





room with it for long, more so with changes in light (Gilman 34). She becomes intrigued by the designs and the pattern on the wallpaper. Her mind is so fixated on it that she starts to see a woman on all fours creeping behind the pattern (Gilman 44). She thought the woman was stuck in the wallpaper and had to strip the paper off the wall to free the woman. In essence, she believed she was freeing herself from the bondage of her husband's ideas about her illness, and the traditions that forbid women from expressing themselves. Her description of the painting is reminiscent of what she feels about her marriage and the situation she finds herself in, and the millions of women around the world at the time.

The narrator does not like how her husband treats her and dismisses her thoughts and ideas (Gilman 2). John's actions toward her, while driven by the best intentions, make her feel fragile and weak, and it angers her. It makes her depression escalate into mental illness. The narrator expresses her thoughts privately in her journals and hides them from John. She also hides what she feels about the wallpaper from John and Jennie, as they do not allow her to do anything (Gilman 33). She felt that she needed to work as opposed to being submitted to bed-rest. She wanted to engage with society as opposed to being isolated, and she wanted to be more than a patient and a wife, but John dismissed those ideas as irrational, being her doctor and husband.

The narrator slips into insanity in the end, a personal cost she had to pay for 'standing up' against male domination. She did not want to be controlled by anyone, and made it clear when John found her ripping the paper from the wall. He fainted and she crawled over him, an act depicting her rise over her husband and doctor. However, the victory she achieves is at the expense of sanity.

Works Cited

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