



Extra training

Reading Task 352

Read the text and mark the statements

True (1),

False (2),

Not Stated (3).

1. John bullied Jane occasionally.
2. Mrs. Reed chose to ignore John's bad treatment of Jane.
3. John usually bullied Jane when Mrs. Reed wasn't looking.
4. John was angry because Jane had a book that he wanted to read.
5. The book that John threw at Jane hit her on the head.
6. Jane compares John to a Roman emperor.
7. Mrs. Reed came into the room after she heard John's shouts.
8. Jane was blamed for the incident,



John had not much affection for his mother and sisters, and a strong dislike for me. He bullied and punished me; not two or three times in the week, nor once or twice in the day, but continually: every nerve I had feared him, and every morsel¹ of flesh in my bones shrank when he came near. There were moments when I was bewildered by the terror he made me feel, because I was helpless to do anything about his threats or his inflictions: the servants did not like to offend their young master by taking my side against him, and Mrs. Reed was blind and deaf on the subject: she never saw him strike or heard him abuse me. though he did both now and then in her very presence, more frequently, however, behind her back.

Habitually obedient to John, I came up to his chair: he spent some three minutes in thrusting out his tongue at me as far as he could, without damaging the roots: I knew he would soon strike, and while dreading the blow, I thought about the disgusting and ugly appearance of him who would shortly deal it, I wonder if he read that idea in my face; for, all at once, without speaking, he struck suddenly and strongly. I tottered, and on regaining my balance moved back a step or two from his chair.

"That is for your impudence² in answering mama a while ago." said he, "and for your sneaking way of getting behind curtains, and for the look you had in your eyes two minutes ago, you rat!"

Accustomed to John Reed's abuse, I never thought of replying to it. My worry was how to endure the blow which would certainly follow the insult.

"What were you doing behind the curtain?" he asked.

"I was reading."

"Show the book."

I returned to the window and fetched it.

"You have no right to take our books. You are a dependant, mama says. You have no money. Your father left you none. You ought to beg, and not to live here with gentlemen's children like us, and eat the same meals we do, and wear clothes at our mama's expense. Now, I'll teach you to rummage through my bookshelves: for they ARE mine; all the house belongs to me, or will do in a few years. Go and stand by the door, out of the way of the mirror and the windows."

I did so, not at first aware of his intentions, but when I saw him lift the book and get ready to hurl it, I instinctively moved aside with a cry of alarm; not soon enough, however; the volume was flung, it hit me, and I fell, striking my head against the door and cutting it. The cut bled, the pain was sharp. My terror had passed its climax, other feelings took over.

"Wicked and cruel boy!" I said, "You are like a murderer - you are like a slave-driver - you are like the Roman emperors!"

I had read Goldsmith's History of Rome, and had formed my opinion of Nero, Caligula etc. Also I had drawn parallels in silence, which until now I had never thought! to declare aloud.

"What! what!", he cried. "Did she say that to me? Did you hear her, Eliza and Georgiana? I'll tell mama! but first..."

He ran headlong at me: I felt him grasp my hair and my shoulder. I really saw in him a tyrant, a murderer. I felt a drop or two of blood from my head trickle down my neck, and was aware of deep suffering: these sensations for the time predominated over fear. I don't very well know what I did with my hands, but he called me "Rat! Rat!", and bellowed out aloud. Help was near him: Eliza and Georgiana had run for Mrs. Reed, who was upstairs: she now came upon the scene, followed by Bessie and her maid Abbot, We were parted: I heard the words: "Dear! Dear! How disgraceful to fly at Master John!" "Did ever anybody see such a picture of passion?" Then Mrs. Reed said:

"Take her away to the Red-room, and lock tier in there." Four hands were immediately laid upon me, and I was taken upstairs.

¹ very small piece

² rudeness, disrespect