

A Critical Analysis of 'The Yellow Wallpaper'

"The Yellow Wallpaper" written by Charlotte Perkins Gilman is a short story filled with horror set in a gothic backdrop and it brings out a deeper meaning than its performance.

The story is written from the first-person point of view and thus the narrator of the story is the main character of the story and she is a woman. The story begins when she talks about her illness and the reactions of her brother and her husband towards it. She feels that she has something inside her body but her brother and her husband believe that there is nothing to worry as she thinks and she just needs some rest to cure it. Therefore, she has to keep her mouth shut because both of them are physicians and moreover they are men. But personally, she does not agree with them.

"You see, he does not believe I am sick!"

"My brother is also a physician, and also of high standing, and he says the same thing."

"Personally, I disagree with them."

She moves into an old house thinking that it would be a break from her routine life and she was looking forward to relax and be at peace. However, when she stepped into the house she felt uneasy as if it was haunted. But her husband laughs at her for being superstitious. Even when choosing the bedrooms in the house, John, her husband chooses the attic as their bedroom against her wishes.

"I even said so to John one moonlit evening, but he said what I felt was a DRAUGHT, and asked me to shut the window."

"So we took the nursery at the top of the house."

The room is large and covered by yellow papers and it seems to be annoying her. However, as days pass by, she gets used to the room and spends the whole day in the room. Most of the time, John is away in the town attending to his patients and all the household chores are attended to by John's sister, Jennie. As she has nothing to do, she felt trapped in the bedroom. Gradually, she starts suffering from claustrophobia, fear of being enclosed in a small closed place. She begins to imagine that there is a woman trapped in between the yellow wallpapers and the wall and she is unable to come out. Hence, she begins to peel off the wallpapers down to rescue her.

The climax is reached when she and her husband are about to leave their home. On the night before, when John is out of the house, she locks herself in the room and peels the wallpapers off, overcome by her fear. She imagines that she is trying to rescue the woman trapped in between the wallpapers and the wall. Having returned home, John finds his wife locked in the room. He breaks open the door and when he sees his wife peeling off the wallpapers in frenzy, he faints and she creeps over him regardless of his state.

Though the plot of the story brings out a gothic horror episode, the theme of the story has a deeper meaning. One of the main themes of the story is the subordination of women in marriage as illustrated by the story. The fate of woman in marriage leaves her no option, but to be at the mercy of her