

Jane Eyre

Charlotte Bronte, 1847

Read the passage and answer the questions on the next page.

I hardly know whether I had slept or not; at any rate, I started wide awake on hearing a vague murmur, which sounded as though it was just above me. The night was drearily dark; my spirits were depressed. I sat up in bed, listening. The sound was hushed. I tried again to sleep; but my heart beat anxiously. The clock in the hall struck two.

Just then, it seemed my chamber-door was touched; as if fingers had swept the panels along the dark gallery outside.

“Who is there?” I said, but nothing answered. I was chilled with fear. All at once I remembered that it might be Pilot, who, when the kitchen-door was to be left open, sometimes found his way up to Mr. Rochester’s chamber: I had seen him lying there in the mornings. The idea calmed me somewhat, and I lay down. An unbroken hush now reigned again through the whole house, and I began to feel the return of slumber.

But it was not fated that I should sleep that night. A dream had scarcely approached my ear, when it fled affrighted, scared by a marrow-freezing incident enough.

This was a demoniac laugh—low, suppressed, and deep—uttered, as it seemed, at the very keyhole of my chamber door. The head of my bed was near the door, and I thought at first the goblin-laughers stood at my bedside—or rather, crouched by my pillow: but I rose, looked round, and could see nothing. As I still gazed, the unnatural sound was reiterated: and I knew it came from behind the panels. My first impulse was to rise and fasten the bolt; but again I cried out, “Who is there?”

Something gurgled and moaned. I heard steps retreat up the gallery towards the third-storey staircase: a door had lately been made to shut in that staircase; I heard it open and close, and all was still.

“Was that Grace Poole? Is she possessed with a devil?” thought I.

I could no longer remain by myself: I had to go to Mrs. Fairfax. I hurried on my frock and a shawl; I withdrew the bolt and opened the door with a trembling hand. There was a candle burning just outside, and on the matting in the gallery. I was surprised at this circumstance: but still more was I amazed to perceive the air filled with...



What do you think Jane sees in the air? Use information from the last paragraph to support your answer.

Now, write another paragraph to end the passage.

