

Journal Response "The Yellow Wallpaper"

I sit here alone, in my room, staring at this enormous painting that my husband and I had received for a wedding gift. Snow peaked mountains glistening in the sunset of another new days beginning. The river in the painting is clean and clear and you can see the jagged rocks underneath. You can practically hear the water washing over them. It is a peaceful sound. It is surrounded by many of weeping willow trees that align it on either side. The trees can see their reflection in the streaming water as they hang low enough to the ground as if they were playing tag with it. Flowers of many colors are growing everywhere and its like you can smell the distinct odor of their sweet perfume. The birds are flying high with their wings spread and their chests out, calling to their mates as they're searching for food for their young. The timid little rabbits, which look like velvet, are gracefully hopping through the tall pampas grass like a ballerina on stage giving her utmost finest performance. This painting hangs stately over our marital bed. A bed, which was the sign of happier times. We couldn't ever wait to get into it and we had to pry ourselves to get out of it. We shared our most sensual, sexual moments together in that bed whispering sweet nothings in each other's ear. Often we'd look up and stare at that painting and talk about how some day we would love to build new home and raise a family in those serene surroundings. But my life now is anything but serene. It is a down and outright nightmare.

Who would have ever thought that my marriage could end up in such a turmoil? There are no more kind words, no more kisses and no more love. Just pure hatred for the man that I had married. Life was pleasant before his insobriety had taken over his life. He can't control his urges. It's controlling him to no end, and now he is in control of me. He makes me wait for him here with no one to turn to. I am all alone and lonely at the same time. He rips the phone chord out of the wall and locks me into the house. He even managed to sell the car that I had bought when I was in high school. An old VW beetle that I truly loved. How I remember driving to the coast with all my friends with the sunroof open feeling the wind rushing through our hair. Perfectly exhilarating. Now, he had me more under his thumb. He arrives home every night at about seven and awaits his dinner. I must be quick on my toes or else sustain a beating from him. Every beating seems to be worse than the one before. Will I live through this one? I try to fight him off, but it's of no use to me anymore. My arms are limp and heavy like those: willow trees in the painting. I can't lift them anymore. I have gone into an underground of a spiritual suicide.

No more loving thoughts or sweet kisses. I shall be his whore and do as he pleases if I want to keep a roof over my head or even better if I want to live. He reminds me of this everyday. He doesn't even call me by my pet name anymore like he used to, or by my real name as a matter of fact. I don't even know my real name anymore or what I'm doing here. So many times he has tried to kill me. I remember one night he put the pillow over my face while I was sleeping to try to suffocate me. How ironic it was that at that moment I was dreaming I was drowning in the river and fighting with all my might to stay afloat. When I awoke I realized I was really fighting for my life. Then he stopped

after I gave him a good struggle. He just looked at me and laughed in my face. What about the time he held a gun to my head and kept taunting me by caulking the trigger back and forth. He would go on and on and in my mind I could see the barrel of the gun rotating not knowing if this would be the fatal click. If that wasn't enough, he then raped me against my will. I could smell the rancid odor of whiskey on his breath and his clothes. He seemed rather amused that I was pleading for my life. Little does he know that, that last rape had caused me to become pregnant. How I wanted to just rip open my belly and tear the evil out that is growing inside of me. I must try to be strong. How I hate that child, no how I love that child, no I don't know I'm in such turmoil. How I wish I could just tell someone to come and get me out of this place. Why is God punishing me so? Is it because I often missed mass on Sundays? My mother always told me, "One of these days, God is going to catch up with you". At the time I wasn't really sure of what she meant, but I think God finally caught me or was it the devil himself.

I now plead for my life everyday, not only to him but to my husband too. He mocks me and tells me I'm a fat, not good for nothing, bitch, and I should be lucky that someone like him would have me. Can't he see what he is doing? Is he so self-absorbed in his own satisfaction that he is blinded by it. I get weaker and weaker by the day. I'm losing my strength to fight him anymore. How quick it would be just to put a gun to my head and pull the trigger. I would be out of my misery and perhaps in a beautiful place like in the painting. My eyes are tired from crying so. They have no more tears to shed. It is if I'm starting to get immune to the battery. I get up slowly and walk to the mirror that hangs over my dresser, which my dear, sweet grandmother had willed to me. I stand there for a moment and ponder at myself. I barely made it, taking only one step at a time because my body aches and I think my foot is sprained from the night before when my husband shoved me off our stairs on our front porch. My neighbors were standing there and watching all this with disbelief, but nobody came to my aide. Nobody. Why do they let me suffer so?

I then couldn't help but to think that my husband had every right to be angry with me. After all, his dinner was late by ten minutes. I should have known better. How right my husband was about me. I was fat and ugly and nobody would give me a second look with my eye puffy and protruding and the color of a deep purple. My whole body seems to have purple marks on it. You can practically take a marker and play connects the dots on it. How I used to love to draw those mysterious pictures and see what surprise developed. And to say the least, purple was my favorite color. But not anymore. It hasn't been for a long time.

I feel like we're playing a game of cat and mouse every night. I know now, how a mouse feels when shadowed by death as it's being chased. I am that meek little mouse, always scurrying, always trying to please my husband or end up suffering the ramifications. I try to scrounge up an object that may be construed as food. All the time unknowingly entering the wrath of danger of the huge tomcat that lurks about. Suddenly, out of the corner of my eye, I see him, sitting in the corner with that leering look. The games have begun. I try to run and hide but my little legs won't go, they're frozen with fear. I can't move. I want it to be over. Why is he just sitting there licking his paw with

such great satisfaction? At this moment I think, no, I know I would rather be caught in that deadly mousetrap which I've managed to avoid all these times. It would just snap my neck in two quickly and painlessly. That seems to be more painless than the pounce of that feline who is now slowly creeping toward me with his insatiable appetite. He pounces with his big furry paws, which he uses to manipulate my body with. In that moment I recall the awful stench of that matted fur. Yet that grin on his smug face is that of the Cheshire cat. With its feeling of satisfaction, it turns and strolls away waiting for the next time. It will be better tomorrow. I hope. After all, he can't help it. It's not his fault. It's my fault. All my fault. I have no one to blame, except for myself. How I wish I could just transcend my body into that painting. How safe and beautiful life would be there. This must be what heaven is like? Maybe some day. Maybe soon and forever. This is the only way for me, us, to be free. God will understand. He will forgive me.