

Fractured Psyche and Corroded Self: The Sadomasochistic Dynamics in Jane Eyre

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Abstract- *The present analysis is a psychological study of Bronte's Jane Eyre. It identifies the underlying causes to the emotional instability, lack of empathy, and proneness to psychological and physical harm, as found in the characters of Jane Eyre and Edward Rochester. The imbalanced pattern of behavior results from deeper, psychological issues in both characters. The study uses psychoanalysis as its core theory to argue that the recurrent deviance in behavior, and the alarming propensity to aggressive behavior in both characters is indicative of sadistic/masochistic formulation of personalities. The sadistic and masochistic impulses are the basis for the imbalanced state of mind and the perversion of pleasure in the characters. The characters direct their aggression inwards and/or outwards with unhealthy consequences as they either hurt others or their own selves in the process. The said pattern of behavior serves as an avenue for pleasure, and self-gratification. The study finds that pain, then, becomes a desired state of mind, and it relates this desire to cause harm with an over-active death instinct, which results in psychological, emotional and physical deterioration of both characters. The study further traces the roots of the destructive behavior to the early childhood experiences of both characters. Due to the disturbed childhood under the care of strict parental figures, Jane and Rochester develop an unhealthy propensity to violence. Specifically, the study argues that unresolved issues during the anal and Oedipal stages of development during childhood build their destructive capacity of both characters, and result in the twisted sadistic/masochistic dynamics which are manifested later in life.*

Keywords: *psychoanalysis, cruelty, pleasure, corruption*

Jane Eyre is a psychological study of human cruelty, suffering, and the resultant misery. The work maps the destructive capacity of the human mind, and explores the impending doom which follows having such a capacity for violence. When analyzed with the help of psychoanalytical ideas, the characters become volatile individuals who are capable of unhealthy behavior. Throughout the novel, the characters can be observed in situations which either involve hurting their own selves or hurting the other people. It is their internal wounds that translate their destructive capacity into the outright harmful outbursts.

The study explains the emotional irregularities of the characters and investigates the harmful aftereffects of destructive impulses in the light of the Freudian ideas of sadism and masochism. In *Myths of Power*, Eagleton (2005) observes a similar dynamic, suggesting that the novel's sadism and masochism accounts for the power

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struggle at the heart of the novel (p. xviii). Indeed, once observed for its latent content, the Jane/Rochester relationship becomes an outlet for aggressive emotions, and the present study sets out to explain the underlying sadistic/masochistic dynamics by using Freudian psychoanalysis as its core theory.

As the study is conducted to arrive at a better understanding of the psychology of characters, it employs classical psychoanalytical ideas to explain the inner workings of the primary characters. The underlying pattern of incessant suffering characterizes the characters of *Jane Eyre*, and to understand the pattern, the study makes use of Freudian theories. Through Freudian psychoanalysis, the study sheds light on and provides explanation for Jane and Rochester's unconsciously-motivated attraction to violence, and the broader consequences of being in a physically and emotionally abusive relationship.

First off, as a literary classic with a long history of criticism, *Jane Eyre* has been analyzed from a variety of perspectives. It has been contested for its razor-sharp critique of issues concerning society, and challenged for its unconvincing portrayal of masculinity, yet the novel continues to maintain its popularity into the twenty-first century. Although, the early critics objected to the novel's daring departure from Victorian values with its morally deviant characters, but the twentieth century criticism has made up for what Allott (2010) describes as "Victorian critical shortcomings" (p. xv).

Among the notable, early twentieth century critics is Virginia Woolf. In *Jane Eyre and Wuthering Heights*, Woolf (2007a) remarks on Brontë's textual presence in *Jane Eyre*. Although, the narrative concerns an orphan living and surviving as a governess, the novel fails to shake off its author's textual presence, for Brontë is reflected in the very voice of Jane Eyre. Although, Brontë's presence does not damage the quality of the text, but it renders her work limited. The novel limits itself by portraying a limited range of emotions, because for Jane to center her life around love is what Woolf considers a serious limitation, failing to do justice to the range of human experiences.

Woolf's critique evaluates the work in relation to its author, and David Cecil reiterates the connection between central characters and the author in *Early Victorian Novelists*. Cecil (1948) observes *Jane Eyre* as a text which is a record of personal visions. Its principle characters are mouthpieces of the author; they fail to outgrow Brontë's limited experience with the world. The author's selective representation of the external world comes short to represent the actual world. Singling out Rochester as a serious defect of Brontë's characterization, Cecil adds that he is unconvincing representative of men, rather, he comes across as a caricature from a woman's imagination.

The late-twentieth century criticism of *Jane Eyre* is less concerned with its autobiographical content and more with the diverse range of issues it touches upon. In *A Literature of Their Own*, Showalter (1977), argues *Jane Eyre* as a classic of the feminine novels. It concerns feminine issues, both physical and social. Brontë employs various narrative devices to depict the rich variety of female experiences in a great vivacity. The rich and complex psychological dimension of the female experience is presented through dreams, and hallucinations, paintings and by endowing them with strongly-held beliefs. The sexual dimension of female experience is expressed through the extensive use of the womb imagery. Through Bertha Mason, Brontë gives a concrete

presence to the physicality of the female body, and Helen Burns represents the side of female experience which is suppressed by the societal conventions.

Gilbert and Gubar's *the Madwoman in the Attic* is another thorough study of *Jane Eyre* through the feminist perspective. Gilbert and Gubar (2000) also find female imagery, sexual undercurrent, and themes which discuss the feminine experience with reference to the rigorous ideals of the gendered society. According to both, *Jane Eyre* offers a window into the experience of women. Through the female characters, Bronte gives voice to the realities of womanhood in the patriarchal society. Jane Eyre, Bertha Mason, and Helen Burns represent the varying response to those experiences. Bertha Mason is the manifestation of the female rage against the norms of patriarchy. Additionally, she serves as a double to Jane, a darker avatar which expresses Jane's own repressed desires.

In *Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism*, Spivak's (1985), similarly argues Bertha Mason as a figure that sheds light on the societal injustice, and oppressive nature of society's constructs. In the novel, she is a white Jamaican Creole, who exists between the boundary of human/animal. Jane and Rochester, both deny her civility, perceiving her as a savage. Eagleton (2005) interprets *Jane Eyre* from a class perspective. He argues that the novel shows struggle between classes. With the presence of class structure, Jane navigates within the dynamics of equality, servitude and independence. As the novel reaches its conclusion, the 'lower' character is able to exercise power over the 'higher' character because Bronte physically lowers the latter by handicapping him.

Among Bronte's recent critics is Harold Bloom. Bloom (2007b) points the influence of Lord Byron on Bronte's work. There is an uncanny resemblance between Rochester, and Byron's heroes, e.g. Manfred. Further, Bronte translates her own vision of Byron's personality into his characterization. The unbridled sexuality of Byron is conveyed through the fiery nature of Jane's passion for Rochester and vice versa. Also, Rochester's extensive indulgence into sexual escapades and Jane's sexual imagination combines the unchecked sexuality which is synonymous with Byron (Bloom, 2007b).

As it is discussed, *Jane Eyre* has been analyzed from a variety of perspectives. Despite the diversity in criticism, it can be observed that the psychology behind the characterization of the central characters vitally affects the overall impression of the novel. The behavior of the characters, at times unnatural and nonsensical, is both indicative of the novel's flaws, and its depth. While the criticism regarding the characterization of *Jane Eyre* often views it as a drawback of the novel, an in-depth psychoanalytical study of the novel reveals the complexity, depth and overall brilliance of the characterization. Through the analysis of Jane Eyre and Edward Rochester from psychoanalytical lens, then, this study argues that both characters are affected by sadism and/or masochism, it is the sadomasochistic elements which are responsible for the behavior of Jane and Rochester.

In *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality*, Freud (1989) describes sadism and masochism as "the desire to inflict pain upon the sexual object, and its reverse" (p. 251). A person's act of desiring something and feeling gratified upon fulfillment of the desire is a matter entirely psychological, and Freud describes sadistic and masochistic impulses originating entirely from psychological issues as well. It is the perversion of sexuality, and

perversions extend beyond the sexual regions of the body (Freud, 1989). Indeed, the gratification through pain goes further than regions of sexual union: the gratification may occur through mental, and/or bodily abuse.

Further, Freud's instinct theory is important to understand his ideas regarding sadism and masochism. He outlines Eros and Thanatos as innate regulators of the self: the former is responsible for self-preserving actions and the latter is employed for self-destructive actions. Thanatos or the death instinct is responsible for all the negative energy of a human being, it is especially responsible for aggression. Jacobs (2003) points out, Freud uses the notion of death instinct "as a way of explaining the origin of aggression" (p. 46). Similarly, sadism and masochism is the demonstration of aggressive behavior: sadism turns aggressive behavior outwards while masochism turns aggressive behavior inwards.

Jane Eyre permeates with self-infused suffering, and sadistic victimization of the object of desire. Jane Eyre and Edward Rochester, the primary characters of the novel can be observed as either inflicting suffering on their own selves or bringing it upon their desired sexual object. The fascination with pain is the integral part of their psychological makeup. This configuration clearly indicates that characters are sadomasochists. Further, the relationships of these characters with each other is strongly affected by figurative bondage, and the pairing is characterized by the dominant/submissive binary.

Jane Eyre's life is patterned on victimization of the self. Her closest ties serve as means to gratify her inner impulse of self-harm. At various points in the narrative, Jane forms connections with John Reed, and Edward Rochester, both serve as outlets for her masochistic gratification. As a child, Jane subjects herself to the abuse at the hands of John Reed. In the first chapter, she describes how John habitually punishes her, which he later demonstrates by striking her, throwing a book at her, and by grabbing her by the hair. Jane admits that she was "[h]abitually obedient to John" (Bronte, 2016, p. 12). Accustomed to the abuse that she receives, she responds to the abuse with passive acceptance, she does not attempt to defend herself against it. In the relationship between John Reed and Jane, then, the former perfectly lends himself to the role of the dominant, while the latter is the submissive. In-line with Freud's theorization, the gratification is centered on non-genital areas for both characters. The only way John Reed can have a gratifying experience with Jane is through the act of inflicting punishment on her, and Jane finds her own unconscious gratification through the experience.

It can be observed that Jane tolerates physical and mental abuse on the fabricated justification of victimhood, but the reality of her situation is that she, unconsciously, likes bringing suffering on herself. She is taught at an early age that she is a bad child, and bad children need punishment. Unconsciously internalizing the strict disciplining, Jane harms herself through the use of external objects. This is the only way she can harm herself without admitting it to herself of such a shameful act. Clearly, Jane's compliance to an abusive authority indicates a deeper, psychologically-motivated reasoning. She allows John Reed to mentally and physically abuse her, and willingly puts herself through suffering. In a distorted, and disguised way, she satisfies her inner impulse to self-harm. And, by convincing herself that she is the victim, she deludes herself into believing that she is superior to John Reed, that is the only way she feels powerful, and can carry out her guilty desire of self-abuse.

Later, Jane repeats the submissive, self-victimizing pattern of behavior in her relationship with Edward Rochester. The dynamics of the relationship between Jane and Rochester are the same as they were in the

relationship between Jane and John Reed: Jane is the submissive and Rochester is the dominant man in the relationship. Apart from the obvious difference of age, social standing, and wealth, Jane unconsciously develops feelings for Rochester because being in his company makes her reinforce her position of the masochist. In her very first encounter with Rochester, she observes his domineering attitude and especially notices his masculinity and sternness. Throughout the encounter, Rochester maintains a condescending tone with her, and Jane complies to his orders for the very reason, stating, "I should have gone... but the frown, the roughness of the traveler, set me at my ease" (p. 105). Clearly, Jane responds to the situation in a typical masochistic fashion. Rochester makes her feel inferior, and this is exactly the quality which attracts Jane. During their second encounter, the same dominant/submissive dynamic is maintained by both participants in a greater degree. Jane becomes much more obedient, while Rochester becomes much more domineering. Now, Jane starts referring to Rochester as 'master', while Rochester calls her with condescending pet names. As Anderson and Lawrence (2015) note, Rochester continues to be rough towards her, and Jane continues to be attracted to his rough and coarse attitude.

True to her masochistic personality, Jane recognizes herself inferior to Rochester. The proposal scene is particularly revealing for that purpose. Before Rochester proposes to Jane, she belittles herself in front of him, calling herself "obscure, plain, and little" (Bronte, 2016, p. 227). After accepting his proposal, Jane worries that she will soon be an equal of her master, she specifically uses the word 'fear' to describe her reaction to the thought of Rochester no longer being her master. Psychologically, Jane wants to remain in servitude to her master. Equaling Rochester would mean losing the privilege of being treated as an inferior. Anxiety is the prime indication of deeper, core issues (Tyson, 2006), and Jane's fear at abandoning the position of servitude is also the indication of her deeper issues.

Apart from Jane subjecting herself to cruelty at the hands of others, she also inflicts suffering on herself through self-negation. Jane punishes herself by denying happiness, prosperity, and pleasure to herself, even when the prospect of happiness is just one decision away from her. After meeting Rochester, Jane grows increasingly attached to him, but Rochester does not show any sign of attachment to her. It comes to the point where it pains her to see him with another woman, e.g. Blanche Ingram. But when Rochester finally confesses his true feelings, and troubled past to her, telling her how much he loves her, Jane responds by rejecting him and fleeing from his house. The only justification she provides for her actions is that she is "flee[ing] temptation" (Bronte, 2016, p. 286). She puts as much distance as possible between Rochester and herself. Her self-imposed exile from Thornfield Hall results in bouts of hunger, periods of sadness and misery without any promise of future happiness. And, Jane alone brings it upon herself willingly, and willingly she endures all the accompanying misery, the pattern to her life remains consistent. She only makes long-lasting connections to people if they dominate and make her suffer, e.g. John Reed and Edward Rochester. Their appeal lies in the way they treat Jane. It is because of the uneven dominant/submissive binary that she is able to maintain a long term bond with both characters.

Edward Rochester, on the other hand, is the primary sadistic character in the novel. While Bronte shows destruction of the self through Jane Eyre, she shows destruction of the other through Rochester. When he is introduced into the story, Rochester is a middle-aged man. He is well-traveled, experienced, and possesses a large

fortune. Through these qualities alone, Bronte develops him as a dominant man. His own attitude is domineering, characterized by an air of superiority. Through Jane's eyes, he is always shown in a superior light.

Bloom (2007b) argues that Rochester inherits characteristics of a typical Byronic hero, with all of its sadistic implications. Indeed, Rochester exhibits signs of sadistic behavior through pathological tendency to cruelty, aggression, emotional harm, and manipulation of the desired object. The history of his life indicates that he treats women sadistically. Bertha Mason, Celine Varens, Giacinta, and Clara were all seduced, used, and abandoned. Importantly, Rochester remembers and talks about these women in condescending tone. To him, these women deserved what they received from him. Bertha Mason was locked in a room for over ten years without remorse. Celine Varens "deserved only scorn" (Bronte, 2016, p. 131). He got "tired of" Giacinta in three months, while "honest and quiet" Clara was abandoned because she ceased to interest him (p. 279). In all of these cases, women are treated less as humans and more as objects for personal gratification.

When Jane is introduced to Rochester, he tells her that he envies her clean conscience and unpolluted memory. In contrast, he considers himself a sinner, tainted by the world, and its corruption. Yet, despite confessing his inferiority, he does not abandon the tone of superiority. Rather, he tells her "you, I am persuaded, can suit me if you will" (p. 122). Here, Rochester comes across as a predator, scouting his next victim to form a sadomasochistic relationship with. Indeed, for Rochester past is the concrete evidence of his predatory nature. During the final chapters of the novel, Rochester confesses his numerous love affairs, and the companionship of various mistresses under the pretense that he "sought [his] ideal of a woman" amongst them (p. 278). In *Charlotte Bronte and Victorian Psychology*, Shuttleworth (2004) rightly remarks that the novel treats women as "object[s] to be regulated, controlled and decoded" (p. 148). Indeed, the underlying sexism is the indication of the sadistic overtones of the novel.

There is a similarity between the way Rochester treats Jane and the way he has treated women in the past. He does not approach Jane with the best of intentions. He is motivated by personal designs, of gratifying himself at the expense of the woman he takes interest in. Rochester is as forceful and commanding to Jane as he was to Bertha. He holds both of them back from independence of thought and action. He admits to his aggressive nature when he threatens Jane by saying, "I am not a gentle-tempered man... put your finger on my pulse, feel how it throbs, and – beware!" (p. 272). As Rochester threatens Jane with violence, he clearly shows his lack of respect for her decisions. He is willing to physically impose himself on her to make her comply with his wishes. Indeed, at this point, Jane is a mere woman to be used for personal gratification.

It is important to recognize that Rochester's interest in Jane is because he thinks that she is naïve, and inexperienced of the world. Jane's appeal lies in her vulnerability, her lack of awareness, and submissiveness. This will enable him to order, control, and treat her as his inferior. This is the reason which intrigues him, and makes him attempt to form a connection with her. In other words, the relationship between Jane and Rochester exists because of certain binaries: vulnerable/invulnerable, inexperienced/experienced, stainless/tainted, uncorrupted/corrupted, submissive/domineering. The binaries clearly reveal a pattern to Rochester. He takes a fancy to Jane because she is controllable, if he would order her, she would obey it. And, that's exactly what he

does. Rochester starts to exercise control on her. His interest in Jane gradually takes a sadistic form as he employs the very tools known to be closely associated with sadism. He begins to inflict emotional abuse on Jane.

Eagleton (2005) rightly remarks that, “[d]eference, submission and domination, the pleasures of mastery and the delights of being ruled: these are all much in evidence in *Jane Eyre*...” (p. xvii). Clearly, the dynamic of domination/submission, and master/servant exist between Rochester and Jane. Its primary indication is Rochester’s perception of Jane as his inferior, and Jane’s perception of Rochester as a superior being. Rochester denies Jane equality, or superiority. He considers himself superior to Jane, and tells it to her: “... I have a right to be a little masterful... on the grounds... that I have battled through a varied experience... while you have lived quietly with one set of people in one house” (Bronte, 2016, p. 122). Thus, from the very start, Rochester establishes how he wants to be treated – which is not as an equal. He wants to be perceived as the master, to give orders and not to receive them. This is why he treats Jane condescendingly, continually dictates her actions. Also, the way Rochester treats her indicates that he feels a sense of ownership over Jane, much similar to how a master feels ownership over a slave. Rochester derives satisfaction from maintaining superiority to Jane, and he maintains the superiority to the very day of their wedding.

Another aspect of note is the selfish nature of Rochester’s attitude to Jane. His actions lack any true value for Jane’s sentiments. He does not respect her feelings, rather, he plays with them for his own amusement and gratification. He admits to Jane that he, “feigned courtship of [Blanche] Ingram” (p. 235) for the purpose of evoking envy in Jane. He also conceals his marriage to Bertha Mason from Jane, and does not reveal it until he is forced to admit that he “entrapped [Jane] into a feigned union” (p. 262). The act of concealing important information is an indicator of the fact that Rochester does not have Jane’s best interest at heart. It indicates that he is not sincere with her and that he acts for his own gratification, not for Jane’s well-being.

Sullivan (1978) draws an important parallel between Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* and Tieck’s *Bluebeard*, for the Romantic tradition at the heart of the novel may have been inspired by the Bluebeard narrative. It is pointed out that Rochester’s character arc structurally parallels Bluebeard’s: both keep the dark secrets of their past hidden. In Bluebeard’s case, the dead wives are hidden away in the closet, while Rochester keeps his wife hidden away in the attic room. Further, both are rich gentlemen courting their next wives. Architecturally, Bluebeard’s manor resembles Thornfield Hall, and even Bronte references to the similarity (Sullivan, 1978). The point is, the close parallel with Bluebeard truly makes the extent of Rochester’s callous, manipulative nature stand out. Rochester manipulates Jane and deceives Blanche Ingram just as Bluebeard courts victims through deception. Both Rochester and Bluebeard have their history of extreme cruelty hidden away in secret places of their houses, and both live with compulsion to hurt the ones they get close to.

Additionally, aggression is the defining aspect of sadism. Rochester freely employs aggression in dealing with Jane without any accompanying remorse. Case in point, after their wedding is broken off, Jane and Rochester find confronting each other at a later time. Jane tells him that she has to leave Thornfield Hall, and that she cannot stay with him. This evokes a response from Rochester which is noteworthy for its sadistic undertones. He threatens her with violence, all the while he has a look “that of a man who is just about to burst an insufferable bond and plunge headlong into wild license... The crisis was perilous; but not without its charm”

(Bronte, 2016, p. 271). The lines indicate the extent of the sadomasochistic bond which exists between both characters. While Rochester is threatening to harm her, or as Stone (2011) puts it, “Rochester is threatening to rape her” (p. 4), Jane feels at ease, rather, she finds the situation attractive. The lines solidify Rochester’s capacity for violence, and Jane’s capacity to find his violence attractive.

Clearly, the bond between Jane and Rochester conforms to the ideals of a sadomasochistic relationship. Edward Rochester is a sadist who plays his part as the aggressive man, and Jane Eyre plays her part as the submissive woman. The lack of equality between both character, the understood inferiority of Jane and imposed superiority of Rochester adhere to the various binaries involved in sadomasochistic relationships, such as aggressor/submissive, oppressor/victim, and master/slave. These binaries are maintained throughout the novel.

Moreover, the novel provides ample textual evidence to trace the origin of Jane and Rochester’s respective masochistic/sadistic personalities. As Freud observes, human behavior almost always has its origin during the childhood years, dysfunctional behavior originates due to a variety of unresolved childhood issues, arising during the different phases of psychosexual development. Similarly, sadistic/masochistic behavior can be traced back to the childhood, specifically, to the psychosexual stages of development.

In Jane’s case, the unconventional destruction of the self is the result of her childhood experience with a surrogate mother who enforces a rigorous disciplining in her. Jane is an orphan under the care of Mrs. Reed. During her formative years, Jane is constantly subjected to humiliation and punishment. She is expected to be unquestioningly obedient and is told that she is to be “[kept] at a distance” until she learns to act according to the demands of her aunt. Jane’s disciplining of the early years is analogous to the Freudian toilet training phase. Writing in *Character and Anal Erotism*, Freud (1959) sheds light on the potential outcome of a strict toilet training. It may result in an adult who is exceptionally concerned with orderliness in life. Normally, it is the strict toilet training which results into an adult masochist. Indeed, orderliness exists in people “who were formerly anal erotics” (Freud, 1959, p. 47). As an adult, Jane has internalized the childhood teachings, and they dictate her actions. The teachings of her aunt echo in her conduct as she aspires to uphold morality and adhere to the principles of goodness, and righteousness. Because of her principles, she suppresses her personal desires. And, her concern with the principles at the cost of her personal desires serves as the clear evidence of her desire to have a balance, or an order in her life.

Rochester’s life, on the other hand, is patterned according to his deep-seated Oedipal fixation to his mother. As Rochester reveals his past to Jane, it becomes evident that he has a deep loathing for his father, and his unhealthy fixation with his mother is evident from the extensive presence of women in his life. Rochester tells Jane that he has spent years looking for “ideal of a woman... [yet] I could not find her” (Bronte, 2016, p. 278). The ideal figure is the figure of the mother. He attempts to find an alternative for his mother throughout his life, but remains unsuccessful. Similarly, Rochester’s seduce-and-abandon pattern regarding women is further evidence of his Oedipal desires, remaining with a woman other than his mother evokes a feeling of guilt, and this guilt is responsible for Rochester abandoning women under different pretexts.

Jane Eyre is, then, an excursion into the workings of the psyche. It probes into the human behavioral patterns, and exposes the darker dynamics of sadism and masochism which underlie abusive relationships in

general. This study concludes that sadism/masochism patterns the primary characters and it serves as a reason for the aggressive nature of their relationship. While Rochester delights in causing suffering, Jane delights in receiving it. It is indicated by a repeated pattern of the behavior of both characters, for Jane and Rochester remain in a figurative bondage to each other. They unconsciously depend on each other, and feed off of the physical and psychological abuse that accompanies their dependence. Clearly, it serves as the reason to why both characters continue their toxic relationship, and return to each other despite separation.

In *Jane Eyre*, Jane exhibits all of the primary characteristics of masochistic behavior while Rochester displays all of the primary signs of sadistic behavior. Jane is a passive, submissive, self-victimizing woman, while Rochester is an aggressive, domineering, oppressive, and predatory middle-aged man who finds pleasure in misogynous treatment of women. Both characters maintain the aforementioned binaries throughout the novel, and their relationship further solidifies and provides energy for their unhealthy behavior. The characters tap into the capacity of their respective death instincts to find the needed aggression to inflict pain. In Jane's case, she uses it to inflict aggression on herself while Rochester uses it to inflict aggression on others. The childhood experiences of both characters further build up the potential of their destructive personalities.

Moreover, the study finds that Bronte portrays human psyche as something delicate and sensitive, which is affected by and is vulnerable to the internal and external stimuli. The internal makeup, and the external circumstances are the determining factors, the causes to the unhealthy outlook towards life. In-line with the core concepts of psychoanalysis, Bronte perceives childhood as playing a larger role in the formation of the personality as the unhealthy psychological consequences of difficult childhood and traumatizing past experiences play a major role in shaping Jane and Rochester. Such experiences translate into an imbalanced state of mind, and prove responsible for the recurring association of pain with comfort. Jane finds comfort in her own misery, brought about through her own life choices, while Rochester creates misery for the woman he loves. The overarching victim-victimizer binary, then, serves as the clear indication of the underlying masochism and sadism of Jane and Rochester respectively.

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