

Gothicism empowers
one the inner reality
to overcome the
reality



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“ The Yellow Wall-Paper” by Charlotte Perkins Gilman and “ The Rocking-Horse Winner” by D. H. Lawrence are two famous examples Gothic literature. Gothic literature can be making statements about notions of women’s suppressed sexuality, male-dominated culture and gender roles. The characterizations of Gothic literature are mystery, horror, and the supernatural. In “ The Yellow Wall-Paper” the Gothic elements of horror and the supernatural are used to illustrate the narrator development.

The particular Hidden woman in the “ The yellow wallpaper” is a medium where supernatural is displayed and the narrator establishes her inner reality via the yellow wall-paper which empowers her to confront her husband. In “ The Rocking-Horse Winner” this rocking horse is a medium to display the supernatural. The narrator gains Gothic supernatural through his mystery rocking horse and had an opportunity to change the reality that his mother has no love for him and wants nothing but money. The narrator in “ The yellow wallpaper” has no power in reality.

Because of her postpartum depression, the narrator has to experience the rest cure; because of the patriarchal society, the narrator is restricted by her husband; and because of her self-awareness, she always fights with herself which drives her to approach a balance and creates a mirror reflection-The Hidden women. The famous rest cure was invented by Dr. Silas Weir Mitchell in 1887, a typical treatment for women’s depression in that era. This rest cure is described by Wagner Martin, she states: “ the rest cure depended upon seclusion, massage, immobility, and overfeeding; it had at its root complete mental inactivity” (Martin 982).

In the story, the narrator is forbidden to go out, read, and write. In other words, this treatment locks the narrator in an ideological prison. It is able to gradually infantilize and idiotize her mind. However, the narrator wants to write; she thinks it will help with her mentally situation. She says: " I think it would relieve the press of ideas and rest me" (Gilman 14). The rest cure was used universally towards women at 19th century, and a certain social convention could be responsible for this trend. Women's status was pretty low and men were in charge of everything in a marriage.

She reveals her bitterness and anger which concealed beneath the text in the story. The narrator says: " John laughs at me, of course, but one expects that in marriage. (Gilman 10)" Greene claims: " The narrator in the story too found her freedom and happiness compromised by her marriage. (Greene 1)" At the beginning of the story, the narrator keeps repeating " but what is one to do. (Gilman 10)" to emphasize that there is no power in her. In 18th century, there was definitely no power in women, because that was a male-dominated society and men controlled everything.

Adam Leed, in his essay " In control," states: " the narrator is forced to stay in a room she is uncomfortable with. (Leed 1)" Furthermore, " John attempts to control her inner life, her writing. (Leed 1) " The narrator says that: " he hates to have me write a word. (Gilman 13)" This kind of control contributes to the narrator's rebellion, which directly creates a reflection-the Hidden woman, to fight for her. The narrator wants to express her anger at both inequality in marriage and the pain she suffered in the male-dominated society; therefore, Gothic elements are used to assist the process.

In "The Yellow Wall-Paper", Gothic literature gives the narrator supernatural power via a particular medium-the Hidden woman, which produces an inner faith for the narrator that overcomes the reality which is the male controlled relationship with John and the Hidden woman, appears as a horror character; however, she is virtually the hero. Delamotte appraises: "A set of interrelated issues: self-defense; the encounter with a Hidden Women; speech and silence; the misprizing of heroine; the horrors of repetition; and the problem of freedom. Delamotte 3)" There interrelated issues are entirely embodied by Gothic.

Prior to exposing the power of Gothic supernatural, Gothic elements are utilized to romanticize the story. The isolated house, former nursery and the desolate landscape perfectly sketch a Gothic frame which speaks for the narrator's helplessness. Gilman writes: "A colonial mansion, a hereditary estate, I would say haunted house, and reach the height of romantic felicity (Gilman 10)." It is argued by Dellamote: "This gothic talk of house was really a description for women's suffering (Dellamote 4).

Since the start of the story, Gothic empowers the narrator to direct the reader to her inner reality to feel what she feels. "I can see a strange, provoking, formless sort of figure that seems to skulk about behind that silly and conspicuous front design. (Gilman 14)" One can sense some sorts of alternatives are coming and it is strange, provoking and formless-the narrator's rebellion. This rebellion is not yet formed maturely, but it is about to come. One ought suspects; horror cannot bring hopeful rebellion.

However, as Dellamote explains: “ Gothic convention—the daylight is apprehended as nightmare. ” In Gothic literature its reverse from reality characters that appear villainous are actually the heroes. The frightened figure ought to apprehend as hero—a reflection of herself. Gothicism creates this inner mystery illustration inside the narrator’s own world to against the real world. Therefore, there must be a villain that the narrator is against. The narrator’s rebellious motive was engendered by her husband John who represents the authority in that patriarchy society and the villain in this story.

Lanser claims that: “ The phrase “ John says” heads a litany of “ benevolent” prescriptions that keep the narrator infantilized, immobilized, and bored literally out of her mind. (Lanser 419)” John, the husband, seems like the less Gothic in this story is a vital element of it, though he first appears as a high-standing physician, a hero who suppose to save the narrator from her mental disorder. The expression John has unfolded towards the narrator’s anxious state of mind was manipulative.

Gilman writes: “ he is very careful and loving, and hardly lets me stir without special direction. (Gilman 11). ” Here is a verbal irony, with indifferent tone, exposes the power John controls to restrict her emotional fluctuation. A description of John’s expression towards the narrator’s request to go out, Gilman writes: “ but he said I wasn’t able to go, nor able to stand it after I got there; he said I was his darling and his comfort and all he had, and that I must take care of myself for his sake, and keep well. (Gilman 16).

John seems like a hero to the nervous weak narrator, however, Lanser indicates that: " the patriarchy controlling her " for her own good" has become an American feminist classic (Lanser 415). " John starts to be painted with the Gothic romance because: " whatever suspicion they may have in women's Gothic the villain is really the hero is balanced by an important complementary suspicion: the hero is really the villain. (Delamotte 6). " After the narrator starts to feel uncomfortable with John, the Hidden woman exists completely, the narrator says: " I am quite sure it is a woman(Gilman 18).

The Hidden woman represents the narrator herself who ultimately overcome her husband and simultaneously the male-dominated society. At first, Gothic supernatural creates a Hidden Woman which represents that the villain is really the hero. The Hidden Women is established by the narrator in her inmost world, who first appears to be a queer creepy woman who trapped in the yellow wall paper and hardly related to a hero. Whereas " The narrator's discovery of the Hidden Women is in one case an encounter with women's oppression—their confinement as wives, mothers, and daughters (Delamotte 5).

She starts to realize that the Hidden woman is her own reflection, and this reverberation is derived by multiple pressures: oppression, struggle self-awareness, and deep desire-the desire to escape from the reality. She says: " the fact is i am getting a little afraid of John (Gilman 18). " Her attitude is altered from feel loved to afraid which symbolizes that she is able and tries to express her virtual feelings. They are mixed feelings: frightened,

rebellious, and provoking. However, now she is encouraged by the Gothic supernatural and bold enough to protest.

Delamotte proposes the Gothic supernatural: " It is a wish, in essence, to empower herself. What she wishes for is an escape, through fantasy into a symbolic version in which she has a measure of distance and control (Delamotte 6). " In the end of the story, the narrator says: " I've got out at last (Gilman 23). " The narrator uses the Gothic supernatural power and reaches an inner reality. She acquires the control and power, ultimately releases herself from that male-dominated society.

In addition to " The yellow wallpaper", there is another story " The rocking horse winner" which uses the Gothic supernatural to empower the main character Paul. Paul is a boy who desperately desires his mother Hester's love. However, Lawrence describes the mother: " Only she herself knew that at the centre of her heart was a hard little place that could not feel love, no not for anybody (Lawrence 53). " The reason for this particular attitude toward Paul is: " Neither the toys nor social position give real satisfaction nor the parents are condemned to ever more frantic and meaningless repetition (Martin 65).

Martin argues that the reality to Paul is that his mother will never love him. Hester says to Paul: " It's what causes you to have money. If you're lucky you have money. " Since then, Paul starts to seek luck in order to have money. He finds out that his rocking horse has the power taking him to " another place", gives him the winner of the horse race and gain money from it. Paul says: " sometimes I'm absolutely sure, and sometimes I have an idea.

(Lawrence 59). " This is the power that the rocking horse gives to him. On the other word, the rocking horse is a use of Gothic lement which empowers Paul.

However, Martin argues that: " the rocking-horse is seven times referred to simply as the " horse" and this unobtrusively establishes an ironic tension between real life and the un-living imagination. (Martin 65). " The rocking horse is an un-living imagination which is created by Paul based on his desire to fulfill her mother and gain her love. He dies at the end of the story.

However, it is virtually a relief that he escapes from the situation. Lawrence describes it: " he's best gone out of a life where he rides his rocking-horse to find a winner. Lawrence 65). "

Paul gains chance to win his mother's love from the Gothic rocking horse, at the end he rides this certain horse to a peaceful heaven where full of love. The narrators in " The rocking horse winner" and " The yellow wallpaper" are empowered by the Gothic superpower which let them have a great chance to overcome the reality which is able to destroy them. Both their emotions: anger, lonely, empty, desperate, and rebellious are contribute to their imagination of redemption. Gothic power thrives their ability and eventually made them conquer their own reality.