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The Setting of a Classic Novel:

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* Compared to its 2011 Cinematic Adaptation

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Introduction

Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* was published in 1847 and was, as literary historian Stevie Davies writes in the introduction of the Penguin Classics edition, an immediate success (xi). A large number of film adaptations have been made since then, from the era of the silent films to today's motion pictures. *Jane Eyre*, as well as all novels, contains a large amount of information and readers perceive texts in a variety of ways. Consequently, adapting literary texts for film is not a simple undertaking.

A film adaptation must be able to convey the original story of the novel in the short time of one and a half to two hours. This is possible since film viewers are not required to develop their own images; they receive effects of sound and dynamic pictures from the movie screen. An important feature of a film is the setting; this is the time, place, and circumstances in which a narrative takes place. The setting assists the plot by presenting the environment in terms of visual impressions and description of sounds in both novel and film. Through the setting, Brontë creates a Gothic atmosphere for the protagonist and her location. Jane attends five different locations in the novel – five primary settings: Gateshead, Lowood, Thornfield, Marsch End and Ferndean. In the novel, the setting conveys a mood of joy or sadness; it also conveys a sense of heat or a sense of cold, to each and one of these locations. Accordingly, if a filmmaker forgoes aspects of the setting, it would result in considerable alterations which would not be ascribable to the novel.

The purpose of this essay is to compare the settings of *Jane Eyre* to the settings of Director Cary Fukunaga's BBC – Focus Features film adaptation from 2011. Since the 2011 film version is a motion picture and not a television series, it is compelled to condense the plot using only a limited number of scenes. Yet, it must attempt to capture the atmosphere of the novel – its obscurity and darkness along with its ghosts and goblins. This essay will examine in what way the setting is crucial for *Jane Eyre* and how the film director has chosen to use the limited amount of time as he presents his interpretation of the novel and its Gothic settings. The examination will treat four locations, since Ferndean is not depicted in Fukunaga's film version. Each section in the essay starts with a discussion about the settings in the novel. This is followed by an evaluation in which the essay analyses similarities and differences which are evident in the film.

Adaptation of Fiction into Film

A relevant question is whether the medium of literature is suitable for the conversion into the medium of film. Could it be that these related media would repel each other like two similar magnetic poles if a text is adapted into a motion picture? John C. Tibbets and James M. Welsh have pondered this question; they refer to Stanley Kauffmann, an American film critic, who in the 1960s suggested that “it was relatively pointless to adapt literary classics to the screen since at best the cinema could hope only to approximate what our best writers had created in print” (xv). However, there are many great films which have their origin in a written work. Linda Seger writes that some producers tend to think that “it’s more commercially viable to do material that already has an audience” and that “[o]thers cite the paucity of good original scripts” (xiii) as reasons for making adaptations. However, the financial risk also increases when adapting from one medium to another; firstly, executives and producers have to purchase the rights of the novel. Secondly, they have to buy the screenplay. That is equal to paying for the project twice. Seger also points out that one should bear in mind that not all conversions of written material have been stunning successes (xiii).

It can be suggested that some alterations of the novel’s plot or setting are necessary when a filmmaker is creating an adaptation. This is partly because a script or screenplay, which is a kind of manual for making a film, is very different from literature meant to be read. The screenplay shows dialogue and action descriptions in a succinct manner; a page of the script corresponds to a short time in the film and it can never contain all the information which is stored in a page of a novel. This is why a six-hundred-page novel cannot be equal to a two-hour film. Seger argues that the filmmaker is not obliged to pay too much attention to literary details: “if adaptors have an exaggerated respect for every word, comma, and turn of phrase in the literature, they will be unable to re-form the material into drama” (8). Alterations can also be made intentionally in order to increase a dramatic effect which may be particularly suitable for motion pictures.

Jane Eyre is a novel containing a vast and rich material. It is a complex coming-of-age story, with a number of themes and sub-plots. It can furthermore be suggested that the novel is a good example of Gothic fiction. David Stevens writes that “the nature of horror [. . .] manifests itself in Gothic texts” (53). Even though *Jane Eyre* also belongs to the genre of social criticism and *Bildungsroman*, filmmakers must try to conform to Brontë’s Gothic feeling and depict “the nature of horror” in order to create a reliable film version that attempts

to come close to the original text. All adaptations of novels require filmmakers who have the ability to identify parts which can be excluded. This means that they have to make difficult choices in the midst of an abundance of material - a fact that is certainly true for the adaptation of Brontë's novel *Jane Eyre*.

Gateshead Hall

Jane begins her odyssey at Gateshead Hall; from then and there she aspires to move forward, toward or away from something. The settings of *Jane Eyre* are important parts of the story because different locations and circumstances convey Jane's current feelings and allow the audience to be aware of Jane's mood. The first tool that Brontë uses in order to animate the setting is cold: "dreadful to me was the coming home in the raw twilight, with nipped fingers and toes, and a heart saddened by the chidings of Bessie" (9). From the start, the author thus introduces physical sensation as a method of narration where the cold represents fear and solitude. Directly after the cold introduction, Brontë establishes the sensation of warmth. The Reed children are gathered round their mother by the fireplace and for them the author uses words that contradict the coldness that Jane feels; expressions such as 'darlings' and 'happy' (9) are words which are not connected to Jane.

Jane withdraws to the window-seat behind the red curtain and a poignant scene is created with the help of her favourite book: *Bewick's History of British Birds*. The author describes Jane's feelings by the use of phrases from the book, "the haunts of sea-fowl; of 'the solitary rocks and promontories'" (10). Robert L. Patten writes that "Jane is 'profoundly' interested in migratory British birds and their solitary 'haunts' in 'forlorn regions of dreary space'" (149). Furthermore, Patten argues that Jane "engages in imagining" about "terrifying places" (149). Because of this, the readers get a premonition of Gothic Horror directly from the start, and it is with this book that John Reed manages to inflict a cut to Jane's head. From now on, the sensations of pain and anger can be ascribed to ice or cold.

In the novel, the setting of the window-seat scene is described as a misty, dark November day with "ceaseless rain sweeping away wildly before a long lamentable blast" (10). Jane makes use of a scarlet curtain in order to hide from John Reed. However, the filmmakers have chosen to depict the scene far brighter with the sun illuminating Jane's window-seat. Even the hanging drapery or curtain is brighter, it is yellow with an

embroidered white pattern. It can be argued that the film to some extent loses Brontë's atmosphere of *Jane Eyre* in this scene because of the distinct daylight.

The next scene which has an interesting setting is Jane's incarceration in the Red-Room. Again, she experiences her environment as cold and secluded, almost godforsaken. Tamar Heller writes that "[t]he Red-Room is a complex Gothic site that suggests both Brontë's indebtedness to the Radcliffean tradition and her innovative development of it" (51). Brontë refines Radcliffe's technique of Gothicism by describing Jane's thoughts as she contemplates her fate while daylight is slowly replaced by moonlight. Jane gets weary and her imagination is triggered as she "looks into the mirror and seems not to recognize herself" (Heller 51). Jane perceives a gleaming light which she cannot comprehend: "[w]as it, I asked myself, a ray from the moon penetrating some aperture in the blind?" (20-21). This is the primary reason that induces Jane to fall unconscious to the floor; a fit of imagination.

The Red-Room of the motion picture has the main features described in the novel: ornamentation, the light crimson tapestry, the chimney-piece, and the mirror. However, the filmmakers have again chosen a lighter room, and the Gothic feeling, which is so strong in the novel, is to some extent weakened. Furthermore, Jane is frightened because of a back draft in the funnel (00:07:40), causing a plume of smoke and not because of the effect described in the novel where a ray of moonlight triggers her imagination. The time aspect is also important: Kelley Griffith writes that events of significance in *Jane Eyre* are slowed down and use more time: "[t]his 'slow' time emphasizes Jane's emotional reaction to the experiences she has there" (70). Griffith argues further that the Red-Room is one of the significant events in the novel where the author has slowed the time down as Jane discovers that the room forebodes evil and she begins to feel cold, smothered and subdued as her anger subsides when she remembers that Mr Reed had died in there (70). In contrast to the novel, where Jane spends an entire afternoon in the Red-Room, the film does not depict the length of time in a sufficient way as it presents this important part of the plot.

Michael Riley suggests that a film adaptation should: "attempt to capture the prevailing tone" (145) of the original work, i.e. capture the way something is said or written by the author. Steven Lynn writes that novels are stimulating in the sense that they are without tone for as long as they are unread; the reader supplies the tone by interpreting the text in which clues are provided (60). It can be argued that the film does not entirely capture the tone set in the beginning of the novel because it does not provide any clues for the viewer to interpret. This can be exemplified by Riley,

[t]he child's forlorn appearance and feisty temperament merely aggravate her situation. Denied love and sympathetic understanding, Jane takes lonely refuge in her vivid imagination. Apart from her own resources, she finds paltry (and only occasional) comfort in the attention of a servant, Bessie, who sometimes entertains her with stories. Thus, learning that she is to be sent away to school at Lowood, Jane feels hope and excitement for the first time in her life. (147)

Because of the film's extremely brief presentation of Gateshead Hall, this is not easy for the audience of the motion picture to comprehend and grasp. Debra Teachman claims that Jane develops a "sensitivity to acts of injustice" (2) at Gateshead, and it can be suggested that the circumstances explaining this development are not presented in the film. Additionally, the pictures of Gateshead are static, light and clean; the camera impedes the effect of ominousness and mysticism due to the cinematographer's excessive use of long-shots with a wide-angle lens. This creates an effect which diminishes the Gothic element of the Gateshead scenes. It can therefore be argued that in the initial stage of the film, the tone of Brontë's novel does not emerge completely.

Lowood

Jane is sent away from Gateshead to be educated at a boarding school for girls, Lowood Institution. In the novel, it is referred to as "the Orphan Asylum" (91) and the author continues the theme of fire and ice as she depicts Jane's first years as a pupil there. It is a location where the cold dominates the warmth because of the parsimonious way in which the school is run. The institution is funded by philanthropists who are unaware of its spartan circumstances created by the superintendent, Mr Brocklehurst. As Jane arrives late at night and is lifted out from the coach, her first impressions are "rain, wind and darkness" (51) and instantly, the reader feels the atmosphere of this location. Jane perceives Lowood as a building which looms up through the dim air, and cold water is used from the beginning to illustrate pain and fear. As a direct contrast, Jane is led into a room with a fire where she can warm her cold fingers; she discerns in the dim light an antechamber which to Jane at the moment is perceived as a congenial environment, a parlour. In this warmth Miss Temple enters and as Jane is subjected to her loving manner (52), it is clear that the warmth of the room illustrates compassion and friendliness. Miss Temple then leaves Jane and she is led by

Miss Miller from “compartment to compartment, from passage to passage, of a large and irregular building” (52). Brontë describes Lowood as a vast, dark ocean which has to be traversed. This ocean is destitute of light and warmth until they reach their destination: a spacious and oblong room in which life is indicated by the murmur of a large number of girls. Mary Burgan writes that when Jane arrives at this common room, she notices the “sparse illuminations that dimly reveal the setting” (84) and Jane comprehends that the only source of light which has been assigned to this spacious room of perhaps eighty girls are two pairs of tiny candle-ends, one at each short side. The sparse illumination is a common feature for every interior space of Lowood; the dormitory, the refectory and the schoolroom all share the ever-present gloom of obscurity. Burgan further argues that “[i]n this phase of the story, the stress falls on environmental conditions” (84) which are compromised in order to rear the girls into individuals who do not demand or expect anything but the basic necessities of life. Accordingly, Teachman writes that Lowood is a location where the pupils have to submit to a doctrine which states that they are “girls of lower genteel standing” (3) and therefore shall live and accept a humble life. The girls also have to submit to being inspected for worthiness since they are dependent on charity from others and should be grateful for everything given to them. The superintendent has limited the number of candles used indoors and the structure of the building is draughty. In cold winter mornings, the result is that the girls’ washing pitchers contain water with ice. It can be suggested that Brontë sharply criticizes institutions of philanthropy, hinting that although such institutions may be funded by good people, they are not run in a good way because the funds are not used for providing the children with what they need.

The film almost immediately depicts Lowood’s schoolroom; it is according to the novel cold and dark in appearance. The shape is oblong with a hearth built into the wall of one short side and there is a clock mounted on the wall. The novel, however, describes a schoolroom which has a hearth at both sides (56). The film emphasize Mr Brocklehurst’s punitive disposition and has an elaborate scene where Jane is forced to stand upon “the pedestal of infamy” (00:15:17). The director has chosen to enhance the effect of the scene where a girl steals a glance at Jane and smiles, giving courage. In the film, it is Helen Burns smiling while the sun sends its rays through a high mounted window to contrast the cold, dark world of Mr Brocklehurst (00:15:45). The scene reveals Jane’s feeling of exposure and vulnerability, and seconds later it depicts the rays of the sun illuminating Jane. The film

viewer can clearly see that Jane, still standing upon the stool, collects her courage and recovers from a dreadful state of mind.

The exterior of Lowood is scarcely depicted in the motion picture. The girls' marches to the church in freezing weather are omitted and so is the part where the healthy girls are allowed to sojourn in the vicinity of the school, in order for them to be parted from the seat of the typhoid contagion which afflicts Lowood. The filmmakers have constructed a garden which is in accordance to Brontë's depiction: "[t]he garden was a wide enclosure, surrounded with walls so high as to exclude every glimpse of prospect" (58). The film's garden shuts in the pupils and their flowerbeds with a high stone wall. The wall is an important symbol of Lowood; behind it Jane has lived a considerable part of her life and it can be argued that the film has omitted an important scene where Jane opens her window and longs out beyond the high wall to another life. This conviction is not evident to the film viewer as the scene of the departure from Lowood is abrupt and does not reveal the protagonist's inner feelings. However, the filmmakers have managed to more closely depict the novel's image of Lowood compared to the depiction of Gateshead.

Thornfield Hall

The next location where Jane becomes a resident is Thornfield Hall. The name reveals that this is a place where Jane is at risk of hurting herself, physically and emotionally. It can be suggested that the introduction is over; the novel takes its commencement with Jane as a grown-up woman, breaking off from Lowood, and the Gothic element is now enhanced. Stevens suggests that a Gothic story can include a setting which is featured in a variety of ways. However, he points out that there are "certain generic preferences – ruins, dungeons, darkness, for instance" (54). It can be argued that Thornfield, though not a ruin from the beginning, certainly has a Gothic atmosphere to it.

Fukunaga is aware of the importance of obscurity and darkness in the novel, and the DVD's comprehensive bonus material discusses "the mysterious light of *Jane Eyre*." This mysterious light comes distinctly to the viewer's perception during Jane's journey from Lowood to Thornfield. The novel makes this obvious as Jane arrives at Thornfield where a "candle light gleamed from one curtained bow-window; all the rest were [*dark*]" (my emphasis 113). This scene is brilliantly filmed: it is almost dark and the twilight is looming large with a strange blue tint as Jane traverses the hills of the English countryside. From her

carriage she looks down at Thornfield, which is situated at the bottom of a valley, seemingly alluding to Hades' infernal regions. Behind the driver, who wears a high hat reminiscent of Dracula's, Jane can see the gleaming window in Thornfield's tower. As her carriage descends a slope, Thornfield piles up in the dark like a ruined medieval fortress with its crenelated battlements raising aloft through the mist. The film's first view of Thornfield has completely captured the Gothic atmosphere.

The novel describes the exterior of Thornfield as a mansion "three stories high, of proportions not vast, though considerable" and says that it has a "picturesque look" because of its "battlements round the top" (117-118). The filmmakers have elaborately created Thornfield based on the above quoted description; it certainly gives the impression of being old-fashioned compared to Victorian standards and it is more reminiscent of a Knight's Castle than a gentleman's residence. Furthermore, the landscape surrounding the cinematic Thornfield is a stunning theatrical representation of Brontë's narrative; beyond the garden a vast meadow stretches and in the midst of all this an array of Boxthorn shrubs grow on the sides of the hills along with oaks and silver birches which separate Thornfield from the rest of the world.

Brontë has on Jane's arrival to Thornfield stressed the presence of fire. Immediately after Jane has stepped down from the carriage, she is guided through the hall into the drawing room where "double illumination of fire and candle" (113) dazes her eyes. As Jane's eyes are adjusted to the light she discerns "[a] snug small room" (113). Cynthia Carlton-Ford explains that Brontë sets up hearth fires to illustrate the feeling of safety; when Jane is safe, she is also accepted as a member of the group (375). In the novel, Jane leaves Lowood partly because she is abandoned by her guardian, Miss Temple, who is her source of love during her years there. At the scene of Jane's arrival to Thornfield, it can be suggested that the author uses fire and light as precursors to convey Jane's feeling of being safe and "snug" in a warm and light environment in order to express a distinct contrast to the cold and dark Lowood. Accordingly, by Jane's frame of reference, which originates from an existence where there is little warmth, she is overwhelmed by Thornfield's warmth and Mrs Fairfax's disposition to be friendly and approachable.

Brontë has added to the Gothic atmosphere in this scene; a large cat lingers in the proximity of Mrs Fairfax. In a literary context, the cat had already been a symbol of superstition for several hundred years before Brontë wrote the novel *Jane Eyre* and many times before has it been used in order to add to the enigma of the tale. Furthermore, a cat is

not only a symbol of superstition, it can stand for domestic comfort and it can be suggested that Mrs Fairfax's cat also signifies warmth. The film director, however, has chosen not to include a cat and viewers can be of the opinion that the scene in question lacks this important detail, which in other matters is in accordance to the novel. The drawing room does not give a spacious impression, yet it is visually pleasing to the viewer's senses with its picturesque furniture and comforting fire. This scene reveals the evidence of Fukunaga's scrutiny within the field of nineteenth-century illumination and heating: the hearth with its grid has an elaborately decorated mantelpiece; on the left a paraffin lamp is shining, to its right a candle is surrounded with looking glasses in order to increase the luminous intensity by also emitting reflected light. It is easy to understand the reason for the director's interest in Victorian sources of warmth and light; as Carlton-Ford points out, "Brontë uses fire unobtrusively but insistently by having Jane notice and comment on the most ordinary hearth fires. She is, in fact, almost obsessed with them" (378).

As Jane is tired from her journey, Mrs Fairfax leads her upstairs. Brontë describes the staircase as solid with robust banisters made of oak. The landing has a vertically oblong window with latticed panes, and from there, the gallery is depicted as a vast space with a roof supported by arches which extends along the huge walls of a church. The film has accordingly featured a powerful staircase with a large window with latticed panes. There are no banisters in the film but an additional light source, a paraffin lamp mounted on the wall together with a light reflecting piece of steel. In order to conform to the Gothic element of Brontë's text, the film adds the echo of Mrs Fairfax's laughter which eerily spreads through the vast corridor and evokes uneasiness in Jane. As Jane enters her chamber, the first thing visible is a hearth fire which is not mentioned in the novel. It can therefore be suggested that Fukunaga has added a fireplace in this scene in an attempt to bring forth Brontë's interest in fireplaces. The hearth fire consequently helps the motion picture to contrast Jane's room from the dark, huge walls on the other side of the door. By having a fireplace in Jane's room, the film continues the novel's theme of fire and ice which distinguishes places where Jane is snug and safe from places where she is wary and afraid.

Screenwriter Moira Buffini argues that "*Jane Eyre*, the genre, if it has one, it's actually gothic thriller, which is dark. Something about this house... Something just isn't quite right there" (bonus 00:20). Furthermore, the film's cinematographer Adriano Goldman says that "Cary [Fukunaga] told me that this should be a mix between a love story and a kind of horror movie" (bonus 00:39). Goldman explains that during the thinking process of how to

accomplish cinematic effects that suit that genre, he realized that “[t]here’s no hard sources hitting the actors, it’s always bounced, it’s always hitting the floor, and then what comes from the floor lights the actors and the actions” (bonus 00:51). By this explanation, Goldman refers to the light sources used in Victorian England; the electricity was not yet invented wherefore the filmmakers had the intention of establishing a mid-nineteenth century light-effect by not exaggerating the “hard sources”, i.e. spotlights which would “hit” the actors and ruin the Victorian setting. The hearth-fires are located near the floor and the flames “bounce” up on the surfaces of the room creating a sort of peculiar glimmer and not a beam of strong light. Goldman further explains that it was of importance to use the correct film stock, lens and filters so that the realization of the scenes followed Fukunaga’s design because “[t]he fireplaces and candles, and lanterns, oil lanterns were, in fact, the light” (bonus 01:20). This realistic stage lighting is used when the characters gather around the hearth fire and it provides a feverish yellow glimmer which dominates the picture.

Fukunaga explains that as he reread the novel, he perceived Thornfield as a place which has a life of its own; it creaks and reflects or devours light as if it had an independent existence (bonus 01:03). Fukunaga does not only use a strange blue light outside Thornfield, but also inside of it, and he gives a detailed description of his intentions with this lighting arrangement:

[a]s they [the characters] walk by walls or element in the rooms, it creates this really amazing sense of, almost dizzying sense of isolation. It’s like when you are at the bottom of the ocean and you just have a little headlamp to look around. There’s something very unnerving about darkness. (bonus 01:25)

The light of these situations is a kind of deep ocean-blue, which can be perceived as an expression of the Gothic night with its ever-present moon.

Marsh End

Jane realizes that she has to leave Mr Rochester and Thornfield because the man she falls in love with has the intention to commit bigamy. The novel depicts Jane’s journey from Thornfield towards Marsh End with a number of incidents and emotional explosions. For the first time in her life, Jane sets out on a journey without a determined destination and she reasons with herself to gain courage: “[n]o reflection was to be allowed now: not one glance was to be cast back; not even one forward” (369). At first, Jane seems to be unaware of the

hardships she is now likely to experience; she contemplates ethics and morals as she walks in the fresh dewdropped grass: “[b]irds began singing in the brake and copse: birds were faithful to their mates; birds were emblems of love” (369). At this stage, Jane’s environment is comfortable and Brontë describes a nature in harmony with its inhabitants. Jane’s greatest problem at the moment is the question of right and wrong; what kind of person is she, to leave her mate without a word? However, it is not long until subjects such as ethics and morals turn out to be less important than the problem that is now facing Jane: she forgets her belongings in the carriage with which she travels to Whitcross, and finds herself destitute at a crossroads in the middle of a wasteland. Consequently, she is forced to spend the night outdoors, and in the morning, the first thing that comes to her mind is “[l]ife [. . .] was yet in my possession, with all its requirements, and pains, and responsibilities” (374). After more than one rejection at the few doors she encounters, Brontë describes how Jane slowly begins to realize how cruel human beings can be towards each other.

The film uses Jane’s departure from Thornfield as a basis from which it can navigate the viewer to and fro locations, and from which it can express a variety of emotions that belong to the tale. In the novel, Jane travels for two days until she reaches Whitcross. Historian Stevie Davies is the writer of the editorial material which is presented in the Penguin Classics edition of *Jane Eyre*. Davies notes that Whitcross is located on the border between Derbyshire and Yorkshire where the moors spread across the country (570). It is thus on the border of wilderness, and Davies suggests that the episode of Whitcross “evokes the wanderings of the Children of Israel in the wilderness, in Exodus” because Jane’s escape can be seen as her own emigration from a master who, in her view, tries to exploit her as a matrimonial slave. Furthermore, Davies argues that Whitcross is a representative of “Christ’s cross and of the crossroads at which Jane stands” (570). Jane’s life has now come to a standstill and the filmmakers illustrate this by using a wide-angle lens which allows the camera to catch the entire deserted landscape which is dominated by the crossroads. In the next moment the camera gives a bird’s-eye-view of Jane from far above; this perspective sends the visual message of a protagonist in despair riveted to the cross’s center.

Jane has now arrived at the darkest hour of her life; exhausted and on the verge of suffering from hypothermia in the cold rain, her mind conceives dark thoughts. However, this is where Jane’s character proves itself being stronger than the average:

Could I but have stiffened to the still frost – the friendly numbness
of death – it might have pelted on; I should not have felt it; but my

yet living flesh shuddered at its chilling influence, I rose ere long.
(380)

Jane does not allow herself to rest on the ground too long which could lead to her death; she forces herself to focus on the light she has seen in the marshes and struggles on to reach it. In her mind, the source of the light is the last resort and her only hope to stay alive; she cannot live through another night in the open. At this critical point, the novel depicts in detail what Jane experiences: what she sees and hears during the laborious effort of approaching the light. The first thing she has to do is to cross a muddy and wet swamp area; this poses a risk since she does not know the depth of the mud, but it is necessary and she crosses the swamp without hesitation. Next, Jane detects a “trace of white” (381) in the terrain, which she soon understands to be a man-made track. She walks the track towards the house and she discerns a low wall with a palisade and a high “prickly hedge” on the inside. Jane continues, feeling her way until she reaches a wicket with yew trees on either side of it. She can now see Moor House, a “black, low, and rather long” construction. The light beams from the “lozenge panes of a very small latticed window” (381) from outside of which Jane bends down in order to get a glance of what is inside of the house. It can be suggested that Brontë now uses her obligatory markers for depicting Jane’s feelings and mood: cold water when she is afraid, and the warmth of fire, when she is safe. Accordingly, inside Marsh End the hearth fire creates a warm, snug atmosphere and pets contribute to the domestic feeling in a similar way to that of Thornfield with Rochester’s dog and Mrs Fairfax’s cat.

The film has cut down severely on Brontë’s depiction of Jane’s laborious journey away from Mr Rochester and Thornfield. The protagonist travels directly towards her goal, and does not experience rejection in the biscuit shop and she does not receive food scraps from a child. The film’s swamp is more of a wet grass field and not a deep, dangerous bog. Jane does not detect a track, but walks directly in the open terrain towards the light source. The filmmakers use a large, three-story building made of massive granite blocks with big windows. This creates a different image compared to the novel’s low house with small lozenge panes. The building is surrounded by a stone wall which measures two metres in height. It can be suggested that the significant height of the wall is a replacement for the novel’s palisades. Furthermore, similarly to the Thornfield scenes, the pets are here excluded, and it can be argued that the presence of a dog or cat would contribute to the domestic feeling around the hearth fire. However, in spite of the fact that the film only symbolizes Jane’s hardships by the use of cold, severe weather as well as light and sound effects, there is reason

to suggest that the scenes which depict Jane's migration from Thornfield correspond to Brontë's text.

The Influence of Music to Complement the Setting

A cinematic effect which is significant and particularly augmented in the section of Thornfield, is the incidental music or the film score of *Jane Eyre*. Both these terms refer to film and are part of the film's soundtrack, which comprises voices, music and other sound effects. In the novel, Brontë makes use of the setting as she portrays the characters: a warm and safe environment is used for characters that Jane can depend on; a cold and threatening environment is used for characters that the protagonist must defend herself against. A filmmaker can, in a similar manner to Brontë's description of the setting with fire and ice, use music in order to enhance the description of setting and characters. Jessica Green writes that when an audience is watching a film they firstly concentrate on "the very dynamic images that move onscreen" and "[t]he dialogue, as a form of diegetic sound, is probably the next piece of the film they concentrate on" (81). She points out, however, that the pictures in motion on the screen, together with the narrative, is only part of the experience because "people understand communication by both watching and listening" (81). Furthermore, Green refers to Christian Metz who states that film is "[b]orn of the fusion of several pre-existing forms of expression, which retain some of their own laws (image, speech, music, and noise)" (81). Green suggests that among these four generators of information, music is the most artistic but the least natural; resulting in that a great number of films contain nondiegetic music which does not convey any feeling or mood at all (81). Green continues by claiming that one of the film score's basic functions is to transmit the character's feelings to the viewers (82) and that music, compared to other generators of information, has the ability of conveying the thoughts of a character (83).

Just as Brontë uses fire and light or ice and obscurity to convey strong sentiments to the reader, Fukunaga uses classical music in order to describe Jane's mood at crucial moments. The director has been careful in his choice of background music and has excluded vocalists in favour of the violin which is the main medium of transmission for the scenes where Jane's feeling or mood needs to be enhanced audibly. The music of *Jane Eyre* does not only convey feelings but it also serves as an extension for the film's communication

with the audience and the way it perceives the setting: melodious and soothing in warm, calm environments; monotonous and hysterical for menacing and dark places.

In order to score *Jane Eyre*, Director Fukunaga worked together with composer Dario Marianelli who was nominated for an Oscar in 2006 for his original score for *Pride & Prejudice*, and in 2008 awarded an Oscar for his score for the British film *Atonement* (bonus 00:07). Fukunaga argues that Marianelli “has a really amazing talent for melody and creating melody that through the course of the film becomes synonymous with the emotional experience of the characters” (bonus 00:38). The director elaborates this statement by saying that Marianelli possesses a unique formula for romantic music as it is expressed unconventionally, providing a sound of Victorian Northern England folk music. He explains that the special sound which can be ascribed to *Jane Eyre* when the protagonist is frightened or upset is developed from a violin playing “non-vibrato” (bonus 01:12). Vibrato is a technique for string instruments and it means that the sound or music is developed from variations in the note’s pitch, i.e. variation in frequency. However, the non-vibrato or tremolo, is an effect which emerges through repetition of one tone or alternation of two tones. This results in a distinct difference in resonance, i.e. variation in volume of the note or sound (Hewitt 399). Thus, the effect of non-vibrato becomes evident only when the sound level is altered and not from alternating the pitch of the sound. Fukunaga explains that this subtle variation in loudness provides a “raw sort of jagged feel to it” when “various iterations” repeat the specific melody and this “amplifies the emotional experience” of the audience (bonus 01:30). This musical technique is particularly used by Fukunaga as an audible tool to convey Brontë’s depiction of Jane’s anger and her irrational thoughts after having confronted Bertha Mason in the attic: “I could not yet discern; but he himself, I doubted not would hurry me from Thornfield. Real affection it seemed, he could not have for me” (341). In the film, this scene becomes poignant through the assistance of the violin playing non-vibrato and it helps to enhance the effect of Brontë’s depiction of Jane’s interior monologue. It can be argued that the monologue is an approach to a stream of consciousness, which would later be established in literary criticism as a modernist narrative mode. With the music, the protagonist’s bewildered thoughts are revealed as she violently tears off her wedding dress.

Another example where the violin channels Jane’s state of mind is the scene where she wanders aimlessly in the wilderness away from Thornfield. Here, the violin serves to give a painful sense of desperation to Jane’s character as she struggles in the wailing storm, on the verge of mental and physical collapse (00:03:15). Furthermore, the scene and its music

make a strong impact because of cinematographer Goldman's excellent camera technique. As Jane approaches Marsh End, the camera presents a perspective from above; a point of view which hovers over Jane and gives the audience the opportunity to see both Jane and the fierce landscape which engulfs her. Then the camera perspective changes as St John Rivers comes to Jane's rescue; the camera shifts its point of view and focuses on Jane's perceptions again, and the interior environment of Marsh End pass quickly by as she is carried into the house. The camera even depicts Jane's lightheadedness and vertigo as the screen goes blank for a moment (00:03:58).

There are strong reasons to suggest that Marianelli's film music does replace and make amends for Brontë's detailed descriptions of Jane's feelings. These feelings range from happiness and exhilaration to melancholy and desperation. The incidental music must therefore really prove its worthiness if it is to succeed in conveying the emotions to the audience; as Fukunaga says, "[t]he violin in a way would be an expression of her soul" (bonus 01:33).

Conclusion

The business of cinema and television to a considerable extent resolves around adaptations of novels. Novels constitute a store of ideas and inspiration which never declines or ebbs away. This is because a certain novel can be made into a screen version for as long as there is an interest in the book. Since the way in which different readers perceive a literary text significantly differs, it can be understood that an adaptation is always an interpretation based upon choices made by the filmmaker. The director's choice of what to include and exclude from the source determines the features of the film and generates the audience's interest in seeing it.

A method to ascertain the standard of the director's interpretation and determine whether it can be regarded as trustworthy to the expectations of the author is to compare the textual setting with the cinematic setting. The author's tool is the written word, and Brontë uses it to perfection as she describes the settings of *Jane Eyre*; the reader receives vivid pictures in which the fictional characters propel the tale's narrative. Throughout the novel, Brontë presents the circumstances by using two particular human sensations which are

possessed at birth and can therefore be recognized by all readers, namely heat and cold. In the case of *Jane Eyre*, they can be referred to as fire and ice and their properties are much conveyed through the setting. By describing the setting in this way, the novel also depicts its characters, showing personality traits which are understood by the reader because the characters are described in circumstances marked either by heat or by cold. Accordingly, what film adaptors of *Jane Eyre* must evince to the audience, is their ability to reproduce Brontë's conveyance of feelings and characters through the setting. However, the filmmakers have to use cinematic tools in order to realize the textual source into the medium of film; arrangement of lighting and variation in music are examples of tools that influence the setting, and a film producer can use these tools in order to develop emotions in the audience in a similar way to that of Brontë's use of fire and ice.

When examining similarities and differences as well as faithfulness concerning the setting in the novel and the setting in the BBC – Focus Features film adaptation, there are two locations that may strike the audience because of their equivalence or nonequivalence to Brontë's text, namely Gateshead and Thornfield. It can be argued that the filmmakers have not worked as hard with the scenes of the former location as they have with the latter. There are two details that reveal this: firstly, the weather on the day of the filming at Gateshead was clear and sunny and this does not correspond to Brontë's dark, frightening mansion. Secondly, one of Gateshead's most poignant scenes, the Red-Room, is briefly depicted on the screen and it does not convey the strong feelings which it is supposed to do according to the novel. On the other hand, a location in the film that is distinctly similar to that of the text is Thornfield Hall. It corresponds to Brontë's description of the building: it is castle-like with battlements and Gothic arches; the hearth fire in its parlour is designed in accordance to the textual description, and Jane's escape to the cold fields add to the author's use of fire and ice. This is combined with excellent stage lighting and music that complements the setting in the conveyance of the story and its Gothic atmosphere.

Lowood and Marsh End are locations in the film that are not given much time on the screen. However, the settings and stage lighting of these locations correspond to Brontë's text and it can be suggested that these locations and their scenes are in conformity to the atmosphere of the novel.

To summarize, the difference between the novel and the BBC – Focus Features film adaptation from 2011 is significant. However, an adaptation is always an interpretation

based on choices which are essential for the making of a motion picture. Inevitably, the choices of what to include and exclude from a novel will influence on a film's setting, and it can therefore be concluded that the producers of this film version have been able to convey Brontë's classic novel *Jane Eyre*.

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