

Compare and
contrast the two
stories 'farthing
house' and 'the red
room' essay sa...



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There is a large contrast regarding context between the two short stories. A reason for this is due to the different eras in which they were written. 'Red Room' was written back in the Victorian times around the late Nineteenth Century, whereas 'Farthing House' is set around the late Twentieth Century. This would certainly play a big part in the contrast. In the late Nineteenth Century, it wouldn't have really been the slightest possibility that a woman would be narrating because women had very little respect and were seen as just being a housewife who looked after the children. However as the years passed, women started to gain more rights, e. g. the right to vote the right to stand as an MP. So by the time 'Farthing House' was written, as in the late Twentieth Century, it wasn't seen as so wrong to have a woman narrator a story.

This can explain the largest difference in context, but not fully. Back in the Nineteenth Century when 'Red Room' was set superstition and being supernatural was commonly known and highly believed in. Which had resulted in the people of that time being much more spectacle, and so if 'Red Room' had been narrated by a woman, it may come over to people as either different or offensive as this wasn't a role of a woman. Back in the times when 'Red Room' was set, there wouldn't have been all the technology that we have today, and so the voice of woman wouldn't have ever been heard. People would have just been looking up to the men as they were looked at as being the most intelligent and the ones in charge.

The main contrast between the narrator in 'Red Room' and the narrator in 'Farthing House' is that they are of different sexes. As mentioned above, the rights and respect for women between the times both stories were written

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had developed much more. The world had come much further on than considering men were better than women.

The man in 'Red Room' started out very confident and strong. He was determined to be brave. But this description of the man doesn't always remain the same throughout the story. However, this is not entirely the case in 'Farthing House'. The female narrator at the very start of the story starts as a very spectacle and an on edge character. This then mostly continues throughout the story. The woman is usually acting suspicious of her surroundings and what is happening. In 'Red Room' the narrator comes over as young in his mid-twenties. It is because of his confidence and attitude. However in 'Farthing House', the female narrator comes over as a middle aged woman as she seems a lot more nervous and very on edge.

In 'Red Room' the man totally doesn't believe in ghosts and isn't frightened at all. Whereas the woman in 'Farthing House' is very sceptical and isn't really sure of what is happening. She is very on edge at most times throughout the story. In 'Red Room' the Ghost that the young man meets is never really known to be a Ghost of the dead, but in Farthing House, near the end we find out that the Ghost is of a young baby who had died at Farthing House'.

The two characters tension levels are different throughout both short stories. The man in 'Red Room' is gradually rising in terms of tension. Because one minute he is fine and brave, but can then all of a sudden turn in to a shivering nervous wreck. The man is very confident at most times, feeling that there couldn't possibly be a ghost, but if there is a ghost he wants to

meet it, which leaves the reader very confused to what he is thinking.

Whereas the woman in 'Farthing House' is very ignorant, but anxious. She is very sceptical about the ghost and Farthing House altogether.

The story 'Farthing House' is set out in the countryside, it is very isolated to the real world mentally and surrounded by an ancient graveyard that adds to the theme of Ghosts to the story. The house is away from civilisation and occupied by old aged pensioners. The *Dik* in Farthing House is light, bright and homely and is described as if a party is a happening! Whereas 'Red Room' is set, deserted away from human life physically. The *Dik* in 'Red Room' is very dark and droopy, and this dramatically makes the atmosphere more frightening and uneasy.

Tension in both plays is tracked by the author(s) very differently. In 'Red Room' there is one gradual, continuous rate of tension growing, and at no point really does the young man start to feel any better. Whereas in 'Farthing House' the woman's tension rate is all over. At points in the story she is fine and confident, but not long after feeling petrified and insecure! This is probably because at some point in the story, the woman is just relaxing and enjoying herself, and there is no real tension present at such times. But then at other times, she may awake feeling as if someone who is not viable has woken her and sometimes as if she can feel that someone or something is present.

I personally felt that 'Farthing House' was much better than 'Red Room'. I think Farthing House is much more understandable than Red Room. With Red Room the whole story is weird, and very complicated. Farthing House

also had more of a frightening feel to it, whereas Red Room was more like ET, as it isn't really what a ghost story is all about, there meant to be scary, and Red Room wasn't. I also like Farthing House more than Red Room because I think that the story was much more believable and slightly realistic as it isn't too far over the top like in Red Room. In Farthing House, I like the way the narrators tension levels are always changing, as you never know what is going to happen next.

I find that the feelings that the narrator of Red Room has are very confusing, as he seems to feel all these different things within a very small space of time. I also find that the end of the story is completely ridiculous and unnecessary. I am talking about the part where the ' Alien Ghost thing' appears to the male narrator and starts helping him, as they seem to have hurt him. It is totally weird, not scary and quite complicated to understand.

I much prefer Farthing House as it is a interesting, easy and more recently set story. It isn't as scary as what I would interpret ghost stories to be, but it is more of a ghost story than Red Room. Therefore as I conclude, I can say that Farthing House is much more effective as its story as a whole is much more ' Ghost Story' like as I have previously mentioned.