The Yellow Wallpaper Story (Critical Essay)

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There are many stories in English literature that speak volumes. These stories convey the message about some big issue in a very subtle and meaningful way. One of such stories is "The Yellow Wallpaper." The Yellow Wallpaper is a short story penned down by American Author Charlotte Perkins Gilman. It was first published in January 1892 in The New England Magazine. The story revolves around a woman who is suffering from depression after the loss of her baby. Both the lady and her husband John, move to a countryside house where the main lead of the story remain alone all day, and her husband, a respected physician, carries on his job. The lady discusses the issue with her husband, who stops her from writing her thoughts (Gilman). Writing is her only getaway, but she acts according to her husband's advice. She finally keeps locking herself in her room which has yellow wallpaper. She keeps staring at the wallpaper until she realizes there is a lady trapped inside the wallpaper, who wants to get out. The depressed lady sees herself in the lady in the wallpaper and keeps scratching its A time comes when all the wallpaper has been scratched, and she becomes completely insane.

The short story, “The Yellow Wallpaper” is a piece of fiction that revolves around transcendentalism. Transcendentalism is a concept that lays emphasis mainly on a person’s imaginative abilities and intuition. According to many transcended is a place where knowledge is free of bias and is available in its mores purest form. It is a state where messages are shared much deeper than thought. In this story, “The Yellow Wallpaper”, there are many concepts or beliefs that are based upon the domesticity, femininity, tradition, marriage and social image.

The tale also elaborates the insensitivity and the carelessness of the society in general towards a very sensitive issue, especially Jane’s husband. Jane is shown to be suffering from a serious case of depression after losing her child. She is a person who wants to be heard desperately; she yearns to be taken seriously. John, the only person close to her, as her life partner, should take her seriously, but he never listens to her and takes her very casually. This thing hurts her a lot and adds to her depression. Her husband treats her as her property and as a second class citizen. He thought that her wife has been imagining things and writing is adding to her insanity.

Another thinks that the main lead of the story, Jane, is yearning throughout the story is mental independence. She is yearning to be heard and express her creativity in the form of writing but with the help, advice, and companionship of her husband. She wants respect and honor from her husband, which is completely missing in their relationship. All her demands, her pleas to visit her friends, her demands to go for shopping all went unheard. Even her husband did not let her sit outside the house. All this adds to her condition of mental stress and depression and she draws closer to insanity. In fact Jane and John both are living a life that has been designed for them by the society; the husband works outside and the wife stays home. They have been trying to uphold their marriage for the sake of society. This has greatly tarnished their souls especially the wives as the husband gets a chance to go outside and have a social life but the wife even does not get any such opportunity. It has also resulted in the loss of thought and authenticity and the cosmic unity between them has lots.

**References**

Gilman, C. P. (1999). *The yellow wallpaper* (p. 328). Project Gutenberg.