**Bertha in Jane Eyre**

**Chapter 11** Bertha's laugh is described as "tragic . . . preternatural and mirthless"

**Chapter 12** Jane hears "eccentric murmurs" coming from the area

**Chapter 15** During the night, Jane hears "vague murmurs" that sound "lugubrious"; also

Hears "demonic laugh" and "goblin-laughter" that sounds "unnatural";

something "gurgled" and "moaned" outside her door

**Chapter 20** When Jane goes into the room on the 3rd floor she hears "a snarling, snatching sound almost like a dog quarrelling" and a "goblin ha! ha!"; J wonders "what creature was it, that masked in an ordinary woman's face (she thinks it's Grace) and shape uttered the voice, now of a mocking demon, and anon of a carrion seeking bird of prey?" Bertha bites Mason and "worry[s him] like a tigress"; B is quiet at first; R warns Mason that he "should have been on [his] guard"; "She sucked the blood she said she'd drain [his] heart"; R tells Mason to go home and think of her as dead; Mason wants R to "let her be taken care of . . . treat[ed] tenderly"; R refers metaphorically to Bertha's abode as a "wolf's den"; R describes Thornfield to Jane as a house whose "gilding is slime and . . . silk draperies cobwebs; that the marble is sordid slate, and the polished woods mere refuse chips and scaly bark";

**Chapter 25** Bertha comes into Jane's room described as "a form" that makes Jane's "blood [creep] cold"; Bertha is "a woman tall and large, with thick and dark hair hanging long down her back" and while Jane is not sure what she is wearing, she speculates that it could be, among other things, a "shroud": after Bertha puts on the veil and looks at herself in the mirror, Jane says that her features were "fearful and ghastly," and that B had a "discoloured . . . (and) . . . savage" face with "red eyes . . . (and) . . . fearful blackened inflation of the lineaments"; she is "purple . . . with lips [that] were swelled and dark; the brow furrowed, the black eyebrows widely raised over the bloodshot eyes": Jane
tells Rochester that Bertha reminded her of "the foul German spectre – the vampire"; before she leaves, Bertha looks at Jane with "fiery eyes" that glare and thrust her candle into J's face and blows it out; Jane "was aware her lurid visage flamed over" her before she passes out

Chapter 26

Rochester tells the wedding party about his past: she is my wife, whom I married fifteen years ago,—"Bertha Mason by name; Bertha Mason is mad; and she came of a mad family; idiots and maniacs through three generations? Her mother, the Creole, was both a madwoman and a drunkard!—as I found out after I had wed the daughter: for they were silent on family secrets before. Bertha, like a dutiful child, copied her parent in both points. I had a charming partner—pure, wise, modest: you can fancy I was a happy man. I went through rich scenes! Oh! my experience has been heavenly, if you only knew it!"; Description of Bertha: "In the deep shade, at the farther end of the room, a figure ran backwards and forwards. What it was, whether beast or human being, one could not, at first sight, tell: it grovelled, seemingly, on all fours; it snatched and growled like some strange wild animal: but it was covered with clothing, and a quantity of dark, grizzled hair, wild as a mane, hid its head and face."; Jane comments that "The maniac bellowed: she parted her shaggy locks from her visage, and gazed wildly at her visitors. I recognised well that purple face,—those bloated features."; When Bertha attack R, Bronte describes that "the lunatic sprang and grappled his throat viciously, and laid her teeth to his cheek: they struggled. She was a big woman, in stature almost equaling her husband, and corpulent besides: she showed virile force in the contest—more than once she almost throttled him, athletic as he was. He could have settled her with a well-planted blow; but he would not strike: he would only wrestle. At last he mastered her arms; Grace Poole gave him a cord, and he pinioned them behind her: with more rope, which was at hand, he bound her to a chair."
Chapter 27  Rochester has some sympathy for Bertha – he tells Jane he kept her at Thornfield because Ferndean would have been too dank and might have killed her. Jane chastises R's description of Bertha: "You are inexorable for that unfortunate lady: you speak of her with hate – with vindictive antipathy. It is cruel – she cannot help being mad."

Chapter 36  Description of Thornfield burning: (Rochester) went up to the attics when all was burning above and below, and got the servants out of their beds and helped them down himself, and went back to get his mad wife out of her cell. And then they called out to him that she was on the roof, where she was standing, waving her arms, above the battlements, and shouting out till they could hear her a mile off: I saw her and heard her with my own eyes. She was a big woman, and had long black hair: we could see it streaming against the flames as she stood. I witnessed, and several more witnessed, Mr. Rochester ascend through the skylight on to the roof; we heard him call 'Bertha!' We saw him approach her; and then, ma'am, she yelled and gave a spring, and the next minute she lay smashed on the pavement."

"Dead?"

"Dead! Ay, dead as the stones on which her brains and blood were scattered."

"Good God!'