairy heroine. It is generally accepted in fairy lore that the presence or absence of fairies is contingent upon the physical setting. As nature powers, fairies require a natural setting conducive to that natural power. According to Gèrin, the relationship of fairies and their physical setting was part of the fairy lore that Tabby imparted to the Brontë children (38).

Jane's relationship to the setting exceeds her desire to immerse herself in nature. Throughout the proposal scene, nature seems to respond to Jane's rising and falling passion: the wind wafting through the laurels becomes a roaring gale by the end of the night (223 – 225). According to Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream, the weather responds to the mood of fairies; they are earth and air powers (2.1.84 – 120). Thus, nature visibly reflects Jane's fairy powers the same way in which it reflected the power of the fairies in Shakespeare's play.

The most prominent aspect of the natural setting is the moon which recurs throughout this passage. Although moonlight is mentioned in Shakespeare's play, the moonlight in the proposal scene is an extension of the function of moonlight throughout

the novel. Unlike the rest of the natural setting, moonlight takes on an active role in its interaction with Jane throughout the proposal scene. The moonlight guides Jane's steps (218); its beauty is one of the reasons Rochester gives for walking with her in the garden (219). Jane also "reads" Rochester's face in the moonlight to determine the veracity of his intentions; the moon guides Jane's understanding and decision. She states: "Mr. Rochester, let me look at your face: turn to the moonlight.... Because I want to read your countenance; turn!" (224). There is also symbolic meaning in the disappearance of the moon when Jane accepts Rochester's proposal. As a changeling, Jane responds to the moonlight, but it also responds to her. The moon recognizes Jane's moral danger (225). The sudden absence of moonlight can be read as a withdrawal of blessing, which fosters foreboding.

In the proposal scene between Rochester and Jane, the fairy tale trope of identification resurfaces. Both Rochester and Jane name each other and themselves, demonstrating that they both exercise the power to define themselves and understand each other. Jane's names reveal the two sides of her changeling nature: human and fairy. For example, Rochester calls her both "Jane" and "Janet" in successive sentences. The repetition emphasizes the difference and similarity, the significance of the two terms (219). Jane is a reference to her human nature; Janet is a reference to Jennet, the queen of the fairies (Lofthouse 21). Jane makes a point of explicitly declaring her human nature, she says: "I am a free human being with an independent will" (223). However, Rochester also recognizes the fairy side of her changeling nature: "You – you strange – you almost unearthly thing!" (224). The declaration of Jane's changeling nature, both fairy and human, must preclude her relationship with Rochester. The trope of naming

demonstrates an understanding of the essence of what is named. Only after Rochester demonstrates that he knows her can Jane trust his declaration of love for her.

The last set of names Rochester and Jane exchange have a magical quality because they effect change. With this exchange of names, Rochester and Jane establish a new relationship. Rochester calls her, saying: “I summon you as my wife” (223). The verb “summon” has magical connotations. Then, Rochester asks her to “give me my name – Edward” (224), and she names him “dear Edward” (224). In fairy tales like “Tamlane,” naming allows the heroine to attain her lover. The exchange of names also demonstrates the active role both Jane and Rochester play in this relationship. This balanced exchange prevents either from falling victim to imposed labels. Rochester and Jane name each other in order to cement a relationship.

In A Midsummer Night’s Dream, all the fairies are characterized by their magical powers of mobility; some, like Puck, can even circumnavigate the world in a night (2.1.182 – 83). Similarly, Jane relies upon her potential for fairy-like freedom of mobility in the proposal scene. It is Rochester’s deliberately misleading statement that she must leave and “find a new position” (220) which brings out the fairy side of her nature. When Jane describes her response to Rochester’s statement that she must leave, it is not just emotion that she experiences; Rochester’s declaration causes Jane’s fairy power to assert itself:

The vehemence of emotion stirred by grief and love within me, was claiming mastery, and struggling for full sway; and asserting a right to predominate: to overcome, to live, rise, and reign at last; yes, – and to speak (221).

The power Jane feels “struggling” within her is both her human emotions and her fairy power, which is evoked by the necessity of exercising the fairy power of mobility. The

significance of Jane's potential for mobility can be overlooked in this scene because it is overshadowed by her speech to Rochester. However, an important aspect of Jane's speech is that everything she says is emphasized by her power to leave and go where she pleases. Specifically, Jane is free to declare her feelings to Rochester before his impending marriage because she has the power to leave him after her declaration. Jane states: "I have spoken my mind, and can go anywhere now" (223), but in fact, she can speak because she is free to go anywhere. Jane would be inhibited if she were shackled to the domestic sphere like the Angel in the House; she could not declare her love for Rochester and continue to work for him and his new wife.

Unlike the Angel in the House, the domestic sphere is not Jane's ultimate goal. Even while she declares her love for Rochester, Jane is looking for a relationship, not a domestic haven; her potential for mobility remains unhampered. In fact, Jane is prepared to follow the migration of the fairies to Ireland. According to much fairy lore, the fairies were driven to Ireland before they were driven underground (Lofthouse 16).

Even more than her verbal address to Rochester, Jane's physical potential for mobility demonstrates that she is not rendered powerless by Rochester. In fact, Rochester's apparent rejection of Jane evokes her power. Jane's mobility leaves her empowered in the face of apparent romantic rejection. This sort of rejection would cripple the typological Angel in the House whose options are limited to the domestic sphere in which she resides.

It is especially significant that Jane is not afraid to acknowledge her love for Rochester. This demonstrates the power of the human side of Jane's changeling nature: she needs human relationships with open communication, intellectual stimulation, and

especially love. In fact, her need for communication is emphasized by its context in her speech to Rochester; she communicates her need to communicate.

“I love Thornfield – I love it because I have lived in it a full and delightful life. . . . I have not been trampled on. I have not been petrified. I have not been buried with inferior minds, and excluded from every glimpse of communion with what is bright and energetic, and high. I have talked face to face, with what I reverence; with what I delight in, – with an original, a vigorous, an expanded mind. I have known you Mr. Rochester. . . . I see the necessity of departure; and it is like looking on the necessity of death.” (222).

In this acknowledgement, Jane is stronger than Rochester, who cannot acknowledge his love for her first.

In her response to Rochester, Jane recognizes her spiritual equality with Rochester and their spiritual connection. This spirituality is explicitly Christian; Jane affirms that that she has a soul and will someday stand before God as Rochester’s equal (222).

Rochester affirms this, and declares that is the reason he loves her (222 – 23). The compatibility of Jane’s fairy powers and her Christian spirituality are a significant part of Brontë’s message. Jane does not need to deny any aspect of her changeling nature in order to embrace Christianity. Moreover, the fairy-charged Christianity of Jane separates her from the demonic spirituality of the Fallen Angel and the passive, superficial religion of the Angel. Jane is a powerful, spiritually active being.

Rochester recaps the manifestation of Jane’s fairy power when he sees her the next morning. Rochester states:

“sprite or salamander. . . . I have seen what a fire-spirit you can be when you are indignant. You glowed in the cool moonlight last night, when you mutinied against fate, and claimed your rank as my equal. Janet, by-the-by, it was you who made me that offer.”

[Jane replies] “Of course, I did. . . .” (230).

Jane is a fire-spirit who can defy fate, name herself, and claim the man she loves. Most importantly, it was Jane's power that drove the action during Rochester's "Midsummer Night's Eve" proposal. Jane's active role in all the transactions of the night defies the passivity of the typological Angel without associating Jane with the Fallen Angel. Thus, in the proposal scene, Jane breaks the established dichotomy by exerting the full range of her changeling powers.

The morning following his proposal, Rochester reverts to his old pattern and his belief in traditional conventions. He tries to fit the future "Jane Rochester" (227) into the traditional angelic beauty typology. Jane instinctively recognizes Rochester's inaccuracy and strives to correct him. Their conversation emphasizes the implicit message of the proposal: the changeling heroine breaks the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy.

Rochester couples Jane's fairy title, Janet, with the title Jane Rochester: "Soon to be Jane Rochester... in four weeks, Janet, not a day more" (227). This elicits a physical response from Jane; she blushes and then blanches (227). Her fairy instinct recognizes the discord, and Jane becomes increasingly uncomfortable with Rochester's characterization of her. Rochester's idea of the "young Mrs. Rochester" does not resonate with Jane's true changeling nature (227). Rochester's false representation of Jane merges the fairy with the typological Beauty and Angel, he states:

"...for nature, at least, has stamped her patent of nobility on this brow, Jane; and I will clasp the bracelets on these fine wrists, and load these fairy-like fingers with rings... You are a beauty, in my eyes; and a beauty just after the desire of my heart, - delicate and aërial." (227).

The fairy Rochester describes in this conversation with Jane approaches the typological Victorian fairy. Auerbach claims that this Victorian fairy is another manifestation of the

typological Angel (65). Later in this conversation, Rochester explicitly merges the typological Beauty with the typology of the Angel, by naming Jane an angel: "...now I shall revisit it healed and cleansed, with a very angel as my comforter." (228). According to Bown, Victorian men idealized and infantilized women with the fairy lore they developed in the later nineteenth-century (4), thus the fairy becomes another unrealistic typology. Rochester is trying to fit Jane into this tradition with his description of her.

Jane not only rejects this angelic, beautiful fairy (227 – 28), Brontë throws up flags throughout this passage to alert the reader to the problematic nature of Rochester's description of Jane. Rochester does not listen to Jane; in fact, he talks past her objections (228). His heedless disregard for her objections is a stark contrast to the open communication they shared the night before (222). Thus, this passage not only rejects the typological Beauty and Angel, it demonstrates that the changeling heroine is not a part of the emerging Victorian fairy lore. Rather, Jane is empowered by the local, feminine tradition that Brontë grew up in.

Jane not only rejects Rochester's false representation of her as the Beauty and the Angel, she eventually returns Rochester to a recognition of her identity as a changeling. Her success is important to Brontë's message; Jane's argument has the potential convinces the reader that she defies the conventional typologies. Jane states: "Jewels for Jane Eyre sounds unnatural and strange.... I felt he was either deluding himself, or trying to delude me" (227). The delusion Jane alludes to here is that of the typological Angel and Beauty. Through her, Brontë is demonstrating that the myth of the Angel in the House is a lie. By referring to her names in the passage above, Jane draws the reader's

attention to the discord between the typologies Rochester is conforming to and her essential nature as a changeling heroine.

The contest between the typological angelic Beauty and the changeling in this section is embodied in a debate about clothing and jewelry. Jane rejects the jewelry (228) and gaudy dresses (236) that Rochester almost forces upon her. These things explicitly represent the typology Jane is rejecting; the physical transformation of clothes and jewelry parallel a typological transformation. Jane explains to Rochester that she cannot accept his gifts because they will transform her into Rochester's "English Celine Varens" (237). In *Jane Eyre*, the Angel and the Fallen Angel are associated with material adornment.

Jane's intense discomfort at Rochester's insistence on dressing her up may also be an explicit reflection of her fairy nature (227 – 37). According to North-Country fairy lore, fairies could not bear to be dressed up in new clothes (Lofthouse 24). This is the fairy lore that would have had the greatest impact on Brontë because she lived in the North-Country and she was a part of the local folk lore tradition.

However, Jane's rejection of Rochester's gifts ultimately rests in her refusal to sacrifice her identity as a changeling. The changeling heroine recognizes the connection between the costume of the beautiful Angel and the imposition of the Angelic typology. Moreover, she explains to Rochester that the imposition of typological ideals of beauty and domesticity will destroy the dynamic woman he loves: "And then you won't know me, sir; and I shall not be your Jane Eyre any longer..." (228). This statement reveals why Jane's relationship with Rochester is worth saving. Although Rochester tries to place Jane in the costume of the angelic Beauty, the changeling is the woman he loves.

The angelic feminine typology is not merely implied in the debate between Jane and Rochester after their engagement. Jane explicitly rejects the angelic typology; she emphatically refuses to be an angel:

I laughed at him as he said this. "I am not an angel," I asserted; "and I will not be one till I die: I will be myself. Mr. Rochester, you must neither expect nor exact anything celestial of me – for you will not get it, any more than I shall get it of you: which I do not at all anticipate." (228)

Decades before Virginia Woolf metaphorically kills the Angel in the House in her speech "Professions for Women," Jane recognizes that if she allows Rochester to characterize her as an angel, it will kill her. Moreover, Jane explains her rejection of the Angel: she cannot maintain the unrealistic angelic standard. She must be allowed to be who she is: a changeling. Thus, the character of the changeling functions to overthrow the angelic typology.

Later that day, Jane refuses to be a "second Danae with the golden shower falling daily round me" (236). This statement draws the character of the Angel and the Fallen Angel together. Danaë was locked up in a room with no doors to prevent her from bearing the child who would kill her father, but Zeus was able to get to her as a shower of gold and impregnate her (Morford and Lenardon 547 – 48). Her secluded room can be read as an extreme version of the domestic limitations of the Angel in the House. However, as one of Zeus' lovers and a pagan heroine, Danaë is also a Fallen Angel³⁸. Moreover, this allusion demonstrates that Jane recognizes that the title of "wife" will not prevent her from being treated like another one of Rochester's bought women. Jane must

³⁸ The myth of Danaë is indirectly connected with a "Beauty and the Beast"-like tale. The son Danaë bears Zeus is Perseus, and one of Perseus' exploits is to rescue the beautiful Andromeda from a sea monster and claim her for his bride. Later European artists, like Titian, capitalized on the "Beauty and the Beast" themes in this myth (Morford and Lenardon 554 – 56).

work to maintain her relationship as his equal and overcome the typological ideals he tries to impose on her.

In their conversation the day after the proposal, Jane has Rochester sing to her (239). This song, which is printed as a poem in the text of the novel, casts Jane as a fairy, “That child of Shower and Gleam” (239), and Rochester as a fairy tale groom in pursuit of his bride against all obstacles. It is significant that Jane rejects the romantic end of this song. She declares that she will not die with her lover (239). This is a stark contrast to the heroine in Brontë’s early story, “The Spell.” In “The Spell,” Zamorna claims that the beauty should die with the beast. Mary, the typological Beauty in “The Spell,” accepts it (“The Spell” 66). Thus, Jane has overcome the mindset governing the typological heroines in Brontë’s juvenilia.

When Jane finally succeeds in piquing Rochester with her words, he returns to characterizing her as a “little elfish” (229) woman, and recognizes that her inner beauty is not externally manifested. Rochester’s ability to recognize and respect Jane’s changeling identity is the reason they can have a relationship. Although he lapses and tries to force her to conform to the typologies of the Angel and the Beauty, she succeeds in convincing him to reject these ideals and accept her as she is.

The night before the wedding, Jane has forebodings that resonate with her fairy nature. In response to her fears, Jane exercises her powers of mobility and goes out in search of Rochester (242 – 44). It is described as both a physical and emotional experience: Jane finds satisfaction running in the wild wind (242). The act of running makes Jane’s mobility distinct from that of the typical genteel woman. Furthermore, this

passage suggests that Jane's mobility is an expression of the fairy's nature power. Nature, especially the moon, resonates with Jane's nature and also reveals hidden truths. The moon lets Jane and Rochester see each other, thus resonating with Jane's desires. When Jane is serene, so is the night; the sky is half clear and the moon is shining (251). However, the blood-red moon also seems to warn Jane about her impending separation from Rochester. Jane describes the moon, stating: "she seemed to throw on me one bewildered, dreary glance" (243). Furthermore, the allusions woven through their midnight conversation (244 – 47) remind the reader of Jane's changeling identity and Rochester's curse. Brontë reinforces these fairy tale identities at every important juncture in Jane's life.

Jane's changeling nature is strangely suppressed immediately before and during her wedding; she had been unable to write her name on her trunks because she feels estranged from the name Mrs. Rochester (242). It is as if she instinctively senses that this identity cannot correspond with her nature because it will be false. Throughout the wedding ceremony (253 – 54) and the meeting with Bertha (257 – 59), Jane exhibits little interior dialogue because the changeling nature within her is not active. After taking off her wedding dress, Jane describes the day thus: "till now I had only heard, seen, moved – followed up and down where I was led or dragged – watched events rush on event, disclosure open beyond disclosure: but *now*, I *thought*." (259 – 60). When Jane finally thinks about the events of the day, the fullness of her changeling nature exerts itself. In fact, she is frightened by the potency of this interior spirit, which commands her to leave Rochester and Thornfield immediately (261 – 62).

Jane wrestles with the internal judge (262) who condemns her to a life apart from Rochester. She describes the struggle in physical terms: “I stopped my ears... I wrestled... conscience, turned tyrant held passion by the throat... with that arm of iron ... thrust her down....” (261). It may be argued that this conscience is merely the product of Jane’s strict patriarchal religious upbringing at Lowood. In fact, she once refers to her conscience as “he” (261). However, this tyrant conscience is also acting in line with Jane’s fairy nature and with the tradition of fairy brides. A fairy bride cannot remain with a mortal husband who has transgressed against her laws (Clouston 84 – 85). Moreover, Jane’s departure is encouraged by the feminine incarnation of the moon (281). The fairy side of Jane’s changeling nature manifests itself powerfully in the moonlight throughout the novel. Thus, the appearance of the moon at this critical juncture can be trusted as an indicator that Jane’s fairy nature is active.

Although the moon encourages Jane to flee, it is a resolution she makes within herself (261 – 62) and maintains despite supreme internal crisis (278 – 79) and external, physical crisis (279 – 80). Jane has no external helpers which enable her to leave Rochester. In fact, she pleads with her internal voice, “Let another help me!” (261), and the voice responds, “No; you shall tear yourself away, none shall help you...” (261). This sets Jane Eyre apart from the “Cinderella” tradition, which is characterized by a heroine who has magical helpers.³⁹ As a changeling, Jane’s power is within her; it does not come from external helpers.

Brontë emphasizes both sides of Jane’s changeling nature in her departure from Rochester. The fairy nature corresponds with the spiritual side of Jane: she must renounce Rochester as her idol (278). The fairy cannot compromise its spiritual laws.

³⁹ See Chapter Eight, especially note twenty-six.

However, Jane maintains her love for Rochester (267); this sets her apart from the capricious fairy brides who leave their lovers in an angry huff (Clouston 85). Rochester allows her to go because he realizes that she maintains control of her spirit, and that is what he wants. In the crisis of losing her, Rochester defines what it is about Jane that attracts him: it is her inner, changeling nature. Thus, she must come to him willingly; he cannot force her to be his wife or lover (280). Rochester's inability to hold onto Jane is another characteristic of the fairy bride tradition. Even after their marriages, fairy brides retain their powers of mobility.

Jane flees to the moors after her hope of a life with Rochester is shattered. The moors are a recurring theme in Jane's life; her relationship with the moors is an important aspect of her changeling identity.⁴⁰ It is implied that the moors are her home; the moors, considered an inhospitable place in the first half of the nineteenth-century,⁴¹ are an unlikely haven for a young woman (although they were an acknowledged haven for fairies). Yet, Jane runs to the moors at a time when most young women would have run home, after a failed romance. The fact that she ends up at a place called "Moor House" (300) is especially telling; through this house, the moors do become home.

Before Jane leaves, Rochester recognizes Jane's connection to the moors in a double entendre about sin and pleasure, in which Jane is the "pleasure" Rochester is determined to take for his own, despite his curse. Rochester states: "... And I may get

⁴⁰ Charlotte and Emily Brontë redefine the moors in their treatment of this inhospitable environment in their novels. According to Carol Kubicki's dissertation "Moors and Myths," Brontës' novels changed nineteenth-century attitudes towards the moors. Prior to these novels, travel writers were universally negative in their treatment of the moors (1). However, after the publication of *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre* romantic writers begin to depict the moorland "as a place of freedom and spiritual fulfillment" (Kubicki 1).

⁴¹ See note above.

[pleasure] as sweet and fresh as the wild honey the bee gathers on the moor” (120). It is significant that Jane tells him the bee will sting and the honey taste bitter – it is foreshadowing for their first failed attempt at marriage. Like Jane, the honey on the moor is something Rochester cannot take by force; it must be given to him. Furthermore, Rochester compares Jane with an “*ignis fatuus* light in a marsh” (215); her character is connected with the mystery of the moors.

When Jane was left with her pitifully naked soul, she seeks Nature on the moors; it is her soul-land.

Not a tie holds me to human society at this moment – not a charm or hope calls me where my fellow-creatures are – none that saw me would have a kind thought or a good wish for me. I have no relative but the universal mother, Nature: I will seek her breast and ask repose. (284).

Jane’s human identity is momentarily submerged beneath her fairy nature. Jane proceeds to hide in the moor like a fairy, buried in heather between craggy rocks. In that rocky hiding place, Jane feels the “might and strength of God” (285); it is on the moors she turns to Him and finds peace (285). Finally, a faux *ignis fatuus*⁴² draws Jane to a refuge called “Moor House” (300), symbolically situated on the edge of the moor with holly or yew at its gates (291); these plants are traditionally associated with fairy power. Thus, Jane is sustained by her spiritual power: fairy and Christian. When Jane loses her closest human relationship, her spirit leads her to safety. However, the spirit land of the moors cannot maintain her physical human body: “What a still, hot, perfect day! What a golden desert this spreading moor! Everywhere sunshine. I wished I could live in it and on it.... But I was a human being, and had a human being’s wants...” (286). As a changeling, with human needs, Jane cannot hide forever on the moors like the fair folk. However,

⁴² Jane thinks she is following an *ignis fatuus* but the light she moves towards is light in the windows of Moor House (300).

she does seek human companionship connected to her beloved moors, where she can heal physically and spiritually.

Mary and Diana Rivers, Jane's long-lost cousins, live in Moor House with their brother, St. John Rivers. The deep and immediate bond that forms between Jane, Mary, and Diana is explicitly linked with the moors. Mary and Diana's response to the moors parallels Jane because these three are of the same "kind" (95). Jane states:

"We... spent [Christmas week] in a sort of merry domestic dissipation. The air of the moors, the freedom of home, the dawn of prosperity, acted on Diana and Mary's spirits like some life-giving elixir: they were gay from morning till noon, from noon till night. They could always talk; and their discourse, witty and pithy, original, had such charms for me, that I preferred listening to, and sharing in it, to doing anything else." (347).

In this passage, Jane lists all the reasons she enjoys the Rivers sisters. They fill her life with joy and meaning. However, the primary bond between these three women is the moor. Mary, Diana, and Jane share the spiritual homeland of the moors. Moreover, Jane suggests that the moors act upon their friendship in an almost mystical way, infusing their fellowship with life. Since the moors are linked with fairies in fairy lore and throughout the novel, there is an implicit connection between their spiritual bond and Jane's fairy spirit.

Brontë also reinforces the spiritual connection between Jane and the River's sisters through names. In "The Temptations of a Motherless Woman," Adrienne Rich identifies Mary and Diana as:

the pagan and Christian aspects of the Great Goddess – Diana or Artemis, the Virgin huntress, and Mary the Virgin Mother.... Diana and Mary become [Jane's] friends; for the first time since the death of Helen Burns she has an intellectually sympathetic companionship with young women her own age. (473).

Although Brontë undoubtedly intended Diana to be associated with the Classical goddess of the moon, the name Diana also has connections to fairy lore⁴³. As goddess of the moon, the hunt, and fertility, the goddess Diana was often linked with Titania, the queen of the fairies in Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream (2.1.62 – 75). Moreover, Diana is the most vocal and has the most powerful influence on Jane in Jane Eyre. It is Diana who supports Jane's rejection of St. John (365) and her marriage to Rochester (365 – 66). Thus, the connection between Diana and the Shakespearean fairy queen is plausible. However, whether or not Diana is related to Titania, Brontë casts Diana and Mary as Jane's spiritual confidants. Since all three share a deep connection to the moors, the Rivers sisters nurture Jane's Christian and fairy spiritual nature.

St. John Rivers, Diana and Mary's brother, also has a connection to the moors, but it is very different than love of the moors shared by Diana, Mary, and Jane. St. John's "strange love" of the moors parallels his "strange love" of Jane. She states: "He seemed in communion with the genius of the haunt: with his eye he bade farewell to something.... Strange words of a strange love! An austere patriot's passion for his fatherland!" (353). Like Jane, St. John's power is in "ascendancy" (351) on the moors. However, it is a power contrary to Jane. In fact, it suppresses her power: "I felt as if an awful charm was framing round and gathering over me: I trembled to hear some fatale word spoken which would at once declare and rivet the spell." (353 – 54). Thus, St. John is potentially dangerous to Jane because he exercises a spiritual power similar to hers. In fact, Jane specifically recognizes St. John as a threat to the fairy half of her changeling nature:

⁴³ The first time the name "Diana" appears in Jane Eyre, it is in connection with Blanche Ingram and it is an allusion to the Classical goddess (151).

As for me, I daily wished more to please [St. John]: but to do so, I felt daily more and more that I must disown half my nature, stifle half my faculties, wrest my tastes from their original bent, force myself to the adoption of pursuits for which I had no natural vocation. (351).

St. John's kiss is another example of his malevolent power that seems to oppose Jane.

Jane claims that St. John's kisses "were a seal affixed to my fetters" (350 – 51). St.

John's kisses are a reversal of the fairy tale trope. Kisses traditionally free the enchanted from evil spells, but St. John's kiss binds Jane under a spell⁴⁴. Moreover, he finds "a certain charm" (351) in his repression of Jane's power. St. John is an actively malevolent power in Jane's life.

Although Jane spends an increasing amount of time with St. John, Jane does not enjoy him; he chafes and irritates. Jane states: "I am not happy at his side, not near him, nor with him" (391). Jane's reaction to St. John has precedence in fairy lore. Fairy power can be suppressed by a myriad of objects. For example, iron horse shoes were traditionally hung over doors to repel mischievous fairies. Lofthouse claims that this led to a belief in "lucky horseshoes" (13). In fact, it was believed that the advent of steam engines finally drove the fairies away (12 – 13). St. John is comparable to one of these repellants. Just as holy water, salt, iron, and steam engines repress fairies, St. John's adverse presence represses the independent fairy side of Jane's changeling nature.

St. John must suppress Jane's fairy nature because he adheres to the Miltonic spiritual hierarchy that characterizes Brontë's juvenilia: "He for God only, she for God in him" (Milton 4.299). This spiritual hierarchy has no place for the spiritually independent changeling who controls her own destiny and addresses the Divine directly. The Miltonic

⁴⁴ Although Rochester forcibly kisses Jane after she tells him that she will leave him (278 – 80), his kiss does not suppress Jane or her power. Even Rochester recognizes that he cannot change Jane's will through physical force (280).

spiritual hierarchy is explicit in St. John's proposal to Jane. She does not hear the spiritual call he hears (355), and he asks her to hear God through him (354). In "The Spell," Mary is condemned for her violation of this spiritual hierarchy (65). By contrast, Jane upbraids herself for her weakness in failing to resist St. John completely when he was proposing to her: "...and I, like a fool, never thought of resisting him – I could not resist him" (352). This dynamic reversal is significant. Brontë uses Jane and her changeling nature to overturn the spiritual hierarchy that suppressed the beautiful, angelic heroines of her juvenilia.

However, Jane does succeed in overcoming St. John's spiritual power in an overt display of her own fairy power. When Jane felt herself succumbing to St. John's apocalyptic vision⁴⁵, she states that his power was "in ascendancy" (353). However, in the moonlight on the edge of the moors there is a dramatic power reversal, emphasized by the repetition of the term ascendancy. Jane states: "It was *my* time to assume ascendancy. *My* powers were in play, and in force." (370). Instead of hearing God through St. John, Jane addresses the "Mighty Spirit" (370) directly and in her own way. This is the spiritual triumph of the fairy, and it is emphasized by the setting. On the moonlit moors, the spiritual powers of St. John cannot match those of the fairy within Jane, and St. John is forced to obey her. He must leave her when she commands him to go (370). However, it is not St. John's subordination to Jane, but her control over herself that is most significant. Jane is able to return to see Rochester because she returns as a complete master of her changeling self.

⁴⁵ When St. John proposes on the moors, his proposal is accompanied by an apocalyptic description of the missionary's role as a soldier enlisted under the banner of an infallible Captain (353 – 55).

Although the changeling's spiritual power is contrasted with the spiritual passivity of Blanche Ingram and Bertha Rochester, the typological Angel and Fallen Angel respectively, these characters are not Jane's spiritual adversaries. Brontë is not attempting to set up a new female spiritual dichotomy. Instead, the changeling battles the spiritual powers of death and darkness first embodied in Mr. Brocklehurst and revived in the figure of St. John, whom Jane overcomes in their standoff on the moonlit moor.

The connection between these two men also explains why St. John functions as an anti-fairy spiritual power. According to Gèrin, Mr. Brocklehurst is overtly modeled on Rev. William Carus Wilson, Vicar of Tunstall, Trustee of Cowan Bridge School which Charlotte Brontë attended (2). Both Rev. Wilson and his fictional double, Mr. Brocklehurst ban fairy tales in their respective establishments and attempt to replace them with their own didactic religious stories⁴⁶. Gèrin states that Wilson's stories, published in The Children's Friends, all glorify the death of good innocent children; they reflect Wilson's philosophy: "Rather dead than in danger of committing sin" (Gèrin 13). In a conversation with Rochester, Jane ascribes this theory to Mr. Brocklehurst:

He starved us when he had the sole superintendence of the provision department... and he bored us with long lectures once a week, and with evening readings from books of his own inditing [sic], about sudden deaths and judgments, which made us afraid to go to bed. (108).

St. John River's preaching demonstrates that, like Mr. Brocklehurst and Rev. Wilson, he is a Christian power of death and darkness. Although Jane Eyre does not link the typological Angel with this sort of spirituality, the male-dominated spirituality of death and darkness can also be associated with the figure of the Angel in the House who is killed into passivity by the patriarchal society (Gilbert and Gubar 288).

⁴⁶ This was a common practice in the early half of the nineteenth-century. Auerbach and Knoepflmacher state: "In the 1840s and '50s, rigid didacticism had held children's fiction in thrall" (2).

Even before St. John exerts his repressive spiritual power on Jane, she is aware of the lack of peace in St. John when he preaches. Moreover, he passes this discontent on to his listeners. Jane states:

When he had done, instead of feeling better, calmer, more enlightened by his discourse, I experienced an inexpressible sadness.... I was sure St. John Rivers – pure-lived, conscientious, zealous as he was – had not yet found that peace of God which passeth all understanding. (310).

By contrast, the changeling finds this peace and secures a happy ending for herself.

According to Sandra Gilbert in “A Dialogue of Self and Soul,” Jane’s happy ending is a deliberate rhetorical move by Brontë. Jane’s happy ending on earth is “an emblem of hope” (483) and a rejection of a patriarchal system in “inequities on earth” (483). Thus, St. John’s threat to Jane’s happiness is also a threat to Brontë’s liberating message because St. John cannot have a happily-ever-after, and he would prevent Jane from securing this for herself (343 – 44). In fact, St. John actively attempts to disturb Jane’s happiness. Jane realizes that he is deliberately trying to “stir [her] up to restlessness!” (344), and defiantly responds with her determination to be happy: “I feel I have adequate cause to be happy, and I *will* be happy. Good-bye!” (344).

Jane’s return to Rochester at Ferndean is steeped in fairy tale motifs and impelled by fairy power. Jane’s fairy power is in ascendancy; the impetus that began on the moonlit moors carries her through to Rochester’s study at Ferndean. The uninhibited expression of Jane’s fairy nature in her reunion with Rochester is a stark contrast to the suppression Jane experienced with St. John. When Jane is with Rochester, she revels in the fullness of her changeling character. As a part of this self recognition, Jane knows she has the power to rehumanize Rochester.

Jane's rehumanization of Rochester is a reversal of the nineteenth-century literary tradition of "Beauty and the Beast." Beginning with Madame de Beaumont's eighteenth-century "Beauty and the Beast," these tales were intentionally written to reconcile young women to the custom of arranged marriages and "brace them for an alliance that required them to efface their own desires and to submit to the will of a 'monster'" (Tatar 28). By contrast, Jane does not efface her nature to rehumanize Rochester; rather, Jane is able to exercise the full extent of her powers with Rochester. It is Jane's power that changes the story.

But in his countenance I saw a change: that looked desperate and brooding – that reminded me of some wronged and fettered wild beast or bird, dangerous to approach in his sullen woe. The caged eagle, whose gold-ringed eyes cruelty has extinguished, might look as looked that sightless Samson.

And reader, do you think I feared him in his blind ferocity? – if you do, you little know me. A soft hope blent [sic] with my sorrow that soon I should dare to drop a kiss on that brow of rock, and on those lips so sternly sealed beneath it: but not yet. I would not accost him yet. (379).

Jane's direct address to the reader draws attention to the power dynamic expressed here.

Rochester is a powerful beast, but Jane is more powerful. Her return to him is characterized by a complete assurance of her own powers.

If Jane's changeling nature has been in question throughout the novel, Brontë makes it undeniable in the conclusion. The metaphor of the changeling is explicit in Jane's reunion with Rochester. Rochester calls her "my fairy" (384) and repeatedly refers to her fairy powers, but when he asks if she is human, she tells him that she is (385). As a changeling, Jane is both fairy and human. This changeling nature must be fully expressed at the end of the novel because it is the power of the changeling that creates the happy ending and rehumanizes the beast. Rochester states:

“You mocking changeling – fairy born and human-bred! You make me feel as I have not felt these twelve months. If Saul could have had you for his David, the evil spirit would have been exorcised without the aid of the harp.” (386).

Moreover, the fairy connection is something Jane has always shared with Rochester. In fact, she makes a fairy parallel between them: she is a fairy, and he is a fairy beast, the brownie (385).

XII. NEW BEAUTY

Brontë does not make a new aesthetic ideal with the character of Jane Eyre.

When Rochester tries to classify her as delicate and aerial, she rejects his evaluation as false (227). Jane Eyre must remain plain in order to challenge the established “system of codification” (Lefkovitz 6) that characterizes western literature, from fairy tales to novels and epics, according to Lefkovitz. However, Brontë does offer beauty an alternative role in the art and words of the heroine; Jane’s ability to create and appreciate beauty is a reflection of her inner beauty. Brontë’s philosophy of beauty and its role in life is dramatically different from the philosophy that shaped her juvenilia. In Jane Eyre, beauty is a way of thinking, it is internal. In fact, in the novel true beauty is only internal. Brontë pushes Ruskin’s theory of beauty beyond the accepted Romantic bounds. Inner beauty does not manifest itself externally, except in the eye of the beholder.

Ruskin’s theory of beauty arches from the physical to the spiritual and intellectual, from the concrete to the abstract. He begins the passage on “Beauty” in the first volume of Modern Painters by connecting beauty with the physical. However, by the end of the passage, beauty is a divinely ordained idea.

Any material object which can give us pleasure in the simple contemplation of its outward qualities, without any direct and definite exertion of the intellect, I call in some way, or in some degree, beautiful. Why we receive pleasure from some forms and colors, and not from others, is no more to be asked or answered than why we like sugar and dislike wormwood. The utmost subtlety of investigation will only lead us to ultimate instincts and principles of human nature, for which no further reason can be given than the simple will of the Deity that we should be so created.... instinctively and necessarily, as we derive sensual pleasure from the scent of a rose....

Ideas of beauty are among the noblest which can be presented to the human mind, invariably exalting and purifying it according to their degree; and it would appear that we are intended by the Deity to be constantly under their influence, because there is not one single object in nature which is not capable of conveying them, and which, to the rightly perceiving mind, does not present an incalculably greater number of beautiful than of deformed parts. (Ruskin 3 – 5)

It is this last definition of the abstract nature of beauty that Brontë pursues in *Jane Eyre*. Throughout the novel, Jane's art associates her with the abstract nature of beauty, the "ideas of beauty" (Ruskin 5) described by Ruskin. Jane initially wants to go to school to learn to be an artist and produce beautiful things (20 – 21). Moreover, she succeeds in becoming an artist capable of creating beauty; Bessie's first response to one of her paintings is "Well, that is beautiful, Miss Jane!" (80). After failing to look like the ladies at Gateshead, Jane earns the position of "lady" (80) in Bessie's eyes through her intellectual and artistic accomplishments.

However, even Jane's artistic ability remains primarily internal, not external. Jane claims that her paintings are only a "pale portrait" of her ideas (110). Thus Brontë emphasizes Jane's ideas of beauty beyond her artistic ability; the art she creates is important because it demonstrates her ability to foster internal "ideas of beauty." Rochester first notices that the paintings and drawings in Jane's portfolio are "original" (109), they are scenes from her imagination rather than copies of other artists' works. Rochester is impressed by the "elfish" (111) quality of her art. It is in the eyes of the feminine depiction of the Evening Star and the female incarnation of the moon (110 – 11). The beauty of these images is subordinate to the haunting fairy quality these images exude. Rochester does not comment on the beauty of the paintings; rather he is impressed by their power. Moreover, he recognizes that they are the "shadow of [Jane's] thought" (111). Rochester appreciates the internal "ideas of beauty" behind Jane's work.

Mary and Diana also are impressed by Jane's drawing abilities (308) and they leave her drawing materials when they leave Moor House to serve as governesses (317). Like Rochester, they appreciate the power and beauty of Jane's thoughts. They read the meaning behind the images she creates. It is significant that the two other people with whom Jane forms a close relationship recognize the importance of Jane's internal command of beauty through art.

When the Rivers sisters are reunited with Jane at Christmas, Jane makes Moor Head more beautiful with her cleaning, new carpets, and new china (347). She enjoys Mary and Diana's delight at seeing the place. Thus, beauty functions to bring mutual joy. This is an important aspect of the new role of beauty in Brontë's reworked "Beauty and the Beast." The physical beauty of the heroine does not save the hero, but beauty does function to enrich the lives of all the characters astute enough to recognize it. Moreover, this liberates beauty from the possession of the male gaze⁴⁷; the "idea of beauty" is something everyone can share.

Ruskin also emphasizes the communicative nature of the visual art, and guides his audience to "read" visual art. In Modern Painters, Ruskin states:

If he can [say what the thing gratifies, fills, hallows, exalts in his mind], and if he can show that he perceives in the object any expression of distinct thought, he has received more than an idea of beauty – it is an idea of relation (5).

According to Ruskin, the visual arts can function as another medium through which abstract ideas may be communicated. For example, he lists the six "moral elements" which can be communicated and read in Gothic architecture (Ruskin 165 – 67).

⁴⁷ By claiming that beauty is the exclusive "prerogative" (157) of women, Blanche indirectly makes the visual enjoyment of beauty the property of men in Jane Eyre. Brontë's abstraction of beauty into an idea challenges this and makes beauty something communally enjoyed.

Throughout Ruskin's writing, art is repeatedly described as a signifier which can convey a message of truth through its visual elements:

Truth may be stated by any signs or symbols which have a definite signification in the minds of those to whom they are addressed, although such signs be themselves no image nor likeness of anything.... this channel of communication can convey uncorrupted truth, though it do not in any degree resemble the facts whose conception it induces. (Ruskin 65).

Thus, beauty is a cognitive process, not merely a perception. This passage also emphasizes the verbal and suggests the "reading" of visual art. Rochester, Mary, and Diana all read Jane's art. Rochester specifically recognizes the message of fairy power Jane articulates through her depictions of the feminine incarnations of the moon and the evening star (111). Brontë celebrates the readable aspect of beauty in Jane Eyre; in fact, it is central to her reworking of "Beauty and the Beast."

It may be argued that in the medium of the novel, all visual beauty must be converted into words, abstracted into a form that can be read. However, Brontë's verbal treatment of visual arts was so spectacular that Van Gogh commented on it later. Gèrin states:

It was a quality, incidentally, so sufficiently rare among writers, as to receive recognition from one of the world's greatest modern painters, Van Gogh, who later instanced 'Ellis and Currer Bell' as being as potent in their plastic styles as Herkomer, of Fides, or Israels... (44).

Moreover, Brontë's treatment of the visual arts in Jane Eyre exceeds the author's necessary conversion of the visual into the verbal. The abstraction of beauty into words and ideas that are received by the mind is a major theme in the novel. The ultimate example is when Jane verbalizes visual beauty for Rochester after he is blinded by the fire at Thornfield (377).

The abstraction of visual beauty occurs after Jane has sketched her first house at Lowood School. That night, Jane delights herself by imagining the images she will draw in the dark. Her joy comes from the contemplation of the beautiful, not the physical sight, because the drawing itself was ugly:

I... sketched my first cottage (whose walls, by-the-by, outrivaled in slope those of the leaning tower of Pisa) That night, on going to bed, I forgot to prepare in imagination the Barmecide supper of hot roast potatoes, or white bread and new milk, with which I was wont to amuse my inward cravings: I feasted instead on the spectacle of ideal drawings, which I saw in the dark; all the work of my own hands... (65).

Later, Jane imagines castles while staring into the fire, demonstrating the importance of the artistic act of imagining the beautiful:

In the clear embers I was tracing a view, not unlike a picture I remembered to have seen of the castle of Heidelberg, on the Rhine, when Mrs. Fairfax came in, breaking up by her entrance the fiery mosaic I had been piecing together, and scattering too some heavy unwelcomed thoughts that were beginning to throng on my solitude. (104).

Jane harnesses the power of abstract beauty to lift her above her circumstances. Ruskin lauds the internal contemplation of beauty as being of primary importance. However, Ruskin states that this internal beauty will be externally manifested in the appearance of the subject. Brontë rejects this; Jane's internal beauty is manifested in her art rather than in her appearance.

Jane's pictures of imaginary visions are the ones that especially attract Rochester's attention, indicating his ability to appreciate Jane's internal beauty. These pictures of imaginary scenes from Jane's head make a true connection between beauty and spirituality. They contrast the superficial connection between the typological Angel's beauty and spirituality:

The subjects had, indeed, risen vividly on my mind. As I saw them with the spiritual eye, before I attempted to embody them, they were striking; but my hand would not second my fancy, and in each case it had wrought out but a pale portrait of the thing I had conceived. (110).

One of the pictures depicts the moon as the bust of a woman (110). This is an especially significant figure in Jane's spiritual life. This is the apparition that later appears to Jane and encourages her to flee Thornfield (281). Jane also personifies the Evening Star as the bust of a female rising in the sky, illuminated by the moonlight (110), again associating women with the moon. These women rise like presiding spirits over dramatic landscapes of oceans and mountains. However, these women are not Classical lunar deities; rather, they convey the "elfish" (111) nature of Jane and her spirituality. Rochester immediately recognizes the expression of Jane's changeling nature in these paintings; he classifies them as "elfish." Furthermore, Rochester is unsettled by the powerful spirit he sees in Jane's paintings; like Jane, he has the capacity to accurately read visual art.

The ultimate abstraction of the visual arts comes with Rochester's blindness. Jane becomes his eyes, and she delights in it. She puts the visual into words, compensating for the loss of Rochester's sight.

Mr. Rochester continued blind for 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.... He saw nature – he saw books through me; and never did I weary of gazing for his behalf, and of putting into words the effect of field, tree, town, river, cloud, sunbeam – of the landscape before us; of the weather round us – impressing by sound on his ear what light could no longer stamp on his eye. Never did I weary of reading to him.... And there was a pleasure in my services, most full, most exquisite...I loved him so fondly that to yield that attendance was to indulge my sweetest wish. (397).

This shared experience of beauty as a verbal abstraction cements the relationship between Rochester and Jane. Brontë does not need to include this passage; she could have concluded the novel with the wonderfully charming statement: "Reader, I married him."

(395). Marriage is the traditional happy ending of “Beauty and the Beast” tales. In “The Spell,” Brontë explicitly acknowledges this trope and concludes with a marriage of minor characters (128). Thus, this description of the role of beauty in the lives of Rochester and Jane is deliberate. As an essential part of her reworking of the “Beauty and the Beast” plot with an ugly heroine, this passage puts beauty into its proper place: an idea to be shared and enjoyed.

XIII. VENGEANCE AND LOVE: The New Spirituality of Life and Love in *Jane Eyre*

Just as *Jane Eyre* redefines the role of beauty, the changeling heroine redefines spirituality. The active nature of the changeling implicitly challenges the demonic Fallen Angel and the superficial, passive spirituality of the Angel. However, the spirituality of the changeling has an even broader function; it overcomes the fairy tale tradition of vengeance and creates the possibility of a happy ending based on love.

In the very beginning of the novel, Jane declares her hatred and desire for vengeance to Mrs. Reed (31 – 32). This is portrayed as a fairy tale trope, with the little heroine driving away the evil step-mother figure. However, the victory is fleeting and Jane is left alone and she does not know what to do next (32 – 33). In fairy tales like the Grimm’s “Cinderella” (84), and “Snow White” (188), the desire for vengeance is satisfied and this enables the happy ending. Brontë rejects this in *Jane Eyre*. Thus, when Jane returns to the broken and dying Mrs. Sarah Reed, Jane thinks it “no sin to forget and break that vow” (202) to hate her cruel aunt.

Jane’s forgiveness is not a demonstration of spiritual domestication acquired in the repressive atmosphere of Lowood. In order to make forgiveness a deliberate spiritual act, Brontë maps out the spiritual journey through which it is developed in Jane’s life. Jane’s conversation with Helen Burns about vengeance and love is a turning point in Jane’s spiritual life (49 – 51). Jane espouses a creed of vengeance. Her experience at Gateshead has taught her that evil and injustice must be punished to prevent further injustice. Helen champions Christian forgiveness; she tells Jane that hate can only be

overcome through the power of love. Helen's Christianity informs Jane's actions, especially those towards the Reeds and Rochester. Moreover, Helen declares that Jane's forgiveness is not a passive acceptance of abuse but an active rejection of hate. However, Helen does not encourage Jane to accept the establishment or imitate those around her. She encourages spiritual independence, telling her to read the Bible for herself and decide how to act from her interpretation of that book. Helen tells Jane:

“Heathens and savage tribes hold that doctrine; but Christians and civilized nations disown it.... Read the New Testament, and observe what Christ says, and how he acts; make his works your rule, and his conduct your example.... Love your enemies, bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you and despitefully use you....” (50).

However, Jane is distinct from Helen: “... an impulse of fury against Reed, Brocklehurst, and Co. bounded in my pulses at the conviction. I was no Helen Burns.” (57). She is willing to forgive when she is above and beyond her tormentors; when she is in a position of power, and they are weaker than her, she is willing to forgive. Jane does not advocate martyrdom or self-abasement. She does not enable abuse.

Thus, after explicitly making a distinction between herself and Helen, Jane is able to deliberately choose to forgive her aunt: “...I had left this woman in bitterness and hate, and I came back to her now with... a strong yearning to forget and forgive all injuries...” (202). Mrs. Reed rejects Jane's love, but Jane determines to overcome her hate. Jane's ability to overcome hate is the source of Jane's strength: “I felt pain, and then I felt ire; and then I felt a determination to subdue her – to be her mistress in spite of both her nature and her will...” (203). Moreover, Jane's ability to forgive her aunt foreshadows her forgiveness of Rochester. In fact, it demonstrates that Jane's forgiveness of Rochester is not a weak sentimental decision; it resonates with her established character.

Thus, Jane immediately forgives Rochester when he asks for it:

Reader! – I forgave him at the moment, and on the spot. There was such deep remorse in his eye, such true pity in his tone, such manly energy in his manner; and, besides, there was such unchanged love in his whole look and mien – I forgave him all: yet not in words, not outwardly; only at my heart's core. (262).

This is true forgiveness. She is not blind to what he did; she evaluates his conduct alone in her room, concluding: “faith was blighted – confidence destroyed! Mr. Rochester was not to me what he had been.... Real affection, it seemed, he could not have for me; it had been only fitful passion....” (260). His actions and not been those of love, and so she concludes that he never loved her. When she realizes that he does love her, she forgives him, but she never gives up her resolve to “Leave Thornfield at once” (261). Thus Jane’s ability to forgive remains a spiritual strength of the changeling heroine; in fact, the full nature of Jane’s identity as a changeling is demonstrated in this act. Jane has the human capacity to love and forgive while still maintaining her own spiritual standards and exercising her fairy power to leave her transgressing lover. However, because she forgives Rochester, Jane’s flight from Thornfield is distinct from that of angry fairy brides who leave blundering mortal husbands.

XIV. HAPPILY EVER AFTER: the fairy tale ending of love and fulfillment

Brontë's heroines never really achieve a fairy tale ending of love and fulfillment in her juvenilia. Although stories like "The Spell" conclude with the happy union of the hero and heroine, this happiness is always fleeting. In Jane Eyre, Brontë rectifies this, the changeling heroine is able to secure the happy ending that eluded her juvenile heroines.

In the first quarter of the novel, Miss Temple, the head mistress of Lowood School, receives the fairy tale ending of romantic love. In true fairy tale fashion, she is married and swept away by her beloved. Jane's perception of the event is incredibly significant for it marks the attitude towards romantic relationships throughout the entire novel. "Miss Temple.... married, removed with her husband (a clergyman, an excellent man, almost worthy of such a wife) to a distant county, and consequently was lost to me" (73). Unlike Psyche in the tale "Cupid and Psyche," Miss Temple does not work and spend her time trying to become worthy of marrying a great man. The reader never sees Miss Temple trying to secure the affections of her future husband. Rather, she spends her life making relationships and finding fulfillment; then, a man who is "almost worthy of such a wife" (73) comes along and desires to share her life.

Jane's attitude toward marriage resembles that of Miss Temple. Jane clearly desires a meaningful relationship with Rochester, but she does not pursue him the way Blanche does. Unlike Blanche, Jane does not make the attainment of a husband her central goal in life (157 – 58). However, Jane is not the passive object of male desire, either. Jane takes an active role in her relationship with Rochester; in fact, she makes the

offer of marriage to him in a reversal of conventional courtship traditions. The culmination of their love in a happy marriage is the ending which demonstrates that the un-ideal heroine can achieve the ideal fairy tale ending.

Just as Brontë challenges the accepted typological characters, she also challenges the simplistic nature of romantic love that propels these characters. In order to create a new narrative space for the changeling heroine, Brontë must demonstrate how the changeling's perception and experience of love sets her apart from the typological Angel or Beauty. Thus, Jane's romance is not only shaped by her romantic interest in Rochester but also by her own character and the internal dialogues she holds within herself.

Early in her relationship with Rochester, Jane tries to stifle her love. She describes her struggle with love as if it were an internal legal proceeding where she sits as both judge and defendant. She calls in Reason and Memory as witnesses, and then Jane condemns herself as a fool (140). In fact, she claims that her love for Rochester is a form of female "madness" (141) which has the power to lead "*ignis-fatuus*-like, into miry wilds, whence there is no extrication" (141). Jane recognizes the irrationality of love and her responsibility to act in her own defense against romantic interest which is unlikely to result in marriage (140 – 41). Jane is able to separate herself from her feelings and rationally deal with her situation.

However, Jane's rationality cannot overcome her love: "I have told you, 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..." (163). Although Jane cannot control her emotions, neither is she overwhelmed by those emotions. The direct address to the reader in this passage demonstrates Jane's ability to separate herself from her romantic desires

even when she cannot control them. Since Jane maintains the ability to rationally analyze herself, she can also analyze the romantic situations of other characters, like Rochester and Blanche. She determines that it is Mr. Rochester's careless attitude which inspires Blanche's attention. Jane's study of Blanche yields insights into Blanches' intelligence, her beliefs, and her jealousies (163). Jane also continues to analyze her own feelings and recognizes that the absence of true love between Mr. Rochester and Blanche is what keeps her own love for him alive (163 – 64). Love takes on fairy power dimensions in Jane's analysis: Jane recognizes that Blanche has no real power over Rochester.

Jane knows that she alone can charm Rochester because she is the only person who really knows Rochester; their love is based on friendship and deep understanding. In fact, Rochester opens his first marriage proposal to Jane with an acknowledgement of their friendship. The equality of the relationship between them is essential. "We have been good friends, Jane; have we not?" (221). This established relationship is very different than the unfounded, inexplicable love between many fairy tale heroines and their future husbands share. For example, the princess in the Grimm's "Snow White" marries a prince she has never met. While in a magically-induced comatose state, she is united with the prince by an unsolicited kiss. In one version of "The Black Bull of Norrway," the heroine works for seven years to be reunited with a prince who has never had a conversation with her. In "Cinderella" tales like those published by both the Grimms and Perrault, the heroine marries a man with whom she has danced but hardly spoken. Moreover, she is recognized by her things rather than herself. The fairy tale love and happily-ever-after ending celebrated in these stories is stated but completely unfounded; the reader is forced to accept it on faith.

In the middle of the novel, Brontë begins to show the reader how Jane's life path will lead her to a happy ending. The path to Jane's "happily-ever-after" exists between the life paths chosen by her cousins Eliza and Georgiana Reed. Eliza is the far extremity of organized religion, sense, and independence from humanity (206 – 07). Georgiana is sensibility, dependence, and desire (206 – 07). Jane finds herself sitting in a highly symbolic place between these two women when they first meet again at Gateshead (201). Jane is able to control all of these things in her own life – passion and rationality, dependence on human company and independence (206 – 07). Gateshead is a significant location to express this dichotomy and demonstrate Jane's ability to circumnavigate it. Gateshead is a place of beginnings and endings.

In fact, Jane's narrating voice breaks the chronological sequence of the narrative and completes the stories of Georgiana and Eliza. Although Jane does not believe a marriage with Rochester is even possible when she leaves Gateshead, the optimism of a happy ending characterizes her return to Thornfield. Brontë shows the audience that Jane's life path between the extremes of the Reed sisters paves the way to a happy ending, an ending different from the ones they achieve.

At Gateshead, Jane's life comes full circle, she makes her peace with the wicked step-mother figure and step-sisters. Having come to terms with her family members' extremes may be symbolic of Jane's resolution of these extremes within her own nature. By overcoming her past, Jane is free to move on into a relationship with Rochester. This is a reversal of the fairy tale resolution of family problems. In tales like Grimm's "Cinderella," the heroine settles accounts with her wicked family after she is married. This implies that the fairy tale heroine is not strong enough to confront her family

without the support of a husband. By contrast, Jane resolves her family issues alone without even the hope of a happy marriage.

Unlike fairy tales which require vengeance to purge evil and make way for happy endings, Jane only finds happiness in love: "...there is no happiness like that of being loved by your fellow-creatures, and feeling that your presence is an addition to their comfort." (216). This is a happiness that requires neither revenge nor romance. Jane recognizes her human need for love, unlike the heartless Eliza. She is not an independent fairy who can exist without human love. However, she does not sacrifice her principles to obtain that love, as Georgiana did in her affair with an aristocrat (208) or her convenient marriage to a "wealthy worn-out man of fashion" (212).

Jane's happily-ever-after is a oneness with another human being. Marriage was not a reduction of Jane. She gained another without sacrificing any part of herself:

I have now been married ten years. I know what it is to live entirely for and with what I love best on earth. I hold myself supremely blest – blest beyond what language can express; because I am my husband's life as fully as he is mine. No woman was ever nearer to her mate than I am; ever more absolutely bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh. I know no weariness of my Edward's society: he knows none of mine, any more than we each do of the pulsation of the heart that beats in our separate bosoms; consequently, we are ever together. To be together is for us to be at once as free as in solitude, as gay as in company. We talk, I believe, all day long: to talk to each other is but a more animated and an audible thinking.... we are precisely suited in character – perfect concord is the result....

My Edward and I, then, are happy: and the more so because those we most love are happy likewise. Diana and Mary Rivers are both married: alternately, once every year, they come to see us, and we go to see them.... Both Captain Fitzjames and Mr. Wharton love their wives and are loved by them. (396 – 98).

Jane description of her rich relationship with Rochester is a stark contrast to the inexplicable love and happiness many heroines are granted at the end of fairy tales.

Moreover, Jane ends the story a decade after her marriage to demonstrate that she has found true love; the relationship between Rochester and herself has stood the test of time.

According to the folklore structuralist, Vladimir Propp, the hero's quest concludes with a wedding (23)⁴⁸; Jane's quest ends with a happy marriage and a happy life.

It is also important that Jane's happy ending is not exclusive. This is a deviation from traditional western fairy tales that are resolved with the marriage of a single hero or heroine outlined by Propp (23). Brontë couples Jane's happy ending with the happiness of both Mary and Diana Rivers. The Rivers sisters not only marry, they find and maintain true love. Although the reader is not privy to the details these relationships, Jane's assertion seems trustworthy because it follows Jane's lengthy description of her own happy relationship (398); Jane knows true love. The happiness of the Rivers sisters is significant because these women are more than Jane's friends, they are her kindred spirits. While the River sisters may not be changelings, they share many character traits with their cousin. Thus, Brontë suggests that all women like Jane have the potential to live happily ever after.

In fact, this is the hope Brontë offers her audience with a fairy tale firmly set in the real world in contemporary times. This is a deviation from the fairy tale tradition in which stories are always set long ago and far away (Lüthi 28). According to Jack Zipes analysis of fairy tales in The Art of Subversion, Brontë harnesses the greatest power of fairy tales with Jane Eyre. Zipes claims that fairy tales unconsciously instill ideas into young people's minds (18). Through Jane Eyre, Brontë infects society with the idea that women can be active and intelligent. Through her changeling heroine, Brontë subtly deconstructs the idea that women must be beautiful, passive, domestic angels. Moreover,

⁴⁸ In Morphology of the Folktale, Vladimir Propp claims that there are a limited number of functions or events in a fairy tale and that the sequence of these functions is "always identical" (21). In fact, Propp lists the thirty-one known functions in the order that they occur in a fairy tale's narrative structure. The thirty-first function is the marriage of the hero.

by placing Jane Eyre within a local time and place setting, she is suggesting that her fairy tale could be realized by strong women in the present.

Finally, Jane's fairy-tale happy ending of life and love is juxtaposed with the grand, mythic, tragic ending of St. John, which fills the last two paragraphs of Jane Eyre (398). This puzzling conclusion demands some explanation. Sandra Gilbert comments on this in "A Dialogue of Self and Soul," claiming that this is Brontë's rejection of the patriarchal spirituality which advises women to defer their hopes of happiness until heaven (483). I agree, but I would like to propose that it is also slightly more than this. Through the juxtaposition of the conclusion of Jane's story with St. John's end, Brontë is elevating Jane Eyre to St. John's heroic level. Just as the changeling functions to replace the traditional Angelic Beauty in the "Beauty and the Beast" plot in Brontë's retelling of this story, Jane Eyre's ending replaces the epic conclusion of heroes. The tragedy that haunts the heroines of Charlotte Brontë's juvenilia is finally replaced with the happily-ever-after.

XV. CONCLUSION: The After-Life of the Changeling in Literature and Film

The effects of Jane Eyre continue to ripple through literature. For example, in Jane Eyre's American Daughters, John Seelye traces the literary heritage of this novel through the works of nine nineteenth-century American authors. Nina Auerbach and U. C. Knoepfelmacher also explore Brontë's heritage in Victorian fantasy and fairy tale literature in Forbidden Journeys (2). However, despite the continuing popularity of Jane Eyre, the changeling heroine that shapes this masterpiece is generally overlooked by Brontë's literary successors; they fail to tap into the empowering fairy tale tradition surrounding the changeling.

Brontë's changeling heroine is a flash in the pan. Like a shooting star, the changeling's brilliant career in Jane Eyre seems to be a singular event. The tradition of strong female fairies that inspires Jane Eyre is superseded by the Victorian tradition in which fairies are another incarnation of the ideal woman. Bown claims that the Victorian fairy is peculiar because it was largely created by men, not women (3). Thus, both during and after the Victorian era⁴⁹, female writers had a vexed relationship with fairies and the entire fairy tale tradition. Female authors had to deal with the fact that the Victorian fairy had become another face of the Angelic Beauty, an unrealistic man-made representation of the female as a non-human other (Auerbach 65).

⁴⁹ According to Auerbach and Knoepfelmacher, the Victorian era began in the 1860s. Brontë published in the 1840s and 1850s.

The typology of the Victorian fairy is not as neatly defined as that of the Angel.

Auerbach simply states that the fairy was one of the many female mutants with which the Victorian universe abounds:

Victorian iconography abounds in less canonical alliances between women and fairies, goblins, mermaids, vampires, and all varieties of creation's mutants; the Victorian universe crawls with anomalies from whose weird energy only man is excluded (65).

Perhaps the reason that Victorian fairies are difficult creatures to define is because they are influenced by a wide range of fairy lore as well as Victorian conventions and ideals. In "British and Irish Fairy Tales," Gillian Avery states that Victorian fairy tale writers "tended to draw on German and French sources rather than on native traditions" (74). This sets Victorian fairies and fairy tales apart from the locally inspired tales written earlier in the nineteenth-century in Great Britain. However, it can be determined that Victorian fairies are both tiny and beautiful; according to Richard Schindler in "Victorian Fairy Painting," the later half of the nineteenth-century abounded with images of minuscule, beautiful fairies (534 – 35). Even when these fairies are depicted as pubescent young girls in Victorian fairy paintings, they are often sexually charged and voyeuristic (537 – 38). Thus, the Victorian fairy is a child-like woman, sexually alluring, and an object of the male gaze. Many of the changes surrounding both fairies and fairy lore converge in Jean Ingelow's 1869 novel Mopsa the Fairy⁵⁰.

In Mopsa the Fairy, the fairy queen Mopsa is nothing like the powerful fairy queen in "Fairies, Brownies, and Witches."⁵¹ Ingelow is forced to hide her message

⁵⁰ Ingelow's Mopsa the Fairy is one of the works included in Auerbach and Knoepflmacher's anthology of subversive Victorian fairy tales by women.

⁵¹ "Fairies, Brownies, and Witches" was a story published in Blackwell's Magazine in 1828. It was very likely read by the Brontës and it demonstrates the type of fairy lore that inspired Brontë's changeling heroine. It is discussed at length earlier in this essay.

about the power of the female imagination behind a relatively passive, beautiful fairy (294) who is owned and objectified by the hero, Jack (256). In fact, she is called a thing three times during their first meeting (214). Throughout most of the novel, she is carried in Jack's pocket along with his handkerchief and spare change (217 – 18). After leaving Fairyland, Jack chooses to remember Mopsa as a thing he kept in his pocket.

Although Ingelow reacts to the stereotypes heaped upon Mopsa, her fairy queen demonstrates what Victorian fairies had become: vehicles for male objectification and infantilization of women. In fact, Ingelow's message is embedded in the physical landscape of fairy land rather than the fairy heroine. The expansive nature of fairy land is a stark contrast to the confinement of the domestic sphere, and it may be read as a reaction against this confinement. Thus, the power of Brontë's changeling is lost to later literature because of the mire of Victorian trappings that fairies acquired. Even Brontë's last incarnation of the changeling in Villette conforms to Victorian fairy lore trends⁵²; the empowering tradition that inspired the changeling in Jane Eyre no longer functions in the character of the changeling in Brontë's later novel.

In Villette, the character Paulina Mary Home⁵³, or Polly, is explicitly characterized as a changeling (27). However, Polly is an angelic Victorian house fairy; the epitome of the ideal domestic woman. As a child, Polly persistently cultivates the domestic arts of sewing and food preparation (16 – 17). Lucy Snowe, the heroine of Villette, notes that young Polly languishes when she is unable to fulfill her domestic role as caretaker and nurturer at the Bretton's house (21). Although this role has some active

⁵² Villette was first published in 1850, it is the last novel Charlotte Brontë writes before she dies in 1855. Although it predates the high Victorian era explored by Auerbach and Knoepfelmacher and may still be characterized as late Romantic, the fairy lore in Villette reflects Victorian trends.

⁵³ Polly's full name becomes Paulina Mary Home de Bassompierre after her father moves to France (318).

aspects, Polly effaces herself in the presence of the men she serves (13, 24).

Furthermore, these men appreciate her because she is, above all, beautiful (4 – 5) and passive while serving them (13). As a young woman, she continues to be the domestic Angel who passively waits upon her beloved father, silently listening to him speak (326). Thus, the fairy-like Polly pursues the role of the typological domestic angel.

Mr. Home explicitly contrasts Polly's sheltered, domestic existence with Lucy's life as a teacher while they sit around the breakfast table after their reunion in France (329 – 30). Polly's circumstances have afforded her the luxury of being a passive, dependent, domestic angel. By contrast, Lucy is a woman whose circumstances have forced her to live independently and work outside of the home. Mr. Home recognizes Lucy's ability to fulfill her "arduous calling" (329) as a teacher to be a strength:

When I had time to consider Lucy's manner and aspect, which was not often, I saw she was one who had to guard and not be guarded; to act and not be served: and this lot has, I imagine, helped her to an experience for which, if she live long enough to realize its full benefit, she may yet bless Providence. (330).

Mr. Home sums up the comparison between the two women by stating:

"If my Polly ever came to know by experience the uncertain nature of this world's goods, I should like her to act as Lucy acts: to work for herself, that she might burden neither kith nor kin" (330).

His words suggest that Polly's idyllic life is unrealistic; because of her sheltered existence she does not understand the harshness of the real world. Her father can only hope that she would have the strength to meet its challenges.

Like the typological characters of the Angel and the changeling, Polly's character has significant spiritual dimensions. Polly is fervently religious; Lucy often finds her praying when they share a room as children (11 – 12). However, it is unclear whether she is praying to the Christian God or to her earthly father, Mr. Home (9). In fact, Polly

may be construed as worshiping the domestic sphere as it is embodied in the symbolically named Mr. Home. Thus, she is not a spiritually independent figure like the changeling in Jane Eyre who has the power to reject masculine spiritual authority and address the “Mighty Spirit” (370) directly. Polly is spiritually subordinate to men and the male-imposed confines of the domestic sphere. Furthermore, her prayer suggests that the domestic sphere is the epitome of her spiritual aspirations. She is certainly content to remain within the confines of the domestic sphere throughout the novel.

Lucy explicitly connects Polly’s beauty and her sensual allure to her fairy nature. Graham Bretton is fascinated with the intermingling of fairy and lady that Polly exhibits when the two former playmates are reunited at his mother’s residence in France (326). This connection is very different than the fairy bond shared by Jane and Rochester. In Jane Eyre, the fairy is impish (11) rather than alluring, but Jane is free to share these aspects of her character with Rochester because he loves and understands the fullness of her changeling nature. In contrast, Graham is attracted to Polly because he does not understand her; the mystery fascinates him. After observing them together, Lucy states: “I saw he hardly knew how to blend together in his ideas the dancing fairy and the delicate dame” (326). Lucy’s phrase “his ideas” is significant because it demonstrates that Graham does not seek to truly know Polly as Rochester sought to know and understand Jane and her “perfectly new character” (276). Instead, Graham is attracted to the ideas he projects onto Polly. Unlike Jane, Brontë’s later incarnation of the fairy is an object of the male gaze and she is shaped by male ideals and expectations.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of the fairy in Villette is her child-like dependence. Even as a child, the changeling heroine Jane Eyre is independent and

mature. By contrast, Polly never truly matures; Lucy notes that Polly is perpetually trapped in her characterization as a woman-child, saying of her “I think she had spoken truth: the child of seven was in the girl of seventeen” (326). Polly is hardly altered by the decade during which she and Lucy are separated, except that she has grown more beautiful (318). Although her actions are always those of a nurturing domestic woman around her father and Graham Bretton, her attitude and antics are child-like. For example, she dances and simpers and begs for a sip of Graham Bretton’s wine “with the countenance of a child that longs for some prohibited dainty” (325). In fact, the connection between Polly and the typological tiny child-woman demonstrates that Polly is a Victorian fairy, very different from the powerful changeling heroine in Jane Eyre. According to Bown, Victorian fairy lore specifically enabled the infantilization of women (4). Furthermore, Auerbach and Knoepflmacher claim that the link between women and children pervades all Victorian culture:

“Whether they were wives and mothers or teachers and governesses, respectable women’s lives had as their primary object child care. British law made the link between women and children indelible by denying women independent legal representation.” (1).

Thus, the child-like fairy is a product of Victorian culture that confined women to the domestic sphere and denied them legal independence.

Through the simplistic, child-like behavior of Polly Home, Brontë’s fairy becomes a relatively unsubstantial typological character. Like the Angel and the Fallen Angel, the fairy becomes another means by which women are reduced to non-human others. In fact, the difference between Jane and Polly is that Jane is a changeling, both human and fairy, but Polly is reduced to a mere fairy. Like a child who is dependent

upon others, this fragile fairy lacks the strength to survive in the modern Victorian world of steam engines, factories, and women who must work for a living.

In fact, Polly is indelibly linked with the past; Lucy states: “Paulina loved the Past” (335). Like the Victorian fairy, she is a nostalgic figure (Bown 1). Moreover, she is a foil for Lucy, the heroine who has the strength to live in the present. Lucy remains a free, independent woman content to enjoy her own company and make a life for herself; she demonstrates that this is enough (572 – 73). In fact, Villette concludes with Lucy Snowe suspended in the perpetual present. She does not achieve Jane Eyre’s “happily-ever-after” ending; rather, her story ends with a pause: “Here pause: pause at once. There is enough said.” (573). However, this pause still leaves “sunny imaginations hope” (573). After Lucy’s deferred hopes of marriage with M. Emanuel end with his death at sea, her lonely life does not feel triumphant, but perhaps it is. The fully human character of Lucy Snowe is the triumphant descendent of Brontë’s changeling heroine. Like the changeling, she evades typological pigeon holes and demonstrates what it means to be a fully human woman. Lucy is woman who lives on in the real world after the age of powerful fairies has passed.

Although the character Polly demonstrates that Brontë does not perpetuate the powerful changeling heroine in the Victorian era, it may be argued that Brontë still attains the goal of the changeling in Villette. While the fairy typology may drift into the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy, Brontë succeeds in maintaining a heroine who exists outside of this dichotomy. Lucy Snowe, the heroine of Villette, escapes the Angel/Fallen Angel typologies without the help of the changeling’s fairy powers.

The after-life of Jane Eyre has not been confined to the medium of literature; Brontë's novel continues to inspire film makers. Unfortunately, the changeling heroine in Jane Eyre has not survived in film any more than she has survived in writings of Brontë's literary successors. Just as film versions of the novel unfailingly portray Jane as an unacknowledged beauty (Lefkovitz 146 – 48), they also portray Jane something other than a changeling heroine. The 2006 PBS/BBC production Jane Eyre is five hours long and retains a large amount of text from the novel. However, Rochester refers to Jane as a witch throughout the film, attributing her spiritual agency to the witch in her. The words “changeling” and “fairy,” which are so pivotal in the novel, never enter the into the film's dialogue.

In the novel, Rochester only suggests that Jane has malevolent witch-like power once, when he accuses her of bewitching his horse at their first meeting on the road outside of Thornfield (107). Rochester's initial misconception demonstrates that he is trying to fit Jane into the female dichotomy of Angel or Fallen Angel. As their relationship grows, Rochester learns better; he recognizes that Jane is a changeling and her power originates outside of the artificial female dichotomy. This is not the case in the PBS/BBC production. The script substitutes the term “witch” for the novel's allusions to Jane's changeling and fairy nature throughout the movie. This is most apparent at the conclusion of the film. In the novel, Brontë crowns Jane's reunion with Rochester at Ferndean with an exposé of Jane's changeling nature. However, in the 2006 film, this celebration of the changeling is reduced to Rochester's tearful line, “You always were a witch.” Allusions to witches imbue Jane Eyre's power with negative connotations; witchcraft is not interchangeable with fairy magic because it is not a powerful, life-giving

force. By failing to recognize the character of the changeling, the PBS production forces Jane Eyre back into the spiritual feminine dichotomy she was designed to break.

Moreover, the message of the changeling in Jane Eyre is not antiquated; it is still applicable in the twenty-first-century. The need to break this dichotomy still persists.

Although the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy was a product of Victorian culture, it has continued to linger in stories and images. For example, in the nineteen-fifties, the character of June Cleaver on the television series “Leave It to Beaver” embodied the domestic Angel, perpetuating the typology. She was beautiful, passive, and rarely depicted outside the domestic setting.



Figure 1 June Cleaver

More recently, advertisements for ABC’s “Desperate Housewives⁵⁴” have utilized this dichotomy. Although the female cast on “Desperate Housewives” has tried to deconstruct June Cleaver’s domestic Angel, the series’ advertisements have failed to break out of the Angel/Fallen Angel dichotomy. Like Brontë’s juvenile heroine Mary in “The Spell,” the women in “Desperate Housewives” straddle the Angelic/Demonic divide in their advertisements. Hollywood has failed to recognize that the only way to successfully deconstruct the myth of the Angel in the House is to create a new type of heroine who breaks out of the established dichotomy.

⁵⁴ “Desperate Housewives” premiered in 2004 on ABC.



Figure 2 “Desperate Housewives” dressed in Angelic white



Figure 3 “Desperate Housewives” depicted as seductive Fallen Angels in an Inferno



Figure 4 “Desperate Housewives” depicted as both Angels and Fallen Angels, dressed in angelic white with the forbidden fruit

More pervasive, however, is the presence of the typological Beauty in society today. In the nineteenth-century, Brontë addressed the problem of unrealistic standards of feminine beauty with a daring stroke; she created a plain heroine who redefined beauty as an entirely internal quality. In the twenty first century, Botox advertisements also claim to “redefine beauty” (figure 5). Instead of rejecting impossible standards of physical beauty and celebrating true inner beauty as Brontë did in *Jane Eyre*, Western culture has embraced modern science and its cosmetic marvels to create a superficial perfection.



Figure 5 Botox advertisement

Thus, Brontë's changeling heroine continues to be revolutionary, challenging established typologies and unrealistic ideals of feminine beauty. Through her un-beautiful changeling, Brontë creates a character with the potential to break false ideals of femininity. The changeling is every woman, as Brontë proves with Jane's literary descendant, Lucy. Although the changeling heroine in Jane Eyre is a product of Brontë's art and imagination, Jane Eyre is also shaped by a fairy tale tradition that Brontë inherited from women like Tabby Ackroyd. She predates the Victorian tradition in which the fairy is reshaped by unrealistic male ideals of femininity. While it may be argued that the changeling's fairy characteristics make her unique and set her apart from the sisterhood of women, the fairy power Brontë utilizes is a specifically feminine power. The changeling heroine embodies women's ideas about internal feminine power and what it means to be a woman. Thus, the changeling Brontë crafted in her novel retains the power to positively impact society today because she is a true woman.

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CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME: Abigail Ruth Heiniger

ADDRESS: Humanities Division Office
University of Louisville
303 East Brandeis
Louisville, KY 40292

DOB: DuPage County, Illinois – February 12, 1985

EDUCATION
& TRAINING: B.A., English and Humanities
University of Louisville
2003 – 2007

M.A., Humanities
University of Louisville
2007 – 2008

AWARDS: Summa Cum Laude (May 2007)
Honors Scholar (awarded May 2007)
Dean’s Scholar (Fall 2003 – Spring 2007)
Phi Beta Kappa Scholar Award (2007)
Morris Bein Award for Excellence in Humanities (2007)
Mary E. Burton Award for graduating English Major with the
highest GPA (2007)
Nominated to UofL Woodcock Society (2007)
Humana Scholarship (2006 – 2007)
Farley Scholarship in Humanities (2004 – 2005)
Provost-Hallmark Scholar (Fall 2003 – Spring 2007)

PROFESSIONAL SOCIETIES:
Woodcock Society (May 2007). Univeristy of Louisville Honors
Society.

Eta Sigma Phi Member (May 2006). Classical Languages Honor Society.

Brönte Society Member (April 2006).

English Speaking Union (ESU) Member (February 2006).

HUGO (Humanities Undergraduate and Graduate Organization) Member (since 2005).

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