

Canary as a symbol of sisterhood in trifles: a play in one act by susan glaspell

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The paper "Canary as a Symbol of Sisterhood in Trifles: a Play in One Act by Susan Glaspell" is a perfect example of a book report on literature. In the play entitled Trifles, the women characters have a better understanding of events that men because they can read the symbolic meanings of the apparently insignificant objects that they see. The discovery of an empty and broken birdcage leads Mrs. Hale to remark "Looks as if someone must have been rough with it" (p. 15, line 4), and they immediately sense its value to a woman. The canary that once lived there must have been a source of joy and music in an otherwise harsh way of life.

The missing canary is likened to Minnie Wright: "come to think of it, she was kind of like a bird herself - really sweet and pretty, but kind of timid and fluttery. How—she - did - change." (page 22, line 8) This comment by Mrs. Hale creates a bond of sympathy between Minnie and the two visiting women because they all see how she was imprisoned in this homely little kitchen like a bird in a cage. When the bird is found dead, the women put two and two together, and realize that Mr. Wright must have killed it.

The canary, just like Mrs. Peters' childhood kitten, was symbolic of Minnie's womanly nature, and its death evidence of the way this was snuffed out by her violent husband. Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale conceal the evidence of the bird's broken body, and in so doing protect Minnie from facing certain imprisonment and death as a murderess. The canary, therefore, symbolizes the sisterhood of the three women. They identify with its suffering and take the murder to be a fitting response to its death, thus cementing a bond of sisterhood with Minnie Wright, in spite of the likelihood that was she who murdered her husband.