

How? I have lived a full life here. I have not been trampled on, I have not been petrified. I have not been excluded from every glimpse of what is bright. I have known you, Mr. Rochester, and it strikes me with anguish to be torn from you.

Have I become nothing to you? Am I a machine without feelings? Do you think that because I am poor, obscure, plain, and little that I am soulless and heartless? I have as much soul as you and full as much heart. And if God had blessed me with beauty and wealth, it could make it as hard for you to leave me as it is for I to leave you. I'm not speaking to you through mortal flesh; it is my spirit that addresses your spirit, as if we'd passed through the grave and stood at God's feet equal - as we are.

I am a free human being with an independent will which I now exert to leave you.