



## The Yellow Wallpaper

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (1860 - 1935)

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Read by:	ashleigh jane	Format:	MP3 CD in paper sleeve
Length:	36 minutes	Catalog:	DB-6002
Language:	English	UPC:	NA
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$7.99
Genre:	Short Fiction		

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The narrator of *The Yellow Wallpaper* is a woman quite typical of her time and class in the late 1800's. She shows symptoms of a "temporary nervous depression", (what Freud might have called hysteria), and her husband, a physician, has prescribed a "rest cure". They rent an old colonial mansion for the summer and move into the upstairs nursery, which has been decorated with patterned yellow wallpaper that is strangely torn. The room's numerous windows, which are barred, furnish the requisite fresh air. She is forbidden from working, and so spends many hours staring at the wallpaper, which becomes increasingly intriguing and begins to mutate. The story is told as a series of journal entries that chronicle her gradual descent into madness. Gilman wrote the story after a severe bout of postpartum psychosis. First published in January 1892 in *The New England Magazine*, it is regarded as a seminal work of American feminist literature.

**Charlotte Perkins Gilman** (July 3, 1860 - August 17, 1935) was a prominent American writer, humanist, and lecturer for social reform. She was born in Hartford, Connecticut and had a difficult childhood. Her father abandoned the family when she was an infant. Her mother, unable to manage, consigned her children to the care of her aunts, one of whom was author Harriet Beecher Stowe. She received little formal education. Isolated and impoverished, she found refuge in the public library studying ancient civilizations. With the help of her father she attended the Rhode Island School of Design and became a painter, tutor and artist of trade cards. She married in 1884 and suffered a bout of post-partum depression after the birth of her only child, an experience that inspired her to write "The Yellow Wallpaper" six years later. She separated from her husband in 1888, moved to California and immersed herself in reformist and feminist activities. Although "The Yellow Wallpaper" was published in *The New England Magazine* in 1892, it was *In This Our World*, a book of satiric poems published in 1893, which brought her recognition. She returned to the east that same year, married Houghton Gilman and went on to lecture throughout the country for the next twenty years on women's issues, human rights and social reform. She published *Women and Economics* in 1898, *The Home: Its Work and Influence* in 1903, and the utopian feminist novel *Herland* in 1915. She wrote and edited her own magazine, *The Forerunner*, from 1909-1916 and wrote hundreds of articles for newspapers. In 1925 she began her autobiography, *The Living of Charlotte Perkins Gilman*, which was published after her death in 1935.