

THE YELLOW WALLPAPER

Written by

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OPENING: INT. BIRTH CENTER HALLWAY

In a dingy, half-lit birth center, we slowly move through a hallway, almost from the viewpoint of another person. The paint on the walls is peeling off in long strips, and the various rooms we pass are sealed with dark, wooden doors ripe with age.

The sound of a baby screaming at the top of their lungs begins when we reach the midpoint of the hallway.

There's a man, wearing a brown tweed suit, sitting on the floor at the end of the hall. He rushes to his feet once he hears the crying. We're still not close enough to make out his facial features, but we can see a figure in a nurse's uniform come out of the room, a bundle in her arms.

She hands the baby to the man and the crying stops. But a woman's raging screams can be heard, echoing throughout the hallway.

TITLE: "THE YELLOW WALLPAPER"

CUT TO BLACK

OVER BLACK

The rustling sound of a carriage over dirt and horses whining.

FADE IN:

INT. CARRIAGE -- DAY

Inside a seemingly posh carriage with black interior, there is a WOMAN (mid-20s) staring out the window. She wears a simple black dress, corset so tight it looks sewn into her skin and a black veil draped over her face, as if in mourning.

EXT. ROAD TO ESTATE -- DAY, CONTINUOUS

A COACHMAN is seated at the head of the black carriage, guiding the horses by the reins. They move up a dirt, winding road towards a massive home in the distance with acres of land surrounding it.

INT. CARRIAGE -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman inside the carriage turns her head towards the estate. The shadow of her facial features somewhat visible within the veil. In the folds of her gown, she reveals a stack of papers with ink written all over them that wasn't visible in the previous shot.

Still staring at the estate, she clutches her papers tighter, wrinkling them with her ink smeared hands.

EXT. FRONT OF ESTATE -- DAY, CONTINUOUS

Halted at the entrance of the house, the carriage sits ominously, a presence waiting to be disturbed. The coachman hops up from his perch, rushing to the door of the carriage and opening it. He extends a hand. Beat.

A hand protrudes from the carriage, taking the coachman's fingers within its. The Woman emerges, face still covered with that dark veil.

She steps down from the carriage silently and stares at the estate, her head cocking like a curious dog.

JENNIE (30s), rushes down the stairs of the house to meet the Woman. She has her hair pinned back into a low bun, a few strands managing to escape from her bangs. Wearing a cream colored dress and a floral apron, she walks right up to the Woman and embraces her.

JENNIE

It's so lovely to see you again,
lady.

The Woman does not hug her back and eventually, Jennie releases her.

JENNIE

You must be tired after the journey,
let me help you inside.

The Coachman runs to retrieve the Woman's bags from the back of the carriage.

Jennie reaches towards the Woman's papers, still clutched in her hands.

JENNIE (cont'd)

I can carry those for you, if you
like.

The Woman turns from Jennie slightly, but distinctly enough that Jennie retreats. She clutches the papers tighter. Beat.

The Woman finally looks towards Jennie again. Holding the papers in one hand, she reaches up and flips her veil back over her face, revealing sharp, dark features. Her cheeks are rosy and we can now see a few strands of her brown hair from under the veil. Her eyes scan Jennie's face.

WOMAN

I was expecting to be alone.

She gestures to the house

WOMAN (cont'd)

To take care of some of the
housekeeping before John arrives.

Jennie scoffs lightheartedly.

JENNIE

Oh you needn't have to worry about
any housekeeping while you're here.
John and I have agreed that I'm to
cook, clean and do whatever necessary
in your stead.

The Woman's face hardens, eyebrows furrowing. She takes a few steps towards the stairs of the home and pauses.

WOMAN

I'd like to get situated, if you
don't mind.

Jennie gestures for the Woman to follow her up the stairs. The Coachman trudges along after them, two suitcases in tow.

EXT. FRONT PORCH -- DAY, CONTINUOUS

As they near the door of the home, it becomes even more grand than it was from a distance. It's haunting; how tall the mahogany door is with giant iron knockers bracing each.

The house is made of dark stone. As the Woman glances up towards the large windows of the second floor, she sees bars on one of the windows. She shakes it off and lets Jennie lead her inside.

INT. FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

Entering the house, the indoor features are just as dark as the outside.

The wooden floors are a deep brown, with painted walls that resemble eggplant. A small table sits next to the main staircase, adorned with flowers and knick-knacks. From the entrance, you can see straight back through the home towards the glass-paned doors that reveal an expansive garden.

The Woman stares ahead, towards the garden, but Jennie gently grabs her elbow, pulling her towards the swirling staircase. The Woman follows, Coachman close on her heels.

As they ascend the stairs, each heavy thud of feet makes the the house creak.

JENNIE

You can see I've already placed some
decorations around the foyer

Thud.

JENNIE (cont'd)

The house is perfect for rest

Creak.

JENNIE (cont'd)

You'll have no worries while you're
here.

Creak.

JENNIE (cont'd)

And the baby is well cared for with
your midwife.

Thud.

They reach the top of the stairs, the Woman's feet echoing a final thud and creak.

The Woman turns, placing her hand on the banister and blocking Jennie from moving further.

WOMAN

Jennie, I think I can find my room
without supervision

Jennie starts to speak, but the Woman stops her with a hand. Jennie closes her mouth and motions for the Coachman to put down the Woman's bags. He does, turns and walks down the stairs, eager to leave. The Woman turns away from Jennie, but continues to stand still, waiting to hear Jennie's footsteps creak back down the stairs.

After a beat, Jennie finally turns and exits.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

The Woman walks towards a cluster of doors that she presumes are the bedrooms.

Opening the door to her left she walks in.

INT. SECOND FLOOR "BEDROOM"

Slowly stepping into the room, her heels clicking as she moves, the Woman looks left and right, surveying.

The room is empty, no bed in sight. A small table sits off-center from the window across from her, and as she looks to the right, another table sits a few feet from the first.

She walks forward a little more, the sun entering from the window across from her. Beams of light hit the floor between the tables and we can see the dust trailing through them. There's a small, square shadow between the tables.

The Woman stares at it, runs her hand through the light, chuckling.

WOMAN

A bed, indeed.

She laughs to herself again as she turns from the room and exits.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

The Woman exits the first room and looks up. Another door is staring at her, right across the small hallway. She squares her shoulders and storms into the next room.

INT. SECOND FLOOR "BEDROOM" 2

She opens the door, more forceful this time and thunders right into the room. The Woman stands in the center and clicks her tongue and sighs.

The room is exactly the same as the first. Window shining beams of light, two dusty tables. She turns, exiting the room and slamming the door behind her.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

After exiting the second room, the Woman turns her head to the left.

She looks towards the bottom of the stairs, where she can see shadows mingling. Jennie and the Coachman, awaiting instruction.

She looks away from them and heads towards the last room at the end of the left hallway.

WOMAN

Well, this must be it then.

She puts her hand on the knob, but stops to close her eyes. Finally, she opens the door and heads inside before anyone can reply.

INT. SECOND FLOOR "BEDROOM" 3

Opening the door, eyes still shut, we can see this room is completely empty, no furniture at all. The Woman takes a deep breath, holds it and lets it out. She opens her eyes.

The room is completely empty. She rushes to the middle of it, shaking her head. Breathing heavily, she turns in circles, placing one hand on her forehead and closing her eyes again.

Tilting her head back, she squeezes her eyes tightly and silent tears begin to fall.

JENNIE (O.S.)

Ma'am?

The Woman wipes her face and exits the room.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

The Woman quietly exits, clicking the door shut behind her. She turns.

WOMAN

(yelling down)

Jennie! There are no beds in these rooms. They'll have to be added I suppose. Old house.

Jennie runs up the stairs. She stops halfway

JENNIE

No, ma'am. We have a room just for you, this way.

Jennie gestures to her right and makes her way up the stairs.

WOMAN

Jennie.

The Woman's tone stops Jennie short.

WOMAN (cont'd)

If I said I can find the room on my own, then I can. I don't need your constant presence. Now... please.

She waves her hand, shoos Jennie away.

JENNIE

Yes, miss.

Jennie nods and heads back down the stairs.

The Woman takes a deep breath, composing herself. She walks towards the room at the end of the hall, hand reaching for the door handle

She enters and slowly comes to a stop in the center of the room.

There's a full sized bed in the center of the left wall. An iron frame and swirling headboard adorning it. The iron is chipped in places. The sheets are eggshell white and slightly rumpled. As if someone just got up and walked away.

To the left of the bed is an armoire and a small full sized mirror adjacent to it. Straight across from the door is a huge window, with bars on it. It almost covers the entire wall. By the edge of the window, in the right corner of the room is a rocking chair, that sways slightly. The wood on the rocking chair is peeling, scratches in some spots. There's teeth marks on the legs of the chair, as if someone gnawed at the edges until the wood was unrecognizable.

The Woman doesn't notice the furnishing, however. She's staring straight ahead, looking at the barred window. She takes a deep breath in, stepping closer. When she's a few inches away from the bars, she trails a finger down one, then pulls it back to look at it. Rust stains the tip. She rubs the rust between her fingers, smells it and cringes, wiping the remnants on her dress.

All of a sudden, the Woman storms out, to the stairs where her bags lay. She grabs a small canvas satchel and retreats back to the room.

The Woman shuts the door, earning the loudest thud and creak of the day.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM

Leaning her head against the door just recently slammed, the Woman breathes deeply, in and out.

As she continues shuddering out each breath, we fade into...

INT. FLASHBACK -- BIRTH CENTER

The Woman is sitting upright in bed, writhing around and screaming. Tears stream down her face and her eyes show genuine fear. Two people hold her back, but she fights them off.

She tries desperately to get out of their grip, fighting towards something, but we don't see what it is.

WOMAN
(muffled by crying)
DON'T TAKE HIM.

She thrashes around on the bed, screaming and crying. One of the nurses injects her with a sedative. She calms, slowly falling back to the bed.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Don't take...

CUT TO:

INT. THE ROOM

The Woman's head is pressed against the door frame. Her papers are clutched in her hands, crinkling them. She leans back and sighs, releases the papers. Collecting herself, she slowly turns around and faces the room.

Instantly, we are hit by the vileness of the space. The room resembles that of a nursery, or maybe a former asylum. The most striking feature being the repellent, almost revolting, smouldering unclean yellow wallpaper.

It's stripped off in patches around the room. The paper is a sprawling flamboyant pattern that emits disgust immediately. It's pronounced and irritating, for the pattern tapers off in areas and confuses the eye with its twirling mess.

The Woman cringes while surveying the paper, but we can see her eyes flitting back and forth, studying it slightly. She walks towards a corner of the paper by one of the large windows and crouches to inspect it.

This corner is a dull orange, as if it faded and molded over years. She turns her head towards the door and sees a corner encompassed in sunlight, revealing a sickly sulfur tint.

Shaking her head, she stands and retreats to the rocking chair by the window. Sitting and placing her papers on the windowsill, she brings her canvas bag to her lap, retrieving a small bottle from it. She uncorks it, downs the contents, and returns it to her bag.

WOMAN
(to herself)
That will have to do.

She plunges her hands into her bag one last time before plopping it on the floor, pulling out a small container of ink and fountain pen.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Oh no...

She realizes, finally, that she crumpled the paper. She straightens them out feverishly, being careful not to do any more damage.

WOMAN
It'll have to be redone, all of it
will have to be redone...

Once she flattens the paper as best as possible, she moves them to the windowsill. Grabbing more paper from her bag and setting it on her lap, she begins scribbling, the sound echoing off the yellow walls.

CUT TO:

EXT. FRONT OF ESTATE -- EVENING

The sun has gone down a bit since we were last with the Woman. An evening dusk light cascading over the estate.

Briefcase in hand, JOHN (late 30s) walks towards the estate. We don't see his face, only his hand on the briefcase and his feet crunching on gravel as he walks.

Finally, he reaches the door opening it with a loud creak.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- EVENING

Returning to the Woman, she is still writing and surveying her work when we hear creaks from outside the door.

She turns her head and quickly, she begins shoving her papers, ink and pen into her bag. Looking at her hands, she tries to rub the ink off on the interior skirts of her dress.

The door opens as she is folding her hands, hiding the remaining stains.

JOHN

My dear! I see you found your way alright.

WOMAN

Oh, John, dear, I was just thinking about how lovely this estate you've rented us is.

John walks towards the Woman and she stands to meet him, still hiding the ink stains.

JOHN

How are you, my love?

He kisses her gently on the head.

WOMAN

I'm fine, darling, just getting acquainted.

She embraces him and he mutters against her head.

JOHN

There are some things we should discuss about your stay.

She looks up at him.

JOHN (cont'd)

No writing, of course you know that.

He winks.

WOMAN

(irritated now) Yes, John I know.

He continues.

She pulls away, walking towards the window and looking out.

JOHN

And only rest. Jennie was kind enough to act as housemaid for the summer.

WOMAN

(passive aggressive)

Yes, your sister is such a gem for doing that.

JOHN

I agree. Lastly, sleep as much as you can and you must try and stay away from red meats, wine, anything of the sort...

John's voice drones out as we watch the woman staring out the window. We can hear him talking, but can't understand what he says anymore. Her eyes widen as she cuts him off.

WOMAN

Don't you hate this room?

John, who was mid speech, collects himself.

JOHN

What do you mean?

He joins her at the window, but doesn't come all the way to her side.

WOMAN

It's odd, isn't it? The paper especially.

She gestures to the wallpaper surrounding them.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Couldn't we move to one of the room's downstairs, Jennie said there's more flowers from the garden there?

JOHN

Oh no, darling, why would we do that?

She turns towards him, putting her hands on his chest.

WOMAN

Please, John, it would be so much better than up here in this dingy cage. And the wallpaper... it's infuriating.

JOHN

I won't hear of it.

She turns away again, to the window.

JOHN (cont'd)
The rooms downstairs don't have space
for a full bed, dear. And only one
window! There would be no room for me
to stay with you on some nights.

John's Wife takes a second to herself. Her once angry face,
forcibly softens. She turns her head slightly towards John,
no sign of anger.

She turns all the way towards him and bounds up to his chest
once again.

WOMAN
Well, of course you're right, honey,
I was just wondering.

He pulls her to his chest.

JOHN
You'll grow used to the paper, dear.
It does you no good getting
hysterical over such small
inconveniences.

He pulls back, pinching her chin with his fingers so she
looks up at him.

JOHN (cont'd)
But that's exactly why we're here,
isn't it? To get that temper of yours
in check.

She nods slowly as John turns away, puts a hand on the small
of her back, and leads her out of the room. He talks again,
but the sound is distant.

JOHN (cont'd)
Now, let us get your prescription.

His Wife turns her head back towards the wallpaper, cut
short when the door creaks shut.

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY

The pair stand just outside the wallpapered room, when
realization dawns on the Woman's face.

WOMAN

Just one minute, darling. I'll meet you down there, I've had no time to freshen up, I've been admiring the house for so long!

She pulls away from him and walks into the bathing room, beginning to close the door.

JOHN

Don't be too long, medicine cannot wait!

She nods as the door closes completely.

INT. SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM

The Woman places her hands on the sink. She turns on the tap and looks up into the mirror, seeing herself staring back at her. A twisted look takes over her face and she rushes to the toilet bowl.

We see her hand gripping the side, tap water running in the background as she vomits.

Finally, she rises, standing in front of the mirror once again, but not looking into it. She wipes her hand on her face, smearing the remainder of ink onto her forehead.

Looking into the mirror and seeing what she has done, she quickly grabs a small handkerchief, wiping her face clean. She runs her hands under the still running water, scrubbing and scrubbing until the black ink flows into the drain.

The Woman wipes off her wet hands on a new handkerchief, and uses it to clean the toilet and flush it. She stands, tosses the handkerchief in a small laundry bin, and looks at herself in the mirror.

WOMAN

Three months. That's it.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN -- NIGHT

John and his Wife are walking arm and arm through the garden.

It's a large and shady expanse of greenery. Full of box bordered plants and long grape-covered arbors with seats under them.

As they walk towards one of the benches, we join mid conversation.

JOHN
Your exercise depends on your
strength, my dear.

His Wife looks towards one of the rose bushes. John stares at her earnestly.

JOHN (cont'd)
And your food somewhat on your
appetite, but air you can absorb all
the time.

They walk towards one of the benches and have a seat.

WOMAN
John, where did you find this house?

She inclines her head towards the daunting, colonial mansion.

JOHN
You shouldn't worry about such things
dear, the house...found me, ha! And
that's all you need to know

WOMAN
But they let you acquire this place
so cheaply. And it's such an
ancestral mansion, why has it stood
so long untenanted?

John laughs.

JOHN
My dear, that's all circumstantial.
Besides, you shouldn't be working
your mind too hard about that right
now. Especially at this time of
night.

His Wife scoffs, but let's it go.

WOMAN
(smiling)
I suppose you're right. I really do
appreciate this place, truly.

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- EVENING

The Woman is sitting in the rocking chair by the window once more, a candle fluttering on the sill. She writes feverishly on her paper, staining her hands even further.

She stops for a moment, grabbing at another piece of paper that was strewn on the sill. She holds it up to her face in front of the window, it's illuminated by moonlight.

Instead of words, there is a drawing. It's sketched well, a small bundle with a round head poking out of the top, deep black eyes are pictured on the head. Words are scratched around the child, "taken," "mine," "where."

The Woman smiles to herself, but it doesn't reach her eyes. She places it among other similarly terrifying depictions of children.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DAY

The Woman is standing in front of her wood framed bed, the sheets disheveled.

She's staring at the wallpaper, one hand under her chin, studying it. Cocking her head to the side, she walks closer to the paper, until her nose is close enough to touch it. Her nose crinkles, like the paper is producing an odor.

Bringing a hand up to the paper, she smooths her fingers over the wrinkles. The pattern swirls under her hand, she traces a figure around a circular, eye-shaped portion.

She jolts, quickly stepping away from the paper, staring at it with a peculiar look. She lifts her hand to her eyes, seeing yellow smudges there. Ignoring them, she continues to stare at the paper as she flattens her hands on her dress, wiping the smudges into the fabric instead.

A knock sounds at the door, startling her out of her trance.

WOMAN

Come in!

The door opens and John walks in.

JOHN

Good morning, dear.

He walks over to her and gives her a kiss on the cheek.

JOHN (cont'd)
I'm off to work soon, I brought your
prescription up for you.

He hands his Wife a pill and glass of water. She takes it,
puts the pill in her mouth and drinks deeply.

WOMAN
Before you go John, about the
wallpaper--

JOHN
(laughing)
I already know what you're going to
say, we can repaper the room if you
like.

She rushes to give him a hug.

WOMAN
Oh, thank you John, thank you.

JOHN
It's not a problem my dear, I'll have
it re-papered once I find the time.

WOMAN
I appreciate it, truly.

John kisses her head and pulls away.

JOHN
Now then, I must be off! Make sure
you get some rest. No writing.

She gives him a small, defeated wave as he walks out the
door.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- AFTERNOON

The Woman is pacing in her room, pen in hand. We can see
some of her papers and ink sitting on the windowsill. She
stops by the window, looking out, Jennie is outside. She
looks up and sees the Woman, waves at her.

The Woman gives Jennie a small smile, but turns away.
Turning to the bed she flops down on the mattress.

She hugs her arms to her chest, staring up at the ceiling.
As she does so, her pen scratches her arm.

She winces, pulling the pen up above her face. Bringing her other hand up, she turns the pen to match the lines in the ceiling.

She does this a few more times. Stopping, she angles the pen and pokes her finger. Her eyes become more focused, and she digs it deeper, a small bead of blood appearing. Realizing what she's done, she pulls the pen away and sits up.

The Woman sticks her finger in her mouth, sucking the blood off. Pulling her finger out she looks at it and shakes her head.

Getting up, she grabs her dress that was hanging on the armoire. Opening the armoire door and revealing a mirror inside, we see her holding the dark fabric to her chest. She runs her fingers along the fabric, staring at her image in the mirror.

She closes the armoire and we cut to the Woman now wearing the dress. Her finger still has a small bead of blood pooled in it. She rubs it into her dress, the dark color concealing any of the remaining injury.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN -- DAY

The Woman and Jennie are sitting in the garden under one of the arbors. Jennie is working on some embroidery, while the Woman sits and stares out at the garden's various foliage.

WOMAN

Really, Jennie, I can't bear to sit around any longer. Can't I just help with some of the laundry or prepare dinner tonight?

JENNIE

We've discussed this before, miss. I know I'm John's sister and you may not believe me, but I do think his methods to be the best. Rest your mind, cease the imagination, and you'll be better in no time.

The Woman looks down at her hands, free of ink now, but the small cut still present.

WOMAN

I just feel like such a burden. I cannot take care of John or be near the baby.

(MORE)

WOMAN (cont'd)
Isn't that what a good wife and
mother is for? But here I am, dozing
all day, nothing to occupy me...

Her hands begin to shake and she clenches them together at
an attempt to stop it.

JENNIE
But that's as you should be. You're
meant to be recovering here, not
slaving away.

WOMAN
But, Jennie, I do think some
activity, some stimulation would--

John can be seen walking towards the garden from the
mansion's back doors, halting the Woman's speech.

He waves to them, but stops to inspect some stray stones and
potted plants.

Jennie turns, intent on listening to the woman.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Some excitement and change would do
me good, that's all... Not with the
baby, it makes me nervous to even
think about being around him, but how
I do wish I could care for him.

The Woman continues to stare at her hands. Jennie looks
intently upon her face, as if seeing something that isn't
there.

The Woman shakes her head and looks up at Jennie.

WOMAN (cont'd)
I'm glad my case is not serious, no
reason to suffer, like John always
tells me. I'll be with him soon
enough.

John's Wife stands to greet him as he finally finishes his
walk to the women.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Dear, you're home early, how
extraordinary!

John reaches his Wife and gives her a light kiss.

JOHN

How are my favorite women occupying their time?

Jennie stands.

JENNIE

Just getting a little fresh air and chat to move the day along.

John pulls his Wife close to his side.

JOHN

Sounds refreshing. What were you discussing?

He looks towards his Wife, who looks at Jennie, then back at John.

WOMAN

We were just talking about how we met, of course. Wasn't it a sweet time? Jennie?

Jennie nods, but looks caught off guard. John looks down at his wife.

JENNIE

Yes... it was I suppose.

John smiles.

JOHN

That opera house was just exquisite. Your mother had us matched as soon as we laid eyes on each other!

The Woman laughs, John tucking her closer into his side.

WOMAN

You know how she can be, much more forthcoming than I was with you then.

She smiles shyly, looking down at the grass below her shoes.

John sighs.

JOHN

Well, we must be off. Time for your medicine anyway.

He waves to Jennie, and starts leading the Woman away. She nods and holding tightly to John's arm.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

John and his Wife walk arm and arm into the kitchen, a glass of water and small pill already waiting on the table. The Woman reaches for the glass and takes her pill.

JOHN

It's important that you keep up with your prescription, my dear.

The Woman listens to John, swallowing.

JOHN

Even when I'm not here some nights. You have to be diligent, hm?

WOMAN

Yes, of course.

John pats her head.

JOHN

Now then, why don't you go on a refreshing walk with Jennie. It'll be good for your strength.

The Woman watches as John walks away, up the stairs and out of her presence. Turning, she tries to compose herself, pacing in the kitchen. Her hands run through her hair, gripping it as if she might rip out the strands.

INT. KITCHEN-- CONTINUOUS

As soon as John rounds the corner and is out of sight, the Woman turns. She runs out the backdoor. Her dress flowing behind her.

EXT. THE GARDEN -- CONTINUOUS

Still running, the Woman passes Jennie on the way to the lane of trees within the garden. Jennie turns her head as she passes, standing up and reaching out her hand in warning. The Woman ignores her and continues to run until she's out of sight, hidden by the trees.

She slows, breathing heavy, but begins walking through the trees. Some of the branches hang low, and she runs her hands through the leaves as she passes. She stops under one of the trees, blooming with pink blossoms.

Taking a petal in her hand, she rubs it between her fingers, causing it to come off of the branch. Holding it in her palm, she looks down at it.

WOMAN

Now you'll feel just as lonely as I do.

Suddenly, the wind blows, taking the petal with it. Her hair blows as she turns her head, several strands tickling her chin. As she looks further down the lane, her face twists in confusion. She turns completely around.

Touching the side of her face, her eyebrows furrow in thought. Shaking it off, the Woman hikes up her dress and continues marching on, into the land.

She comes across a small river, stones are strewn about the crossing. She stops at the edge, looking down into the water. She runs her hand through the stream, grabs a stone and smooths it with her thumb.

Standing up, she throws the stone into the river. It smashes into the water, creating ripples, she watches the ripples extend to the other side. They spread and spread until they lap against a pair of small, booted feet.

The Woman starts, sputtering for words. A small BOY (2-3) is staring at her, his face is vacant, blond baby hairs floating into his eyes. She stares at him.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Are you.. are you lost?

The boys blue eyes well up and the Woman gets flustered.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Don't worry, don't worry...I'll come, I'm...I'm coming.

She hikes up her dress and begins running across the river. As she splashes through the river, the boy stays still, his vacant eyes trained on the Woman. The bottom of her dress is soaking, but she continues on.

The river never seems to end. It gets longer and longer, the boy getting farther away.

WOMAN (cont'd)

(out of breath)

I'll get there.

The Woman trips, splashing onto the rocks and the stream.

WOMAN (cont'd)
I'm coming!

She reaches out and begins crawling through the stream. She is now doused in water, wet strands of hair sticking to her face.

She finally reaches the other side, planting a hand firmly on the grass of the other side. Looking up, the boy is gone. The Woman sinks her head to the grass, letting out an exasperated scream.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

John is looking in the armoire mirror when the Woman walks in. She is soaking wet. His tie is discarded over the armoire door and he leans forward to loosen his collar slightly. The Woman steps inside, water droplets drip to the floor, she surveys the wallpaper and John finally looks to her.

JOHN
My dear! What mess have you gotten
yourself into?

He moves towards her, picking up a strand of her wet hair and pinching it between his fingers. She looks distraught, her eyes vacant, searching.

JOHN
Dear?

She finally looks at him.

WOMAN
I found a river, tripped on a
branch...how clumsy am I?

JOHN
Yes, indeed, well, get yourself
cleaned up, why don't you? Can't have
you catching a cold, you'll never get
better!

She grabs some clothes from the armoire and turns towards the door.

He smiles after her before as she opens the door, exiting.

JOHN (O.S)
And don't venture to that river
again!

CUT TO:

INT. BATHING ROOM

The Woman enters the bathing room and begins peeling off her clothes, looking at herself in the mirror. We watch her through the mirror as she turns towards the large white tub and turns it on. It fills slowly, and she stares at the flowing water as it does.

The mirror grows foggy with steam. Finally, she steps into the tub, sinking low until we can no longer see her head over the lip. The mirror continues to get foggy until all we can see is the white smudge of the tub.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHING ROOM -- A FEW HOURS LATER

The Woman rises out of the tub, water droplets and steam emanating from her body. She walks towards the mirror, rubbing away the steam with a hand. Watching herself in the mirror, she trails both hands up her body from her hips to her breasts. Finally, she brings her hands to her head, grabbing strands of hair and running them over her face.

Suddenly, she slams both hands onto the sink, shaking it slightly. Her reflection mimics her. Sighing, the Woman bends down to retrieve a towel from the floor, the reflection doesn't follow. Instead, it stays poised in the mirror, staring out at the bathroom scenery. A moment passes before the Woman stands back up, shielding our view of the mirror with her toweled frame. When the mirror finally comes into frame, her reflection once again mimics her.

She squints her eyes at the mirror in frustration. Turning from the mirror, she walks towards a small window above the bathtub, wrapping the towel more tightly around her as she moves. Looking out the window, a shadowy figure moves around the side of the house where the Woman's bedroom window is.

Excited, the Woman quickly reaches for her clothing to dress.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM

The Woman re-enters the room. John is sitting on the bed, reading, he turns as she comes in, her hair is still wet, but her clothes are now dry.

JOHN

There she is, my lady.

John walks towards her, kissing the top of her head. He moves away from her, towards the bed. He fumbles with a suitcase on top of the bed, removing some books from it.

The Woman moves towards the window, looking out. She stares intently at the garden below, getting a full view of those mysterious arbors, old-fashioned flowers, bushes and gnarled trees she just visited.

She moves farther down the large window, next to the bed, surveying the garden just the same. Looking out towards the bay and private wharf belonging to the estate, there's a small shaded lane that runs down to it from the house. She frowns, but continues looking, anticipatory.

WOMAN

Would you like to hear something?

John turns from the bed, looking up from his books.

JOHN

(smiling)

Anything.

The Woman smiles to herself, still looking towards the lane.

WOMAN

I always fancy I see people walking
in those paths and arbors...

She lifts a hand, touching a finger to the glass.

John shakes his head and moves towards his Wife.

JOHN

My love...

WOMAN

They could be hiding among the
garden, walking within that lane,
could you imagine that?

She squints, looking for them now, then chuckles.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Earlier... I swear I thought...

John reaches out and touches the Woman's shoulder, turning her slightly.

JOHN
Do not give way to this fancy, not in the least.

Her laugh fades into confusion.

He removes the hand from her shoulder and paces about the airy room. Gesturing to himself as he speaks.

JOHN (cont'd)
With your...imaginative power and habit of story-making, a nervous weakness like yours is sure to lead to all manner of excited fancies.

He stops pacing, pausing inches from her and looks up at her face.

JOHN (cont'd)
You ought to use your will and good sense to...

He caresses her face with a hand.

JOHN (cont'd)
Check the tendency.

She leans into his touch, looks up at him with pleading eyes, but ultimately nods in agreement.

JOHN (cont'd)
Now, I'm sorry to be so harsh. But when you're well enough, just think, we can ask Cousin Henry and Julia down for a visit, wouldn't that be nice?

She smiles at him and he strokes her cheek before turning away towards the door.

Reaching the door, he turns one last time.

JOHN (cont'd)
But I would soon put fireworks in your pillowcase than have those stimulating people around you right now.

He laughs to himself as he opens the door to leave. She stops him by saying:

WOMAN

Well, at least we agreed to change the paper. I can wait a few weeks more as long as I have that reassurance.

Her hands are lightly clasped in front of her. She's smiling contently, happy John agreed with her on one thing. But John stops, hand on the doorknob.

JOHN

Oh, dear, about the wallpaper...

She loses that smile, but her composure remains. Her head cocks to the side and confusion litters her face.

JOHN (cont'd)

I've been thinking and there's just really no reason to repaper it now.

The Woman's hands drop to her sides, her head angles down to the floor. He turns back towards her, the door slightly ajar from where he pulled. He starts to pace in front of it.

JOHN (cont'd)

You should try to think of the paper as a comforting presence, instead. Like an old nursery.

She's shaking her head, scared, her eyes well up, but she turns towards the window.

John finally stops pacing, staring at the back of her head. She breathes in deeply then lets it out nice and slow, pasting a reluctant smile on her face as she turns toward him.

WOMAN

Yes, you must be right, so silly of me to think of such things. I'll try to do that instead.

John returns her smile, coming closer.

JOHN

You know the place is doing you good.

The Woman looks down, contemplating.

JOHN (cont'd)
And really, dear, I don't care to
renovate the house just for a three
months rental.

She looks up suddenly, taking a step towards John. Her
thoughts exploding from her mouth.

WOMAN
Then do let us move downstairs, there
are such pretty rooms there.

She gestures behind him towards the hallway and stairs.

John lets out a small smile. Closing the distance between
them, he takes her into his arms. Taps her on the nose.

JOHN
You're such a blessed little goose,
aren't you? We can move down cellar
if you wish and have it decorated and
furnished aplenty!

The Woman pulls away, closer to the door. John walks back
towards the door, adjusting his tie as he walks. As he does,
the Woman's face shifts, in thought. Her eyes squeeze shut,
a flash of the wallpaper emerges along with the faint sound
of a baby crying. It disappears as her eyes open. Beat.

WOMAN
No, I'm sure you're right about the
windows and beds and things. Yes,
that's quite alright, we'll have it
your way.

He turns his head to smile at her, then leaves the room,
closing the door behind him. The Woman stares at the door,
long after John has left, her eyes vacant, but somehow still
sad. She angles her head towards the paper, nodding at it
before turning and retreating to her bed.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SITTING ROOM

Jennie is in the sitting room, fiddling with some
needlepoint. The Woman enters the room, but heads towards
the kitchen. She pours herself a glass of water from the
pitcher, and takes it over to Jennie. She sits down across
from Jennie and slowly sips her water.

Jennie looks up at this.

JENNIE
Nothing to say, miss?

The Woman stops drinking. She begins to take out her frustrations on Jennie.

WOMAN
Must I have something to say, at all times, Jennie?

Jennie sets her work onto her lap.

JENNIE
I've been meaning to ask you...

Pause.

JENNIE (cont'd)
How was your excursion to the river?
It surely seemed interesting, given what John told me of your state.

Jennie smirks to herself. The Woman frowns, but steals it to smirk right back.

WOMAN
Oh, Jennie, I'm sure John tells you many things of me. Everything you hear must be quite interesting and profound.

Jennie is confused.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Much more profound than your own life I presume? Since you seem to be so interested in mine at all times.

Jennie is shocked, fumbling with her needles.

JENNIE
I...I am perfectly content.

WOMAN
Oh, yes it seems that way, indeed.

She smiles, taking another sip of water. Jennie waits for the Woman to remove her glass. She drawls it out, taking a long sip, before removing it and dabbing at her mouth with a sleeve.

WOMAN (cont'd)

I wonder, do you truly have nothing better to do then stick your nose into my business? Here you are, sewing and milling about, taking care of every household need for myself *and my husband*. Can you not find your own match? Or something of substance to occupy you otherwise?

Jennie scowls.

JENNIE

And what is of substance for me? Surely not writing, no, you do enough of that for the both of us don't you?

The Woman looks down, shy now, desperate to keep her secret.

JENNIE (cont'd)

I'm sure my dear brother would love to learn of that. I hear you scribbling away, pacing about your room. I wonder what John would say.

The Woman grips her glass tightly, shaking, some water spills over the rim and onto her dress. Jennie stands.

JENNIE (cont'd)

Well, best not take out your mood on me.

She walks closer to the Woman, leaning down so she may whisper in her ear.

JENNIE (cont'd)

Otherwise your secret may slip through the cracks.

Jennie leaves, happy with herself. The Woman stands, throwing her glass at the fireplace. It shatters and splinters all over the floor. Jennie turns from her retreat.

WOMAN

Oh, Jennie, it appears I've dropped my glass.

She walks towards Jennie, they are now side by side; the Woman facing away, Jennie towards the glass.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Do clean it up.

She stalks away, past a reeling Jennie, to go up the stairs and out of sight.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DUSK

The Woman is pacing back and forth, her pen in her hand. She's tapping it against her hands incessantly.

WOMAN
This is really just...

The taps of the pen grow louder.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Unbearable.

She throws the pen across the room, it skids until it bumps into the bottom corner of the wallpaper. She stops pacing and looks at the pen for a moment. She runs to pick it up, making sure it's not broken.

Walking to the window sill, she sets the pen down gently. She looks out the window longingly. She sees a light, very far away in the distance.

WOMAN (cont'd)
That could be interesting.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK PORCH -- NIGHT

The Woman, now wearing her robe and slippers, stands on the back porch looking for the light.

WOMAN
No turning back.

She steps onto the grass and begins trekking towards the light.

CUT TO:

The Woman has made it far into the grass plain, but the light is still far away. She's breathing heavily. Hiking up her dress, she takes some more steps.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Fresh air, he said. It's good for you.

She takes one more step, but finally collapses onto the grass in a heap, sighing.

She lies back, her chest rising and falling heavily.

WOMAN (cont'd)
If only I could be one of the
stars...no one contains them.

She stares up at the stars longingly, silently counting them one by one. Looking away from the stars for a moment and out at the grassy plain, she sees the Boy again. She rises on up on her elbows, keen to follow him. But, the Boy turns running in the opposite direction.

The Woman gets up and begins chasing him.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Wait!

She runs and runs, through the rose bushes, where the thorns scratch her arms.

The Boy is just beyond a grove of roses, standing there, facing away from the Woman.

She slowly walks up to him, breathing heavy. She's close now, and reaches out to touch him. Grabbing his shoulder and turning. The Boy turns, but his face is different. His eyes are all black with no whites, just like her drawing. The Woman is startled and removes her hand.

BOY
Why did you leave me,
Mommy?

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

The Woman shoots up in bed. Panting and sweaty. She calms herself, and begins to sit perched on the edge of her bed, staring at the paper. Standing, she moves closer, halfway to the wall across from her bed now. Beat.

She clears the distance and sits on the floor in front of the paper. Reaching a hand out to touch it. She recoils it back almost immediately, but continues to study it, eyes flitting up and down.

WOMAN
(muttering)
I see...

She touches the paper again, tracing the eye-shaped pattern one more time. The eyes blink at her.

WOMAN (cont'd)
(muttering)
It *is* an eye...multiple eyes.

The viewpoint shifts, we are now staring at the woman through the paper (the eyes), her gaze locked on it. Her pupils flash and the yellow paper is reflected in it.

WOMAN (cont'd)
You're trying to tell me something...
aren't you?

We are still in the viewpoint of the paper as she presses her palm flat against it, leaning closer.

(O.S.) JENNIE
(yelling)
Miss, the food is prepared!!

The Woman turns her head, and we turn with her, at eye-level and doing the same motion as she. She turns back quicker though, standing up as she leans into the paper.

Back to the Woman's perspective, as the sunlight sets on the paper, she takes one last look.

WOMAN
I see you...

She walks back towards her writing window, shuffling papers and grabbing ink. Taking a quick second to look back at the paper, a figure moves underneath it. It bulges outwards, then retreats back in. She quickly turns her head back towards the window, then back to the paper once more.

Shaking her head, she sits down, arranges the paper on her lap and begins writing.

She scribbles and scribbles, glancing back at the paper every now and then. Some time goes by.

The thuds and creaks of someone escalating the stairs echoes in the hallway.

Quickly, the Woman finishes her sentences, shoving the paper and ink into her bag and hiding it under the bed.

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

Jennie stands outside of the Woman's room, ear pressed against the door. We hear sounds of shuffling feet back and forth. Jennie leans in closer.

The door swings open, startling Jennie and causing her to jump back.

The Woman stands on the other end.

WOMAN

Jennie! I thought I heard someone creeping out here. How can I help you?

Jennie composes herself before speaking.

JENNIE

It's just... the food is ready miss, we've been calling for you.

WOMAN

Oh right of course. Well, Jennie I'm much too tired and little hungry to come down for dinner now. Give John my best.

JENNIE

I can bring a tray up for you?

WOMAN

No, no I don't think that will be necessary. Really, Jennie go eat your dinner.

JENNIE

But, miss...John would like to see you eat more.

WOMAN

I'm sure he would, but as it is I'm not hungry...

The Woman closes the door and retreats back in the room.

Jennie sidles up to the door once again, pressing her ear against it. Shuffling, back and forth, she hears the Woman pace about the room.

JENNIE

More pacing! Maybe I will go eat with John, we have many things to discuss, as it seems.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM

The Woman has stopped pacing and is seated on the floor in front of the door.

WOMAN

Yes, I know, you always have things
to discuss with *my* husband!

She puts her head in her hands, getting more and more frustrated. Her face twists in dread. She looks up and to the right, at the deep purple of the dress hanging on the armoire. We hear Jennie sigh on the other side of the door.

JENNIE (O.S.)

Come down miss...John would like to
see you eat.

The Woman looks away from the dress, more irritated now.

WOMAN

Just 5 minutes!

JENNIE (O.S.)

(more forcefully)
Please.

WOMAN

5 more minutes, please, I promise!

She looks around the room, hysterical. She rests her head on the back of the door, looking up towards the ceiling. Jennie's footsteps are heard clicking away and down the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. THE BATHROOM

The Woman, now clad in the purple dress stares at herself in the mirror. She looks disgusted with her appearance, running a hand over the bags under her eyes. The ink still staining them.

Turning on the tap, she runs her hand under the water and begins too scrub. She scrubs her hands, harder and harder, continuing to do so long after the ink has washed away.

Her nails are cutting into her skin, leaving small scratch marks glistening under the water's thin surface.

She stops scrubbing, pulling a deep, shaking breath in and bringing her wet hand up to her forehead.

Letting out a sigh, the Woman turns off the tap and dries her hands. She dabs her forehead as well, but as she does so, she notices the scratches. One of her nails is cracked, the surrounding skin red from irritation.

WOMAN

This won't do...

She sighs, opens the bathroom and heading for her bedroom. But she stops, turning her ear towards the stairs. Something is crying, someone is crying. A baby.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Oh my.. did they bring the..?

She rushes to her room, grabbing a pair of white gloves, and running down the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM

Jennie and John are seated at the table eating, a place is set for the Woman. She charges in, white gloves now on.

WOMAN

John! I heard him, did you bring him here? Where is he?

John turns in his seat.

JOHN

What ever could you be referring to, darling?

The Woman looks around, seeing there is no baby, the crying can still be heard. She moves towards the sitting room, looking around, but still nothing.

She begins to hyperventilate. John appears at her side. He puts a hand on her shoulder and she jumps.

WOMAN

I thought I heard..

She looks at John, there's a concerned look in his eye, but also something like fear.

She pauses for a moment.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Oh nothing, John I just thought I
heard Cousin Henry. Your voice and
his do sound quite similar, don't
they?

John nods. Still wary.

JOHN
Yes, I suppose. Won't you come sit
with us?

He leads her by the elbow back to the dining room. She sits
at her place, grabbing a fork and playing with her food. The
crying starts again, but distant, she stares at her plate,
an intense look in her eyes. The conversation flows around
her, but muted, and the crying only grows louder.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- THE NEXT DAY

The Woman dozes in her bed, the afternoon sun gliding over
her face. She's restless, turning back and forth in a fitful
sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SITTING ROOM -- DAY

Jennie and John are having cups of tea in the sitting room
across from the kitchen. There are two antique couches and
two arm chairs. A small, mahogany table sits in the middle
of the room, over top of an ornate carpet. A tray of tea
sits in the middle of the table with various biscuits and
things adorning it.

John sits on one of the couches, Jennie is opposite him on
the other.

JOHN
I can't seem to get here as often as
I used to, Jennie.

Jennie sips her tea and then places it on the table.

JOHN (cont'd)
We are receiving many serious cases
at the hospital, and they're
occupying most of my time.

John rubs his temples.

JENNIE

That's alright John, I'm always here to look after her and the estate.

JOHN

Of course I'll be here for the Fourth of July, I think some company would be good. I'll invite her mother and Nellie to come enjoy the holiday with us...she seems eager for someone to visit, I think.

He puts a hand to his forehead again, Jennie nods eagerly.

JOHN (cont'd)

Will you see to the preparations?

She smiles.

JENNIE

Yes, John, it's not a problem at all.

Creaks and thuds can be heard coming from the stairwell.

John and Jennie both look towards them, as the Woman rounds the corner, now fully dressed from her nap.

WOMAN

Did I miss anything?

John stands and greets her.

JOHN

Oh, nothing, dear. Just discussing our Fourth of July plans.

The Woman steps closer.

WOMAN

Oh?

JOHN

I was going to invite your mother and sister to come for a visit. Do you think you can be good?

The Woman lays her head against his shoulder.

WOMAN

Why yes, John, I think I can be good.

He pats her on the head and pulls away.

JOHN

Well I'll be off. There are some
intense cases I must see too.

She nods her head as John leaves the room.

JENNIE

What would you like to do today,
miss?

The Woman stares thoughtfully out towards the garden.

WOMAN

I'd like to be left alone Jennie, if
you don't mind.

JENNIE

Yes, miss.

Jennie scoops up the tea platter, beginning to move towards the kitchen. She pauses at the garden door and watches as the Woman walks towards the doors to the garden.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN -- CONTINUOUS

Jennie stands and stares as the Woman walks off into the garden lanes, she breezes through the trees, like a phantom in the wind. As soon as the Woman is out of sight, Jennie slams the tea platter on kitchen worktable. She turns and runs towards the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- DAY, CONTINUOUS

Jennie rounds the corner from the stairs, entering the hallway. She slowly walks towards the Woman's bedroom door. As she walks, the floorboards creaking, the door emits a faint yellowish tinge around the edges. It intensifies as she gets closer to the door, almost glowing with the unclean, smoldering yellow.

Jennie's eyes are fearing, squinting with confusion and curiosity. She reaches a hand out, the door squeaking off its hinges. She opens the door, squeezing her eyes shut in fear.

CUT TO BLACK:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DAY, CONTINUOUS

The door swings open, Jennie's eyes still shut. She opens them slowly. The room is in its average state, the yellow paper has lost its usual luster that it has with the Woman. Jennie enters slowly, surveying her surroundings. Moving towards the windowsill, she looks out and sees the Woman lying in the grass lanes.

She looks down at the sill, scanning it and touching the surface. Bending down, Jennie looks underneath the window and adjacent rocking chair. She turns her head towards the bed, a corner of cream colored paper peeks out from the Woman's canvas bag.

Jennie sighs and rises to walk towards the bag. She crouches again, sliding the bag towards herself. Rummaging through the contents, she pulls out a piece of paper that used to have writing on it. The ink is smudged and smeared throughout, as if the Woman was trying to erase it.

Jennie holds it with both hands, pulling it close to her eyes in an attempt to decipher it. We can see words and faint sentences that weren't completely removed. One says, "I don't know why I should write this." Another, "I don't feel able." One at the bottom of the page, "There are things in that paper that nobody knows but me, or ever will."

After reading this last, Jennie looks towards the paper on the farthest wall, opposite the bed. Shoving the paper back in the bag and standing, she walks towards the wall, but stops when a creaking sound can be heard from downstairs.

Quickly, Jennie rushes towards the door, ducking into the bathroom, right as the Woman is walking by. When the Woman finally passes and enters the room, Jennie pokes her head out of the bathroom door. Just in time to see the faint yellow light start to get bolder again. The door slams shut with the Woman standing rigidly in its frame.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DAY

The Woman lies in her bed, staring at the warped ceiling. She reaches a hand into her eye-line, tracing a figure on the ceiling. She lowers her hand and looks towards the wallpaper before curling up and falling asleep.

Images flash behind her eyelids. A baby, the boy from the river, drowning. All accompanied by screaming and crying sounds. The Woman's eyes twitch behind the lids. An image flashes of hands clawing at her face, but not her own.

They are coming out of the wallpaper, clawing and clawing, leaving red, bloody marks down her skin.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

Waking suddenly from her nap, the Woman sits up and looks around the room. She touches her face, feeling smooth skin instead of raw scratches. She leans forward to the edge of the bed and stares at the wallpaper. Her eyes narrow. She gets up, exasperated, grabs her robe and puts it on. Getting a nearby candle and matches, she lights it, carrying the candle holder out into the night.

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- NIGHT

The house is pitch black, save for the small circle of candle light encompassing the Woman's face. She leads herself down the stairs, careful not to create too much noise.

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT -- CONTINUOUS

She walks into the kitchen and sets her candle down on the worktable. Pulling her robe tightly around her, she looks out the glass doors to the garden patio.

The summer wind blows some flowers over the stone beneath the arbors and she watches closely.

She places her hand on the door handle to open it, but quickly removes it. She reaches for it again, but steps back before she can open it.

Walking back towards the candle on the worktable, the Woman sees that Jennie left out some raspberry biscuits she baked earlier that day. She reaches for one, finally eating. The first one is gone in an instant, but she replaces it quickly with another.

In her fervor, she grabs a pitcher of water by the sink. Not bothering with a glass, she drinks directly from the pitcher, taking bites of biscuit when she breaks. Continuing to eat like a pig, she makes a complete mess of the counter top and her clothes.

Leaving the mess of crumbs and water behind, she moves for the glass door, opening it wide and letting the wind blow in. She laughs and laughs, screaming with delight as roses, leaves and grass blow in all around her.

CUT TO:

The Woman is back at the door, one hand placed on the handle and her head angled towards the biscuits that are now untouched. There is no sign of the water pitcher having moved, no crumbs on the table.

She removes her hand, turns and heads back to bed.

EXT. GARDEN LANE -- DAY

On the lane that leads to the wharf, the Woman walks along the path. She pauses, turning slightly and looks up towards the barred window that houses her. Shaking her head, she walks back towards the porch.

The Woman sits idly on the porch, underneath the roses adorning the arbor roof. We can see the roses are beginning to wither, slowly. One falls off and into her lap. She holds it in her hand and begins ripping the petals off one by one.

WOMAN

He loves me.

She rips a petal.

WOMAN (cont'd)

He loves me not.

A petal falls to the ground.

WOMAN (cont'd)

He loves me.

She's ripping them faster now, not at all in time with her voice.

WOMAN (cont'd)

He loves me not.

The last petal falls and she stares at the mess she made at her feet.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Such a silly game...

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

Sitting up in bed, the Woman is studying the wallpaper once again. She crawls to the edge, laying her head on top of her arms on the footboard.

She stares and stares, eyes roaming back and forth, tracing the paper. Suddenly, she rises from the bed, rushing towards the wallpaper opposite her. She takes a finger and begins to trace the pattern.

She moves about the room, tracing the pattern. Every few minutes she stops, scoffs and has to start again. She walks to the other corner and tries again to start there. She traces the pattern again, but runs into a great ripped patch that distorts it.

Decidedly, she gets lower to the floor, attempting to trace there. She runs into the orange, molded patch by the window. Sighing in frustration she sits back on her heels, slumping forward from the exhaustion.

The Woman sits there for a moment, looking up and out of the window. Her face glowing with the moonlight.

WOMAN
(talking to the moon)
It never seems to end does it.

The moon stares back at her.

WOMAN (cont'd)
The cure to my boredom I suppose.

The moon grows slightly brighter.

She shrugs.

Finally, she gets up, faces another area of the wallpaper, and starts again. As she's tracing she suddenly stops, faint crying can be heard echoing through the house. Lighting a candle, donning her silk slippers and robe, the Woman hurries out of her bedroom.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER -- CONTINUOUS

Facing a door at the end of the foyer, the Woman's face is lit up by candlelight alone. The crying can still be heard, this time louder. She stares at the door for a moment, contemplating, before leaning her head against the wood to listen. The crying intensifies.

WOMAN
I knew John had him here.

Stepping back, she grabs the handle and plunges into the dark depths of the basement.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman creaks down the dusty, wooden stairs. The crying has ceased. She reaches the bottom of the first flight, a small square platform that descends to even more stairs. She stares down the last flight, squinting in confusion, trying to discern what could be down there. Beat. Leaning forward to get a better look, candle wax drips onto her hand.

WOMAN

Oh!

She lurches, startled by the sudden impact of heat, her exclamation echoes down the stairs. She looks up, watching her echo travel farther and farther away. Wiping the wax from her hand, she begins to descend.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT FLOOR -- CONTINUOUS

The basement is dusty and dingy, a shotgun hallway lined with boxes is the first thing seen across from the stairs. The boxes are contained by shelves, towering up and out, almost to the ceiling. As she walks through them, she raises the candle to a few, deciphering what's written on them. One box says, "Medical Records," another, "Child Rehabilitation." The latter catches the Woman's eye, and she sets her candle down to pull it off the shelf.

She hugs the box between her right arm and side, bending to pick up the candle and continue. She walks farther down the hallway, eager to see what's at the end. Finally, she reaches a metal door. It's industrial looking, with screws lining the sides and a small glass window near the top. She sets down her box and candle once again to grab at the handle.

She pulls on it, but it doesn't budge. She bangs on the door, pulling harder and harder, until the rust from the hinges begins to fall off and the door creaks open. The Woman steps back, her chest heaving, as she stares at the door. A moment passes before she reaches forward and opens it fully.

CUT TO:

INT. PADDED ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman stares ahead at the white padded walls and floors in front of her. She looks away only briefly to pick up her box and candle. After doing so, she enters the room. She looks around as she walks forward, noting scratches on the walls. Some pieces of padding are torn off in places. The cushion itself has decayed into a molding white color.

She does a full 360 turn, then again, like a dog preparing to lie down. And she does just that. Sitting cross legged on the cushioned floor, her candle to one side, she pulls the box in front of her, tearing off the top and reaching for the files inside.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER -- DAY

On the other side of the front door, Jennie greets us, with the Woman standing farther behind her. The Woman has bags under her eyes and sways ever so slightly on her feet.

JENNIE

Ms. Stetman, Nellie, please come in!
So lovely to see you.

The Woman's face lights up as MS. STETMAN (mid 40s) and NELLIE (late 20s) walk in the door. THREE CHILDREN follow them in and immediately run past Jennie and the Woman towards the garden.

As they clear the foyer, they run into John, who was just rounding the corner to greet them.

JOHN

Whoa, slow down there kids!

They mutter their apologies, but continue to run towards the massive garden looming outside.

Stepping forward to hug the Woman, Nellie turns towards John.

NELLIE

Sorry about them. They can be a bit
of a handful.

JOHN

Not a problem at all.

Ms. Stetman comes forward, hugging the Woman as well and turning towards John. She extends a hand and John grabs it and kisses it.

JOHN (cont'd)
Lovely to see you again, Ms. Stetman.

MS. STETMAN
You as well, Johnathon.

The Woman turns towards Ms. Stetman.

WOMAN
Oh, mother can't you just call him John?

John chuckles as Ms. Stetman stares at her daughter, looking incredulous. Like she would ever consider calling him, "John."

JOHN
Well, why don't we all head to the garden. Jennie's prepared a spread for us.

John walks ahead of them. Ms. Stetman close behind. Nellie and the Woman walk arm in arm a few feet behind them.

NELLIE
You didn't prepare the food?

There's momentary sadness in the Woman's eyes, but it's hardly perceptible. Shaking it off, she turns towards Nellie.

WOMAN
John insists I do no work while I'm here. Jennie sees to everything now.

NELLIE
I see.

They clear the distance to the garden doors, catching up to John and Ms. Stetman.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN PORCH -- DAY

John and Nellie are out in the garden playing with the children and Jennie flits about the kitchen, preparing more refreshments.

Ms. Stetman and the Woman are seated closely under the rose covered arbor.

Ms. Stetman brings a hand up to her daughter's chin.

MS. STETMAN

You're looking horrid, my girl. Are you sleeping?

The Woman chuckles, swatting away her mother's hand.

WOMAN

Yes, mother, it's just the stress of the whole thing.

Looking at her daughter intently.

MS. STETMAN

Who's taking care of the boy?

The Woman turns her head, a grave look overtaking her face as she realizes who her mother speaks of.

WOMAN

A midwife, John found her.

Ms. Stetman pats her daughter's hand, but a look of disdain clouds her features. Before they can speak any more on it. Nellie comes back.

NELLIE

He's certainly good with the kids. I wish I had one like that, sister.

Nellie laughs, but her mother cuts in.

MS. STETMAN

Well, if you heeded my advice and married someone of more stature, maybe you would have.

Nellie shakes her head.

NELLIE

Oh, mother, love doesn't work like that I'm afraid

MS. STETMAN

(muttering)

Love... that's hardly a good enough reason to slum.

Nellie ignores her mother and turns towards the Woman.

NELLIE

So, sister, how are you finding your summer? It must be so grand, living at this place.

She waves a hand around them.

WOMAN

Oh it is. The estate is wonderful and I've become quite fond of my room.

MS. STETMAN

What's so great about the room?

The Woman looks towards her mother with an intrinsic look.
Beat.

WOMAN

Well... it is quite big and has a fare amount of natural light with all of the windows. Nice and airy.

The Woman's sister and mother nod satisfactorily.

NELLIE

Sounds wonderful, you're summer is coming along so much better than mine! Is there truly nothing amiss in this perfect life?

Staring down at her ink free hands, the Woman furrows her brows.

WOMAN

It's not all perfect.

NELLIE

What ever could you mean?

The Woman looks up from her hands.

WOMAN

I'm fond of the room, yes, but only in spite of the wallpaper.

MS. STETMAN

(scoffing)

The wallpaper?

The Woman leans forward, very interested in the discussion now.

WOMAN
(forcefully)
Yes, the wallpaper.

Ms. Stetman starts at the Woman's tone, but conversation continues.

NELLIE
What about the wallpaper?

The Woman looks down at her hands once again, beat. When she finally looks up, it's towards the lane leading to the wharf. Her eyes glaze, lost in thought.

WOMAN
I'm close...to figuring it out. The paper. It's so peculiar, the pattern is covered in unblinking eyes. They're everywhere. I've never seen such expression in an inanimate thing before.

The two women look at each other, alarmed looks in there eyes.

The Woman just stares ahead. She comes alive as she speaks.

WOMAN (cont'd)
It's not arranged by any laws of symmetry, no. The pattern connects diagonally, the sprawling outlines run off in great waves. The entirety of the paper goes horizontally as well. I haven't pinpointed the direction, its so exhausting with all the variation, but... there is one end that is almost intact...and when the sun shines upon it, there is a center, I know it, that begins the rest before it plunges off into its distracting swirls.

The Woman gestures to herself, mimicking the swirls of the paper.

Nellie and Ms. Stetman look at the Woman, astonished, then at each other with worry.

Nellie opens her mouth to speak, just as John walks up to them.

JOHN
Jennie should just about be ready with the food, ladies.

Nellie, startled, looks to John.

NELLIE

Thank you, John. We'll be right in.

She turns to continue the conversation, but John nods and turns to his wife, interrupting.

JOHN

Dear, would you fancy a walk before
we head inside?

She turns to him, standing and reaching out a hand to grab his arm. No sign of her previous lapse.

WOMAN

Yes, John that would be lovely.

They walk away, towards the lane and the wharf.

Once they are out of hearing distance, Nellie turns to her mother.

NELLIE

Mother--

MS. STETMAN

No. We mustn't discuss it.

NELLIE

But, mother, she--

MS. STETMAN

I said no, Nellie. Your sister is
doing well here. She has an
imagination is all.

Nellie shakes her head. Staring at her mother with disappointment.

MS. STETMAN (cont'd)

I'll have none of that. Your sister
married well, lives well, far better
than you, I might add. I will not
have you making a fuss, Johnathon
knows what's best for her and if we
disturb that-- it will ruin
everything.

Nellie looks at her hands now, then up towards her children playing in the distance.

NELLIE

Yes, mother.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN LANE -- DAY

John and his Wife are walking towards the wharf, we can see Nellie and Ms. Stetman behind them in conversation.

JOHN

They seemed rather distraught don't you agree?

His Wife nods.

WOMAN

I suppose.

Beat.

JOHN

You didn't have anything to do with that did you?

She scoffs.

WOMAN

Of course not! What on earth could I possibly do to them? It is they who do not understand.

She turns her head away from John, distant. He stops there stroll, turning towards her.

JOHN

What don't they understand?

WOMAN

Nothing. It was meaningless.

JOHN

My dear...

WOMAN

I said it was nothing.

John turns her face towards him, a finger under her chin so that she looks up into his eyes.

JOHN

Love, if you don't pick up faster, I'll have to take some drastic measures.

Her eyes grow concerned. He pulls his hand away and begins walking again. She remains in her spot.

WOMAN

What do you mean by "drastic measures?"

He turns his head back towards where she stands.

JOHN

I mean, if you don't improve at a healthier rate I'll have to send you to Weir Mitchell in the fall for better rest.

She takes a few steps forward, towards him.

WOMAN

John, no. I'm improving just fine here. I had a friend that went to Weir Mitchell and his cure was much worse than your...loving care.

He sighs and shakes his head, looking down at his feet, then up to his Wife.

JOHN

I know, darling, but if *I* see no improvement, I have no other choice. You understand, don't you? It's a physician's curse.

She closes her eyes for a moment, pupils racing beneath the lids. Beat. Opens them.

WOMAN

I understand.

John lets out a breath, relieved. He takes her hands in his and kisses her head.

JOHN

I'm sure if you get more rest and fresh air, Weir Mitchell won't even be an option come fall.

Nodding, she takes John's arm and they walk back towards the looming mansion.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- AFTERNOON, THE NEXT DAY

The Woman sits on her bed, her eyes trained on a piece of paper. We get a glimpse of what it says: "George Halbert, 7, checked in on January 10, 1850. Convinced something lives in his room. No major episodes today. Will continue testing on Jan. 11 1850." She scours the words, intrigued, using her finger as a guide to the paragraphs written under George's name.

Before she can get too deep, a knock sounds, followed by Nellie entering the room.

NELLIE

Would you like some company?

The Woman shoves the file under the pillows behind her.

WOMAN

Always!

Nellie catches the Woman's quick movement.

NELLIE

What was that?

WOMAN

Oh, nothing. Just a story John brought me from town.

The Woman and Nellie sit together on bed. The wallpaper has lost its eerie look with Nellie in the room. The eyes don't move, it just looks like ugly yellow paper. Nellie opens her mouth to speak, but the Woman jumps in first.

WOMAN (cont'd)

So, you see what I mean about the wallpaper?

NELLIE

Yes... it really is quite ugly, isn't it.

The Woman flops back onto the bed, staring at the ceiling.

WOMAN

Yes, but not only that.

She gestures around the room.

WOMAN (cont'd)

The pattern! It's infuriatingly hard to follow.

Nellie flops back, joining her sister.

NELLIE

Why are you trying to figure it out
anyway?

The Woman props up on one elbow, turned towards her sister.

WOMAN

Wouldn't you? In my situation?

NELLIE

I suppose I would.

The Woman lies back down.

WOMAN

It just.. so boring here, Nellie. I'm
locked up all day. I feel like I've
got eyes on me, even when I'm alone.

The Woman looks around them, as if seeing the eyes now.

Nellie turns her head, looking intently at her sister.

WOMAN (cont'd)

All I do is sit, sleep, eat when I
can, walk around the garden, I really
can't take much more of this.

Beat.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Oh and the baby, the baby. I'm never
around him and he's all I think
about! I wonder what he'll think of
me when he's older.

(imitating)

"Mommy wouldn't take care of me as a
newborn, she was far too nervous."
Ugh.

Nellie thinks on this for a moment.

WOMAN (cont'd)

And I swear I hear him Nellie. John's
got him locked up in here somewhere I
know it.

NELLIE

That's not possible, sister. Where
would John keep a baby in this place?
I'm sure you've been through every
inch of it by now.

The Woman turns her head to her sister.

WOMAN

Not *every* inch.

NELLIE

You must do something for yourself,
to break this streak you have.

WOMAN

What do you mean?

Nellie props up on her elbow towards her sister. She grows excited as she speaks.

NELLIE

You heard me. Do something that makes
you happy. What John and Jennie
prescribe is not aiding you and if
only John can see the baby... I don't
care what they all say, they don't
have *your* best interests. So, you'll
have to do it yourself.

The Woman looks at the ceiling once again. A small smile forms on her lips.

WOMAN

You mean just, do what I want, all
the time?

NELLIE

Yes! Why not?

WOMAN

(growing excited)

Well I can't have them knowing of
course, they'd think me mad...I'll do
it secretly.

NELLIE

It doesn't matter how you do it. You
need to let loose, bring some
happiness into this dreary room.

WOMAN

I think you're right. I already have
an idea for where to start.

Nellie smiles. The two women lean back, the Woman sighing in relief.

NELLIE

And drink a glass of wine, for
heaven's sake, you need some.

The Woman is overcome with a fit of laughter, Nellie joining in.

CUT TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM -- DAY

Nellie is seated in the sitting room, watching her children play with some wooden blocks on the floor. Ms. Stetman and the Woman walk in, joining her on the various chairs and couches. The Woman sits, but Ms. Stetman walks by towards the outdoor patio. She scoffs.

MS. STETMAN

Those kids should be learning manners
instead of fiddling with that riff
raff.

She leaves out the back door, Nellie watching her, her happy smile fading into solemnness. The Woman notices.

WOMAN

Nellie, I have something to show you
of mine, it would cheer you, I think.

Nellie looks to her sister, plastering a happier expression onto her features.

NELLIE

Well, let's see it then!

The Woman has become giddy, jumping up and leading Nellie to the foyer and basement door.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT STAIRS -- DAY

Nellie and the Woman stand in the basement door, framed by it. They stare down at the darkness, the Woman holds a candle in her hand that illuminates them both. She looks excited and begins descending the stairs. Nellie stays at the top, a wary look on her face. The Woman who's halfway down, turns, the candle casting terrifying shadows up onto her face.

WOMAN

Are you coming?

Nellie takes a deep breath, then follows the Woman down.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT FLOOR -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman leads Nellie through the hallway of boxes. Turning her head slightly towards Nellie every time she speaks.

WOMAN
Look at all I've found.

She gestures around her as they walk.

WOMAN (cont'd)
There's so much information here,
Nellie. So many children that lived
her and were experimented on.

They reach the giant iron door.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Isn't it fascinating?

The Woman turns around towards Nellie, a menacing smile on her face. She comes closer to Nellie, and Nellie takes a small step back, almost imperceptibly. But the Woman reaches her, shoving the candle into her hands.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Hold this.

She turns back towards the door, swinging it open to reveal the padded room. Nellie's eyes show terror and concern, but she pushes on, following her sister into the room.

CUT TO:

INT. PADDED ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman enters the room, Nellie close behind her. The beginning etchings of a list are on the wall opposite them and a few boxes with paper's strewn about are on the floor.

The Woman walks around, pointing out things as she speaks.

WOMAN
I've started compiling the
information I've found into a list.

Nellie walks forward, surveying the etchings of children's names and facts. "George (electroshock)."

The Woman reaches down, picking up a steak knife from the piles on the ground.

NELLIE

What's that for?

The Woman swings towards Nellie, the knife angling towards her.

WOMAN

I'm going to begin re-drawing the wallpaper down here.

She stabs the knife into the wall to their left, she leaves it there, letting it stick out. She looks at how it extends out of the wall, flicking it with a finger.

WOMAN (cont'd)

So I can better trace the pattern.

She finally turns towards Nellie, who is still warily watching the Woman.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Isn't this grand? You told me to do something for myself, look at what I've done!

She giggles excitedly, running around the room to the wall to their right. Nellie watches her do this, a sad smile spreading across her face.

NELLIE

Yes, I see. It's... it's amazing what you've done.

The Woman walks up to Nellie, giving her a tight embrace.

WOMAN

Thank you.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM -- MORNING -- NEXT DAY

The Woman, Mrs. Stetman and Nellie are seated around the table having breakfast. It's quiet, besides the sound of scraping spoons in bowls. The Woman lifts a spoon full of porridge to her eyes, she watches it as she turns it over, letting it fall back into the bowl.

Nellie clears her throat.

NELLIE

Mother?

Ms. Stetman looks up at her daughter, but says nothing and continues eating.

NELLIE (cont'd)

Maybe we can take sister into town
with us?

The Woman's head perks up.

MS. STETMAN

Ugh, Nellie again with these
ridiculous ideas.

Nellie sets her spoon down, forcefully.

NELLIE

But she could see other people, walk
amongst civilization instead of being
cooped up here. I think it--

MS. STETMAN

No! Without Johnathon's approval, and
I doubt you'll get it, we cannot take
her into town. She's thriving here,
Johnathon has informed me, so keep
your mouth shut about it.

WOMAN

Mother, Nellie only means to help.

MS. STETMAN

Help? That girl has never helped
anyone a day in her life. All she
thinks about is herself! Marrying
that lowly, tradesman, he's nothing
more than a peasant.

Ms. Stetman spews the words out, Nellie cringing at the
venom.

MS. STETMAN (cont'd)

Don't you look at me like that you
know its true. I should've disowned
you the day you decided he was more
important than our reputation. But
did I? No. You should be *thanking* me.
But instead all you do is sit here
and whine and ask *me* for things, when
I've already given you everything you
could've wanted. And you throw it all
away, for love.

She spits the last word with the most disgust.

MS. STETMAN (cont'd)
There's nothing restricting me from
disowning you. Nothing. Just say the
word.

Nellie is staring at her mother, a tear slides down her
face.

MS. STETMAN (cont'd)
Pathetic.

She stands and exits to the garden.

WOMAN
Nellie-

NELLIE
No. Just...I'm taking you out of
here. Just be patient. And be ready
to leave when I return.

The Woman watches Nellie, a hard look in her eyes, but she
nods her reluctant agreement.

EXT. FRONT OF ESTATE -- DAY

A carriage pulls off from the estate, John and his Wife are
seen at the doors of the estate, waving.

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DAY

The Woman storms into her room, she doesn't glance at the
wallpaper as she strides to her bed, kneels and grabs her
bag from below. Sitting down at the rocking chair, she pulls
out her pen, paper, ink and begins writing.

The ink immediately stains her hand as she runs it across
the paper, writing each word ferociously. Once she has a
full page down, she pauses, looking out the window and
smiles to herself.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- EVENING

The Woman is in bed, napping. She turns back and forth, when
finally, she rises. She walks towards the window, peeking
out, searching for any signs of people. When she deems it
clear, she moves to get her things.

Gathering a long, silk robe from the dresser and putting on her slippers, she makes her way out of the room and down the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN

Jennie is washing dishes in the kitchen sink when the Woman walks up behind her.

WOMAN

Oh Jennie, I didn't know you were in here.

Jennie continues washing, but doesn't turn around.

JENNIE

Well it's only half past five, ma'am. I've got some things to tidy around here yet before dinner.

The Woman nods, even though Jennie can't see her. She moves towards a small cabinet, retrieving a glass before she grabs the pitcher of water on the work table behind Jennie. The water pours, the only sound besides Jennie's scrubbing.

JENNIE (cont'd)

I got news from Mary today, about him.

The Woman stops pouring.

WOMAN

And what did our dear Mary say?

Jennie finally turns, discarding a dish to the side and drying her hands with a towel.

JENNIE

The child is well and happy in your absence, but oh how he must miss his mother's touch. Hm?

WOMAN

Yes, he must.

Jennie nods and returns to the dishes.

WOMAN (cont'd)

It's a relief he doesn't stay with me I think.

JENNIE

Oh? What do you mean?

The Woman collects herself, noticing what she revealed.

WOMAN

Oh nothing Jennie. I just meant the break in motherhood brings peace to both of us, is all.

JENNIE

(suspiciously)

Yes...everyone needs a break from family now and then, I suppose.

Taking her water, the Woman hurries along towards the sitting room.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

We can still here Jennie's scrubbing as the Woman enters the sitting room and takes up a spot on one of the couches. She drinks her water deeply, then sets it on the table.

She waits and watches Jennie, rocking back in forth in her seat. She keeps glancing towards the garden door, but ultimately back at Jennie, who never moves from her work.

The Woman leans back into the couch still waiting, still watching, but ultimately she yawns and nods off.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SITTING ROOM -- CONTINUOUS -- NIGHT

The Woman is sleeping on the couch, when a dark figure approaches her, sitting next to her sprawled legs.

JOHN

My dear... won't you wake up?

John kisses the Woman's forehead and her eyes begin to open.

WOMAN

John?

JOHN

Yes, darling I just came to check in on you.

She sits up slightly, peering into his face.

WOMAN
How long was I sleeping?

JOHN
Only an hour.

He smiles softly.

WOMAN
John, while your here, I had a
marvelous idea I had hoped you'd
like.

His eyebrows raise and he stares at her some more.

Beat. She summons the courage.

WOMAN (cont'd)
Won't you let me visit Cousin Henry
and Julia? You do say I'm improving.

John leans back.

JOHN
Darling, I--

WOMAN
But you do! You say I'm improving
every day with my rest. Please, John
travel would be good for me.

He looks down in thought.

She continues to plead her case. But starts to cry.

WOMAN (cont'd)
If I could just have one more
opportunity to show you how well I
can behave.

She stutters out the words, lip quivering and tears falling
down her eyes.

John notices and brings her face into his hands.

JOHN
My dear, don't cry.

She looks down.

JOHN (cont'd)
I know it's hard to hear, but you
cannot go, nor would you even be able
to stand it after you got there.

Beat.

JOHN (cont'd)
You're just not ready. Look at you
even now!

She cries even further. Muttering words that make no sense
her thoughts jumbled.

John scoops her up into his arms and carries her towards the
stairs. She beats at his chest, screaming to be let out.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- CONTINUOUS

John carries the Woman into the room, placing her on the
bed. Grabbing a book from the dresser, he sits on the bed as
well. With her head resting on his shoulder, he reads to her
a passage from "Self-Reliance" by Ralph Waldo Emerson.

JOHN
"What I must do is all that concerns
me, not what the people think. This
rule, equally arduous in actual and
in intellectual life, may serve for
the whole distinction between
greatness and meanness. It is the
harder, because you will always find
those who think they know what is
your duty better than you know it. It
is easy in the world to live after
the world's opinion; it is easy in
solitude to live after our own; but
the great man is he who in the midst
of the crowd keeps with perfect
sweetness the independence of
solitude."

As he reads, the Woman's closed eyes contract and pinch, as
if dreaming through his words.

CUT TO:

EXT. CROWDED STREET OF UNKNOWN TOWN - DAY

Buildings line each side of a dirt road, smoke huffing out of some. People line the road and carriages drive past, kicking up dirt and dust. Women holding babies and men holding women.

Some are laughing, some are solemn, but they all walk busily, crowding around a figure. The Woman stands in the middle of the pavement, people nudging around her, barely noticing her presence. She watches them as they pass.

Turning around, she comes face to face with a printing press in the window of bookstore. A man finishes writing on a paper in the background. Walking forward, he reaches the press.

She watches as a man begins to work the toggles and gears, beginning to print the words.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM

The Woman still lies on John, her eyes opening suddenly. He pauses his reading at her sudden movement. Inclining his head slightly, he looks down at the Woman.

JOHN

You know you are my darling and my
comfort. You must take care of
yourself and keep well for my sake.

She nods imperceptibly before drifting off into sleep.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

Awake now, the Woman sits up in her bed, head resting on the headboard. John is nowhere in sight. She stares at the wallpaper and we look at it head on. The patterns swirl, as if actually moving.

She leans forward at this, squinting.

A figure moves beneath the paper once more, creeping from side to side.

Not phased, the Woman leans back again. She talks to herself.

WOMAN

You know more about me than anyone in
this house, don't you?

The patterns shift again in response, the figure gone.

WOMAN (cont'd)

I bet you even sent me that dream,
from before. Taunting me, aren't you?

The Woman lays back down again on the bed, turning on her
side.

WOMAN (cont'd)

If only John could take me away from
here.

She lies there, staring at the paper, but never closes her
eyes. Instead she gets up. She runs for the armoire,
grabbing a robe and slippers.

CUT TO:

INT. THE KITCHEN/PATIO DOOR-- CONTINUOUS

The Woman stands at the open front door, the moonlight
illuminating her white nightgown and robe. Her pale skin
makes her look like a ghost. She takes a step out of the
door, but turns her head, looking at the house she's leaving
behind.

Finally, she walks out, we see her move farther and farther
down the road until she is out of sight.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN -- NIGHT

The Woman has reached a small town, the lights of the
various building sparkling at night. Her slippers are worn
and dirty. She walks along the road, a MAN passes her, tips
his hat.

MAN

Good evening, madam.

The Woman smiles, nodding her head in return.

WOMAN

Yes, good evening.

He continues walking.

She stops in front of a small shop, it's lights on, signaling their still open.

She enters.

CUT TO:

INT. SEAMSTRESS STORE -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman walks into the store, immediately hit by walls of colorful fabric and mannequins wearing layered dresses of lace and silk. A SEAMSTRESS is seated at the back of the store, sewing, she looks up noticing the Woman.

SEAMSTRESS

Hello, miss!

The Woman smiles at her.

WOMAN

Hello. What wonderful fabrics you have in here.

The Seamstress beams, standing.

SEAMSTRESS

Oh, thank you! Can I help you with anything.

A dress on the mannequin to the Woman's right, catches her eye. It's a sage green color, but loose and flowing, the opposite of her usual corseted attire. The two straps end in bows on the shoulders, the neckline dips low, to the middle of the mannequin's chest.

The Woman steps up to it, lifting a piece of the fabric into her hands.

WOMAN

May I try this on? It's so beautiful I've never seen anything like it before.

The Seamstress walks over to her.

SEAMSTRESS

Yes, of course! Everyone usually hates this dress...

The Woman turns to the her.

WOMAN

I can't imagine why, it's exquisite.

The Seamstress smiles, pleased her work is finally being admired.

SEAMSTRESS
You can dress just over here.

She leads the Woman through the back of the shop.

CUT TO:

The Woman now stands in front of a mirror in the back of the store, the Seamstress standing just behind her.

SEAMSTRESS (cont'd)
It suits you.

The Woman smiles in the mirror, running her fingers along the hems of the dress. Twirling once. The Seamstress laughs.

WOMAN
Well, I must come back to buy it,
I've come out with no coin on me,
unfortunately.

She's still smiling, but a little sad now. The Seamstress considers this.

SEAMSTRESS
You know, why don't you just take it?
No one's appreciated that dress in
some time, and I'd rather a pure soul
like yours wear it than one of the
sycophants in this town.

The Woman turns, embracing the Seamstress.

WOMAN
Really? Oh, I'd be delighted, thank
you!

The Seamstress smiles.

SEAMSTRESS
Do you want to wear it out?

WOMAN
Yes, yes I believe so. Why don't you
keep my dress, use the silk to make
something else such as this.

She gestures to her new gown.

SEAMSTRESS
Oh, I couldn't.

WOMAN

Yes, you can. I won't take the dress otherwise.

The Seamstress chuckles.

SEAMSTRESS

It's a deal.

CUT TO:

EXT. TOWN -- NIGHT

The Woman exits the shop, new dress flowing in the light breeze. She hugs her arms around herself, when suddenly the baby crying begins again. Her head shoots up, and she begins quickly walking door to door, looking in the windows.

She looks in each window, the crying getting louder with each new house. Finally, she stops at a window, where the crying seems the loudest. The front door is ajar, so she opens it and steps inside.

CUT TO:

INT. TOWNHOUSE

There's no one in the foyer, so she keeps going, looking for the crying. Walking into a small sitting room, there is a crib. The Woman peeks her head over and sees a small baby boy. She practically squeals with joy.

WOMAN

Ah! I've found you at last!

She reaches inside and picks up the baby. She rocks it back and forth, but the crying continues.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Don't worry. Mama's here.

He cries harder. Footsteps can be heard rushing to the sitting room. A MAN (30s) walks in. He sees the Woman and rushes towards her.

MAN

Who are you? What are you doing in this house with my son?

He grabs her arm and attempts to take the baby from her.

WOMAN

Your son? Your son? You've been
keeping *my* son captive haven't you?
How did you get him away from Mary,
huh? Ridiculous, wait til John hears
of it!

She tries to wrestle out of his grip, the baby cries harder.
A LADY (late 20s) enters.

LADY

Malcolm? Malcolm who is this? What is
she doing?

MALCOLM grabs the Woman, gripping her by her shoulders and
not allowing her to move. The Lady comes up and rips the
baby from the Woman's grip. This causes the Woman to thrash
violently in Malcolm's arms, she scratches at his face, but
he maintains his hold on her.

WOMAN

DON'T TAKE HIM. STOP.

She fights against Malcom's hold, but grows tired and sinks
into his arms, crying hysterically.

CUT TO:

INT. BIRTH CENTER -- FLASHBACK

The Woman is crying slumped against a midwife's shoulder.

WOMAN

Please, stop!

She reaches out and we see what it's towards. A small baby
boy being carried towards a door, by a nurse. She turns
towards the Woman, sad, but ultimately, walks out the door,
baby in arms.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. TOWNHOUSE

The Woman is still sobbing against Malcolm. His grip has
loosened, he looks to his wife, confused. She takes the
opportunity to charge out of his hold and run out the door.

CUT TO:

EXT. MAIN ROAD

The Woman darts out of the townhouse, bruised. Malcolm chases after her to the door.

MALCOLM (O.S.)

Hey! Get back here!

She runs down the main road. Carriages pass her, people are startled by her presence as she races past them down the road. She crosses the main road, and comes face to face with a horse. The horse is frightened by her and jumps up on its hind legs. The Woman shields herself and steps back out of his path.

MAN 2 (O.S.)

Watch where your going!

The Woman continues running, down a side alley of smaller shops that have all closed for the night. When she is certain she is alone, she puts her hands on her knees, breathing heavily. She looks up, there is a printing press in front of her in a shop window.

She stares at it for a moment, then backs away to the opposite wall of the alley. She sinks down into the gravel. The Woman begins to write words in the dirt below her, as she dozes off to sleep.

CUT TO BLACK

FADE IN:

EXT. ALLEY -- EARLY MORNING (5AM)

MAN 3

Dear? My dear? Are you alright?

The Man has a hand on the Woman's shoulder. She wakes, frightened.

WOMAN

John?

MAN 3

Who's John?

The Woman stands proudly, brushing off the Man's touch.

She walks down the alley, leaving him standing there confused, watching her walk away.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- MID MORNING

The Woman is sleeping in her bed, the wallpaper looming around her. Shifting, her hand falls out from the covers, lying off the edge of the bed.

The figure in the wallpaper reaches out. Stretching and stretching the paper towards the Woman. It's a human form. Hand reaching out towards the sleeping Woman, not even inches from her face, as if trying to shake her awake.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN -- NIGHT

John and Jennie are sitting having dinner together. Between bites, they speak.

JOHN

She sleeps an awful lot, it's good for her though. To get the rest.

JENNIE

Yes, I agree, perhaps she is improving?

John looks up at his sister.

JOHN

Oh, indefinitely. There's nothing that rest cannot cure, especially for a woman. I'm sensing a change in her, for the better, of course.

Jennie sets down her fork, suspicious.

JENNIE

You truly think she's better?

JOHN

Yes, don't you?

JENNIE

Maybe it's just intuition, but...

She pauses.

JOHN

Out with it, Jennie.

JENNIE

Oh, I don't know, I just feel like there's something she's hiding from us, no? She doesn't dine with us most nights, we know she eats, but mostly alone. That can't be good, such solitude all the while.

John ponders this for a moment.

JOHN

What could she be hiding?

Jennie continues but her speech becomes muffled. Instead, we move through the foyer and up the stairs.

CUT TO:

INT. TOP OF STAIRCASE -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman sits perched at the top of the stairs, a larger stack of files in her lap, listening to the echoing voices.

(O.S.) JENNIE

Haven't you noticed she sleeps so much during the day, and seemingly not at night.

(O.S.) JOHN

I'm with her so rarely in the evenings, this one is a blessing.

(O.S.) JENNIE

Truly, but when she is awake during the day, she's quite exhausted it seems.

(O.S.) JOHN

Any rest is good rest, Jennie. You're looking for reasons to fret that simply aren't there.

Their voices turn muffled and the Woman loses interest. She turns her attention to the papers on her lap, sifting through them. We catch various names on the papers she shuffles: "Alice (age 5), Harry (age 10), Michael (age 9)." Finally, George's file gets placed on the top of the stack, this is the one she's most fixated on.

She brings it closer to her face, quietly mouthing another paragraph so no one can hear.

WOMAN

George, age 7, has been suffering from insomnia in the past few weeks. Claims he's seeing someone in his room. She speaks to him, cries out for him. Dr. Snell tried to convince George there was no one there. George got physical with Snell, stealing a needle from the medical tray and stabbing it in his leg. Electroshock therapy to be tested tomorrow, February 17, 1850.

The Woman sits back, leaning against one of the stairs as she brings a hand to her mouth.

WOMAN (cont'd)

He and I weren't so different it seems.

A chair scrapes back on wood from the kitchen.

A muffled voice speaks and footsteps sound.

(O.S.) JOHN

I'll see you in the morning, good night.

The Woman jumps to her feet, attempting to avoid the creaks in the floorboards, she runs back to her room.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

The Woman is covered in her blanket, files hidden, she faces the wall away from the door. John enters and quietly prepares for bed. When ready, he joins her. As he's lying down, he presses a soft kiss to her head.

She blinks her eyes shut just in time before he sees.

JOHN

(whispering)

Figured I'd stay up here tonight.
Goodnight, my love.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- MIDNIGHT

John has been asleep for some time now, but the Woman is sitting up in bed. The moon shines in all around them just as the sun does.

She watches the moonlight fall over the wallpaper. The pattern shakes, hands push against it from the inside, someone trying to break free.

This makes the Woman slowly get to her feet. She walks towards the paper, pressing a hand against it.

WOMAN
(quietly)
What are you doing in there?

She studies it some more, but seeing no developments, she returns to John at the bed. Finding him awake.

Sitting up, John scans his wife's face.

JOHN
What are you doing little girl? Don't
go walking about like that, you'll
get a cold.

She gets back into the bed and John pulls the covers over her. He makes to lie down, but she lays a hand on his, stopping him.

WOMAN
John, I wish to talk and I wish for
you to hear me.

John looks at her intently, waiting.

WOMAN (cont'd)
I am not gaining anything here. I
want you to take me away.

John looks appalled.

JOHN
Why darling! Our lease will be up in
three weeks, and I can't see how to
leave before.

WOMAN
John.

He continues.

JOHN

The repairs are not done at home and I cannot possibly leave town just now. Of course if you were in any danger I could and would, but you really are better, dear, and I know. You are gaining flesh and color, your appetite, I feel really much easier about you.

Hearing his speech, the Woman grows a bored expression, tired of ignorance. She stands, pacing about by the bed.

WOMAN

I don't weigh a bit more nor as much. And my appetite may be better in the evening when you are here, but it is worse in the morning when you are away!

John gets out of the bed, rushing to her.

JOHN

Oh bless her little heart!

He envelops her in his arms. Pulling back, he puts her face in between both of his palms.

JOHN (cont'd)

She shall be as sick as she pleases!

He chuckles at his joke.

JOHN (cont'd)

But now let's improve the shining hours by going to sleep, and talk about it in the morning.

He leads her back to the bed by an arm. He gets in but she remains poised at the side.

WOMAN

(weakly)

And you won't go away?

JOHN

Why, how can I dear? It is only three weeks more and then we will take a nice little trip of a few days while Jennie is getting the house ready. Really dear you are better!

Her face contorts.

WOMAN

Better in body perhaps--

She stops mid-speech when John sits up straighter, seeing the stern, reproachful gaze that now covers his face.

JOHN

My darling, I beg of you, for my sake
and our child's sake, as well as for
your own, that you will never for one
instant let that idea enter your
mind!

She looks down at her hands, now being gripped tightly by his.

JOHN (cont'd)

There is nothing so dangerous, so
fascinating to a temperament like
yours. It is a false and foolish
fancy. Can you not trust me as a
physician when I tell you so?

Beat. She finally lets out a shy smile, before climbing back into bed with him. He falls asleep quickly, and the Woman fakes her slumber until he is completely out.

Opening her eyes again, she stares at the wallpaper, at the spot she saw move. Her eyes flicker back and forth as she tries to decipher what happened. Finally, she rises, moving towards the paper once more.

She puts a hand on it.

WOMAN

Won't you...let me...in...

She pushes on the wallpaper, hard, falling through it completely.

SMASH CUT TO:

INT. WALLPAPERED ROOM--DREAM SCAPE

The Woman stumbles into a new room. It is her room but not. She looks around. There is no furniture. No windows. Nothing but the wallpaper all around her. It's dim in here, but there is light. She looks above her, there's no lights. She looks around her, there are no candles. But a fluorescent light fills the room.

She turns again and heads towards the opposite end of the room.

Touching the wall, she looks up at the ceiling and it begins shrinking. She cringes back, but the wall in front of her begins moving. She backs away from it, but her back hits another wall, pushing her towards the first. The wallpaper is all around her, closing in, leaving smudges on her clothes, her hands.

The first wall is dangerously close to her. It's getting faster. She lifts her arms to cover her face and screams as it swallows her completely.

CUT TO:

INT. WALLPAPERED ROOM-- DREAM SCAPE

The Woman is on the floor, arms covering her head and face. She slowly lifts her head up. John is standing in front of her, he looks cold, unfeeling.

She stands to meet him.

WOMAN

John?

He grabs her hand and waist and they begin dancing. Orchestral, but suspenseful music is playing. As they move, the baby crying begins again. She turns her head.

WOMAN (cont'd)

John, the bab--

She turns back to him, but it's no longer John. It's Nellie. She dances and dances with her sister.

NELLIE

Don't you feel free?

Nellie is smiling and laughing crazily. The Woman joins in, letting herself go to the music. The crying can still be heard, but somehow in tune with the booming classical sound. The Woman tips her head back and laughs. When she lifts her head back up, she is dancing still, but not with Nellie.

A mirror of her own face is there, she is dancing with herself. It startles her at first, so she steps back, turning to look behind her. When she see's no one else there, she turns forward again, but the OTHER WOMAN is turned away. She stands still, and the Woman breathes heavily as she looks at the back of her own head.

The Woman's features turn cloudy and stern. She steps up to the Other Woman's back, grabbing her by the shoulder and turning her around.

The Other Woman turns, but her face is blank. *Literally* blank. There's no eyes, no mouth, no features, just the same hair as the Woman's sprawling out of the top of her head.

The Other Woman's hair lifts up, floating on invisible wires and suffocates the Woman. It covers her entire body until she's drowned in darkness.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPER ROOM

The Woman falls back out of the wallpaper, there's a small thud as she hits the ground. She grabs at her face, her eyes, hyperventilating. She turns towards her bed and sees John under the sheets, not bothered.

She gets up from the floor and walks to the mirror by the armoire. She looks at herself, leans in close. She touches every part of her face, making sure it's still there. She reaches towards her lips and brushes them, feeling something there.

Reaching inside her mouth, she pulls out a strand of long, dark hair.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DAY

The Woman sits at her usual chair, writing with her ink and pen. Every so often, she'll rise and walk about the room, tracing the patterns of the wall, then return to her writing.

WOMAN

It's completely different.

There's a knock at the door.

(O.S.) JENNIE

Miss? Can I get you anything?

She doesn't turn.

WOMAN

No, Jennie! Just some solitude is all I ask.

Footsteps sound as Jennie leaves from behind the door. The Woman walks towards her bed, yawning and stretching. She lies down, staring at the wallpaper.

WOMAN (cont'd)
I will figure you out.

A promise.

WOMAN (cont'd)
If John won't take me away, and I
can't...
(yawning)
maybe you can.

She closes her eyes.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

We open on the disheveled bed sheets, the Woman not there. She is instead seated in front of the wallpaper, which changes under the moon's light.

The wallpaper has changed, there are faint bar-like shapes across the front pattern, like her windows. The Woman reaches out to touch them with her hands. After her examination, she stands and backs up a couple steps.

WOMAN
Why, it's as plain as can be.

We look at the wallpaper once more, from behind the Woman. And see the figure within the paper once more. This time it takes shape. Dim but perceptible, like a shadow, the figure of a Woman moves about behind the paper.

Our Woman inclines her head, studying the figure shifting behind the bars. She begins pacing between the window and the door, muttering to herself.

WOMAN (cont'd)
By day, she is subdued, quiet. But at
night...

She stops and looks towards the wallpaper, the Other Woman pushes on it in response.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT FLOOR -- AFTERNOON

The Woman is sprawled on the floor of the padded room, files strewn around her. Her candle sits in front of the papers, dripped wax piled at the base.

Behind her on the cushioned wall, we can see the beginnings of an etched chart. Names of the children on the files are listed, underneath them are facts the Woman has collected.

"George: Sees and hears someone in his room. (electroshock)"

"Alice: Claims someone is coming soon to take her room. (confinement)"

"Harry: Refuses to leave his "mother" at the lake. (highly medicated)"

The lists go on and on, naming children with various problems, tests performed. The Woman scribbles on a file, then grabs a small steak knife lying in her pile. She picks it up and moves to the wall next to the one behind her. On this wall is a reproduction of the wallpaper in her room.

She adds a few more lines and swirls before leaning back in thought, tapping the knife to her chin. Realization and excitement dawns on her face, she leans back in to start etching eyes into some of the swirls.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN/SITTING ROOM

Jennie is walking through the kitchen, looking around. She enters the sitting room, searching again.

JENNIE

That girl! Ugh. Always sneaking off.

Jennie pokes her head down a hallway that's connected to the sitting room.

JENNIE (cont'd)

Gets everything she wants and can't even be present for lunch.

She walks back into the kitchen and heads for the foyer.

CUT TO:

INT. BASEMENT FLOOR -- AFTERNOON

The Woman stands in front of her wall chart examining the names and facts.

WOMAN

All these children lived here...

She begins to pace, tapping the knife between her hands.

WOMAN (cont'd)
They all underwent such painful
treatments...

She stabs the knife into the only blank wall. It sinks into the cushion, peeled cushion and dust fall to the floor. Ripping the knife out, she turns to pace and tap it in her hands some more.

WOMAN (cont'd)
And they all saw a person...

She whips her head to the wall with the depiction of the yellow wallpaper on it. She walks closer, the tapping of her knife on flesh incessant now. Her nose is close enough to touch the wall, the knife tapping relentless. Her breathing becomes heavy, an angry, realizing expression overtakes her face, her panic only grows and grows--

JENNIE
MISS!

The Woman jolts, cutting her finger with the tapping knife. She lets out a moan of pain, bending over to inspect her hand. A cut slices almost all the way down her pointer finger. She sighs, smearing her finger blood onto the "wallpaper," she moves it around, filling in one of the eyes she drew, then leaves the room to find Jennie. The eye is painted red, a long line of blood slowly dripping down the white cushion.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER -- AFTERNOON

The Woman pokes her head out of the basement door, peering side to side for Jennie. When she's sure Jennie isn't there, she exits the basement, clutching her finger in the long lace sleeve of her gown.

She begins to walk towards the kitchen, but Jennie storms up behind her out of nowhere.

JENNIE
Where were you? I've been looking for
quite some time.

The Woman turns, startled.

WOMAN
I was just out in the front yard...

She's distracted and can't look Jennie in the eye. Jennie shakes her head, frustrated, but ultimately breezes past the Woman into the kitchen.

JENNIE
I've prepared lunch.

But the Woman doesn't hear her, she simply turns and heads up to her room, leaving Jennie even more frustrated then before. She watches the Woman ascend the stairs.

JENNIE (cont'd)
(to herself)
No appreciation for what she has.

INT. GARDEN -- LATE AFTERNOON (NEXT DAY)

John and his Wife are seated under the rose arbor, snacking on some tea and biscuits. We join them mid-conversation.

JOHN
So you see, I think it would be quite good for you to rest after each meal. Take an hour to lie down.

WOMAN
Yes, dear.

JOHN
It'll be excellent, to sleep all you can.

WOMAN
Of course.

They sip there tea.

JOHN
Did you sleep well last night?

She removes her cup from her lips.

WOMAN
Yes, dear! I'm sleeping much during the evenings.

She looks down at her hands. And we focus on her eyes, searching.

CUT TO:

INT. QUICK FLASHBACK -- WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

The Woman stands in front of the wallpaper, eyes transfixed by it. She begins pacing in front of it for a moment

She moves to the bed to sit, but continues staring at the paper, tracing the pattern in the air with her fingers.

CUT TO:

EXT. GARDEN -- LATE AFTERNOON

The Woman shakes the thought away. When she finally refocuses her gaze, she notices John studying a chart in his lap, missing her momentary absence.

She looks at him, really looks. She begins breathing heavily, a strange, scared look on her face. She mouths to herself

WOMAN
(quietly, to herself)
George.

John doesn't notice.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DAY

The Woman is sitting perched on her bed, looking like she just awoke from a nap. There's a knock at the door that has her whipping her head towards the door. Jennie enters.

JENNIE
Good afternoon, miss. Unfortunately, we'll have to move you downstairs for tonight and into the morning. John's hired someone to give the room a deep clean while he's off on his medical trip. How sweet of him, no? He said I should take a little break from tidying up.

The Woman was barely listening. She looks nervous.

WOMAN
Move me? From here? But I don't want to move.

JENNIE

Miss, it'll just be for the night.
Weren't you hankering to leave this
room just a few weeks ago?

WOMAN

Yes, but..

JENNIE

Then it should be no problem! Come
now.

The Woman sighs, rising. She collects her things (mainly ink and paper), putting them in her canvas bag and following Jennie out of the room.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS ROOM -- DAY

Jennie opens the door, framing her and the Woman. She lets the Woman walk in first. There's no wallpaper in this room, just painted eggplant walls. A twin bed sits in the left corner with a small wooden night table next to it.

She enters, surveying her surroundings. Plopping the canvas bag on the night table, she turns towards Jennie.

WOMAN

Will that be all?

Jennie smiles and exits the room.

CUT TO:

INT. DOWNSTAIRS BEDROOM -- NIGHT

The Woman is sitting cross legged on her bed. Her canvas bag is now overturned on the night table, papers strewn on it and the bed. The Woman is trying to write, but cannot find a good position.

WOMAN

Ugh! This is impossible!

She stands and walks towards the eggplant wall, but halfway there she jolts, realizing it's not the yellow wallpaper. She sighs, walking closer to the wall and splaying her fingers over it.

WOMAN (cont'd)

You're not there...

She begins to get angry. Stepping back, she punches a whole into the purple wall. Continuing on her streak, she moves towards the night table, flipping it on it's side.

WOMAN (cont'd)

No no no no, I cannot do this without her, I cannot handle this.

She's freaking out. Her hands fisted in her hair, ripping at the strands, she stands facing the overturned night table. Silent tears slide down her cheeks as she breathes heavily.

Just then, we hear a voice whisper.

UNKNOWN

Jaaannne.

She removes her hands from her hair, turning abruptly.

WOMAN

Hello?

She walks around the wrecked room, searching for the source of the whispers. It starts again, almost inaudible

UNKNOWN

Jane Jane Jane.

WOMAN

Where are you?

UNKNOWN

Jaaaane, Jaaaaaaannne.

She walks in circles, looking everywhere. She shouts.

WOMAN

Who's Jane?

She looks towards the ceiling. Squinting up as the whispers continue.

UNKNOWN

Jane.

A stain starts to cover the ceiling, starting in the middle and swirling out in distinct patterns and lines. It's a moldy yellow, looking as if the wallpaper upstairs is leaking. It continues to spread throughout the ceiling and starts to drip. The Woman extends a hand upwards, catching a droplet in her hand. She brings it close to her face and smiles.

CUT TO:

INT. SITTING ROOM -- MORNING

The Woman bursts out of her room, canvas bag in tow. She rushes into the foyer and up the stairs, back to her room.

CUT TO:

INT. GARDEN LANE -- NIGHT

The Woman is stalking through the garden, walking through the lane. She looks up at her window, *the* window. She sees a figure pass by. Her eyes widen and she runs towards the door.

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- CONTINUOUS

The Woman is making her way towards the room, she slows as she nears the opened door, avoiding the creaks in the floorboard. Slowly, she peers around the corner and looks into the room.

John is there. *Looking* at the wallpaper. The Woman's eyes widen even further, but quickly changes to confusion. She leans forward more to get a good look at what John is doing.

He continues staring at the paper, pacing as he looks. Stopping in place, he shrugs and begins to turn.

The Woman darts into the shadows of the corner hallway, watching John as he passes by.

As soon as he's gone, she rushes into the room, studying the spot he viewed. After she's done, she shuts the door and runs to her paper and pen to write down what she saw. She pauses only to speak aloud.

WOMAN

He couldn't have seen. It's for me
alone, *she's* for me alone to
decipher.

Shaking her head and returning to writing.

WOMAN (cont'd)

No, he couldn't have seen.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- DAY

The Woman is just waking up, she rubs the sleep from her face, but stops short. She reaches a hand down under the covers, we can see her feeling around. She gets up on her knees, shuffling backwards towards the headboard.

Flipping over her duvet slowly, a blood stain is present on the off-white colored sheet that was beneath her. She stares at it in horror. Getting up from the bed and standing beside it, she continues to stare. Finally, breaking her stoicism, she grabs at the sheets, ripping them from the bed. She throws them off the bed, muttering to herself in a panic.

She continues to cause a mess until all the sheets are strewn off the bed. Then she gets on her knees, hands to her head, presses her face to the mattress and lets out a heartbreaking wail.

CUT TO:

INT. SECOND FLOOR BATHROOM -- DAY, CONTINUOUS

The Woman is lying in the tub, the murky water coming up to her chin. She runs her hand through the water, making ripples that extend to the edges. Sitting up, she runs a hand through her wet hair, closes her eyes and sighs.

Running a hand through the water again, she sinks down and down, until her head is completely under the water. Eyes squeezed shut, bubbles escaping from her nose, she fights the urge to breath.

Struggling evidently now, her pained eyes open, the water tinging them red. She bursts through the surface, coughing and sucking in breath.

Her hand grips the side of the tub, clenching so hard her knuckles turn white.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SECOND FLOOR HALLWAY -- MIDDAY, CONTINUOUS

Creaking sounds from inside the wallpapered room as the Woman approaches it. She is back in her nightgown from the morning. When she hears the creaking sound, an angry look overtakes her face and she moves silently to the open door.

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- MIDDAY

The bed is remade, her sheets clean and back in their proper place. As she enters, she spots Jennie, *touching* the wallpaper.

The Woman gets closer to Jennie, who doesn't know the Woman's in the room. She looks over Jennie's shoulder, watching her feel the wallpaper and rub her fingers together.

The Woman is almost right behind her now.

WOMAN

What are you doing with the paper?

Jennie jumps and turns around as if she was caught stealing.

JENNIE

Why would you frighten me like that??

She shakes her head, looking angrily at the Woman. When the Woman just stares and stares at her, waiting for a response. Jennie composes herself, sighing.

JENNIE (cont'd)

The paper stains everything it touches. I found yellow smudges on all your clothes and John's.

The Woman looks down at her skirts, and in fact sees yellow smudges on her dress.

Jennie starts to walk out of the room.

JENNIE (cont'd)

I wish you would be more careful!

She begins to leave, but we can still see her in the hallway, as the Woman yells.

WOMAN

And I wish you would keep your nose out of my *personal* business!

Jennie stops and walks back to the door frame.

JENNIE

What has gotten into you? John said you were doing well.

The Woman collects herself, an icy persona taking over.

WOMAN

I am well, Jennie. Can't you see that I'm perfectly well? Maybe it's your presence that make me unwell, did you ever think of that? That your constant presence makes me unwell?

Jennie scoffs, ignoring the Woman and walking out, closing the door. The Woman screams.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Leave me alone!

CUT TO:

INT. THE WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

The Woman is changing into her nightgown when John walks into the room. Her head turns towards him as she pulls the last strap over her shoulder.

WOMAN

John? I did not think you'd be home this evening.

John walks towards her. Kissing the shoulder she just covered with silk.

JOHN

I figured I simply couldn't leave my beautiful wife alone tonight.

He rubs her shoulders and she begins to lean into him. But he moves away, towards the armoire. She grabs his wrist to stop him.

WOMAN

Stay with me, tonight.

John looks down on her, giving a soft smile.

JOHN

I am darling, I've just said.

She pulls his wrist towards her chest, moving there faces even closer.

WOMAN

No, *stay* with me. Please.

Peering up at him through her lashes, she leans in, kissing him softly. Pulling away, John looks concerned.

JOHN

My dear, I- You're not well enough
for that kind of behavior.

She moves her hands to his chest, her wide eyes making her
appear as an injured doe in her husband's arms.

WOMAN

But you always tell me how well I am
doing, John. I- I have missed you so
much each night.

She kisses him again, more eagerly this time. John succumbs
to her advances, kissing her properly. She brings her hands
up to her nightgown straps, releasing them so the dress
falls to the floor.

John opens his eyes, hearing the fabric hit the floor. He
pulls back, looking his wife up and down.

JOHN

My dear-

The Woman leads John to the bed, sitting on the mattress. He
begins to undress as he moves towards her. He lies on top of
her as they begin to kiss again. John is fully invested now.
The Woman's eyes open as John moves down to kiss her neck.
She watches the wallpaper, staring at it intensely.

When John moves back up to her face, she focuses her
attention on him once again. They kiss again, but she breaks
it off, speaking breathily.

WOMAN

Don't you want to give our son a
sibling?

She kisses him again, but John looks disturbed. Her hands
move to his waist band, but he stops them. He quickly gets
up, straightening his disheveled clothes with a hand, with
the other he grabs the Woman's night gown and throws it over
her.

WOMAN (cont'd)

John? What's wrong?

JOHN

We cannot do this. Not in your state.
It goes against everything a rest
cure provides.

He is frustrated, hands sifting through his hair.

WOMAN

John, please, we--

He cuts her off.

JOHN

I'll see you tomorrow.

He presses a reluctant kiss to her head, leaving the Woman angry, her dress still clutched against her naked body. Her face contorts in anger as she lets out a guttural cry.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN -- AFTERNOON

Jennie fills a kettle with water in the kitchen. Her eyes still showing worry as she grabs two tea cups and plates. She sets them down and walks out the back door onto the porch.

CUT TO:

EXT. BACK PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

Wiping off some leaves and rose petals from the chairs, Jennie looks up to the Woman's barred window. She can see a shadow there, sitting in the rocking chair. The shadow is hunched over, the lower portion moving, like its scribbling on paper.

Jennie knows she is writing. She shakes her head, face conflicted as she looks towards the window for a moment. The tea kettle begins whistling, breaking Jennie away from her thoughts, she heads back in to get it.

CUT TO:

INT. BACK PORCH -- CONTINUOUS

Jennie and the Woman sit on the back porch, having tea in silence. All we hear are the clank of spoons in teacups, and the light breathing they both emit. John interrupts this silence as he bursts through the door, clapping his hands together.

JOHN

I have wonderful news!

The women perk their heads up. He continues.

JOHN (cont'd)
Since we're nearing the end of our
stay...

His eyes fixate on the Woman for a moment, but he quickly
looks away.

JOHN (cont'd)
Cousin Henry and Julia are coming for
a visit next week. A farewell party,
if you will.

The Woman jumps from her seat, giddy.

WOMAN
Oh, John that would be lovely!

Jennie smiles and nods approvingly. The Woman walks over to
John to embrace him. He pats her head.

JOHN
Let's just all stay in my good
graces, hmm?

The Woman nods against his chest, looking guilty.

CUT TO:

INT. WALLPAPERED ROOM -- MIDNIGHT

The Woman sits in her usual spot, writing under candlelight.
She turns to look at the paper again, a smile spreading
across her face. Looking back at her writing, she starts
sketching the wallpaper design.

EXT. FRONT OF ESTATE -- MIDNIGHT

A small black carriage pulls up to the estate, as quiet as
can be with only one horse drawing it. It comes to a stop, A
COACHMEN pulling on the reigns. The door opens and Nellie
pops out. She walks to the Coachmen, putting a small bag of
money in his hand, before adjusting her bag and walking into
the manor.

CUT TO:

INT. WALLPAPERED ROOM -- MIDNIGHT

The Woman has moved, now on her hands and knees in the
corner of the room. She presses one hand against the paper
and a hand *within* the paper reaches out to touch hers.

The door bursts open, causing the Other Woman's hand to snatch back. Nellie bustles in.

NELLIE
Are you ready?

The Woman hops up.

WOMAN
Nellie, what are you doing here, I can't go now.

NELLIE
What do you mean you can't go now? I told you to be ready.

They raise their voices in whispered screams. The Woman moves closer to Nellie.

WOMAN
I'm so close to figuring out the paper! And John, he's bringing Cousin Henry and Julia to visit! I have to behave, I have to stay. For the paper, for those kids I can't leave!

Nellie is visibly frustrated. She grabs the Woman's arm and starts to pull her towards the door.

NELLIE
You don't know what you're saying! We have to get you out of here, away from John.

The Woman resists.

WOMAN
No! What about George and the Woman! I can't I can't I *can't*

She claws at Nellie's arms until she releases her. The Woman steps back, tears now streaming down her face. She hugs her arms to her chest.

WOMAN (cont'd)
I can't leave them I can't leave not yet.

Nellie steps forward.

NELLIE
What are you--

The door bursts open again. John stands in the doorway.

JOHN

Nellie! What on earth are you doing here? This is not proper.

Nellie turns, scared that she was found out. John is looking at her closely, the picture of dominance and control. Nellie finds her strength, stepping forward.

NELLIE

I'm here because this whole situation isn't proper! You're not helping her, this place is eating her alive! Can't you see that? I wish she never met you and this whole act that you play with her. It's not fair to my sister and I'll be damned if I let her suffer in this room one more minute.

Nellie's eyes glisten with tears as she screams the last word. John looks at her, dumbfounded, but it's the Woman who speaks up.

WOMAN

Nellie, I want you to leave.

Nellie turns around, her face is heartbroken. She steps closer to her sister, hands in front of her, pleading.

NELLIE

Please.

The Woman just shakes her head, pointing towards the door. Nellie is crying in earnest now. She looks at her sister one last time, before turning and heading towards the door. She pushes past John and exits the room.

JOHN

The audacity. I'll have to write to your mother at once. Are you alright dear?

The Woman steps closer to him, only so he cannot come into the room to see what she'd been working on.

WOMAN

Yes, John I'm fine. I'll just get back to bed. Why don't you start writing that letter?

John nods, still a bit dumbfounded. He turns and exits the room, shutting the door behind him. The Woman, alone at last, lets out a shuddering sigh. Her tear-stained face slowly turns, looking at the wallpaper. She charges up to it, slapping it in anger before heading to bed.

CUT TO:

INT. DINING ROOM -- MORNING

John and the Woman sit at the breakfast table, nibbling at scones and fruit. We join mid-conversation

JOHN

I just can't believe she would do that. She knows how well I treat my patients.

The Woman picks at her food, barely listening. John runs a hand through his hair.

JOHN (cont'd)

Would you like to go into town? I think you handled that situation so well, maybe you need a bit of cheering up?

Her head whips up. Tries to hide her nervous expression.

WOMAN

Oh! Oh, no John that won't be necessary. I'm perfectly cheerful and quite happy here. Yes, let's stay, I'd like to rest more before Cousin Henry and Julia arrive tomorrow.

She rushes out the sentences, trying to hide her obvious discomfort with the town, and what she did there.

JOHN

Well...alright, if you need the rest, I suppose that's best.

She relaxes back in her seat, letting out a relieved sigh. John stands up, pressing a kiss to her head.

JOHN (cont'd)

I have to head into town anyway, to retrieve...something. I'll be back tomorrow evening for Cousin Henry and Julia. Your last day, it'll be perfect.

She looks up at him. Mimics him.

WOMAN

Perfect.

John leaves. As soon as we hear the front door shut, the Woman bolts upstairs.

CUT TO:

INT. WALLPAPERED ROOM -- NIGHT

The Woman storms around her room, pacing and talking to the wallpaper. She reaches in her armoire, revealing the sage green dress from town. She changes as she talks.

WOMAN

His change of tune! He's affected by you I know it. That means we must get you out of here sooner, if only so John cannot rip me away, then you'll never be free.

She finishes changing, continuing to ramble on and on.

WOMAN (cont'd)

I've got to get this down, before tomorrow, before I free you, before John returns with them. I must finish off my findings. It was you the whole time with the children!

She pauses for a moment, contemplating.

WOMAN (cont'd)

And Alice! That little one, she saw me coming, she predicted I'd be the one to put it all together. They may have silenced those children, but they will not silence me.

She starts to retreat to her rocking chair but stops, eyeing a corner of the paper at the top of the wall, already peeling. The wallpaper shakes in response to her fervor. She drags her rocking chair over, stands on it, and rips off a giant strip. Leaning in close to the wall, she whispers:

WOMAN (cont'd)

You'll be free soon.

CUT TO:

INT. WALLPAPERED ROOM -- MORNING

The Woman has not slept a wink, we can see it in her eyes. She sits up in bed, staring at the paper.

WOMAN

Today's the day.

A knock sounds at her door, then opens. It's Jennie.

JENNIE

It's time to remove your furniture,
miss. Some servants will take it back
downstairs where we found it.

She comes into the room some more, her eyes catching on the
strip of paper the Woman ripped off.

WOMAN

Oh that! I did it out of pure spite,
the vicious thing.

Jennie chuckles, to the Woman's surprise.

JENNIE

Oh, I wouldn't mind doing that
myself, but you mustn't lose your
strength now!

The Woman fakes a laugh, but eyes Jennie warily.

JENNIE (cont'd)

Now, you must remove yourself from
the room for a while, while the
furniture is being taken downstairs.

The Woman hops up heading out the door to the bathroom.

CUT TO:

INT. BATHING ROOM -- MORNING

The Woman stares at herself in the mirror, hands braced on
the sink below.

WOMAN

She betrayed herself that time,
Jennie. I knew she wanted the paper
for herself...but no person touches
that paper but me! At least not
alive.

She laughs at this. Her reflection doesn't mimic her though,
just stares ahead into her soul.

JENNIE (O.C.)

Miss! The furniture is removed!

The Woman turns from the mirror, grabbing a bag from the floor and heading for the bathing room door. Her reflection turns its head to follow her movements.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY -- EARLY AFTERNOON

Jennie stands outside the bathing room door, when the Woman walks out. She immediately heads for the wallpapered room, a small bag of her personal things in her hands.

JENNIE

Oh! Miss, won't you come downstairs,
there's nary a thing in there anymore
but the bed.

WOMAN

But its so quiet and airy and empty
and clean now, Jennie. I think I'll
lie down again and sleep all I can
before Cousin Henry and Julia arrive.
Don't wake me, don't disturb me until
they've come, hm?

All of this was said without looking at Jennie. She walks into the room, closing the door behind her for one last time.

INT. WALLPAPERED ROOM -- AFTERNOON

The Woman walks feverishly into the room and immediately locks the door with a small key she retrieved from her bodice. Holding the key in her hand, she walks to the window, opening it and throws the key out.

WOMAN

No one must come in, until John
returns, you see. He'll be so
astonished with me at my findings.

Turning, she heads for the bed. She dumps her bag out onto it, papers and files strewn amongst it. She digs within the mattress to retrieve the steak knife from the basement and lays it down as well. Her hair is disheveled, eyes bloodshot.

Turning from the bed, she puts all her attention on the paper now.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Now, where to begin!

She turns back to the bed and tries to pull it, but to no avail, it's nailed to the floor. She gets on her knees pulling at the frame, bite marks scour the legs.

WOMAN (cont'd)

Oh how those children gnawed at this!

She moves about the bed, attempting to lift, push and pull, but it will not move! She looks so exhausted now and so angry. She bites the headboard and rips off a piece of wood with her teeth, frustrated and screaming.

Finally, she moves to the paper. She starts ripping at it, long strips and small ones, her nails breaking and bleeding all over the paper. We can see the wood paneling now behind the paper, covered in blood and marks. She rips and rips moving all around the room, putting all of her effort into this paper.

She steps back, looking at her handiwork. Hands covered in blood and bruises, face sweaty and scratched. She moves to the window, looking out, women made of shadows are moving about the arbors and lanes. She grips the bars and shakes them. They don't budge.

Retreating to the floor, she crawls around in front of the paper. Lying and writhing amongst the blood and ripped patches

There's a knock at the door, pounding and relentless.

JOHN

Dear! Open up, what's going on?
There's people from town here,
looking for you!

He sounds scared and won't stop pounding on the frame.

JOHN (cont'd)

Get me an axe! Someone get me an axe!

WOMAN

John, dear! The key is outside under
the a leaf!

He silences for a moment.

JOHN

Open the door, my darling.

WOMAN

The key is downstairs under a
plantain leaf!

(MORE)

WOMAN (cont'd)
It's downstairs under a leaf,
Jooooohn. Outside under a leaf!

We hear his footsteps rush away. Beat. He comes back, opening the door. We see John now, terror in his eyes and a bundle in his arms. The baby. He takes a wary step into the room, surveying the spectacle in front of him. Jennie can be seen watching behind.

The Woman is on the ground, crawling around amongst the paper shreds. Her hair is disheveled and all over the place. Her eyes are red, hands bloodied and broken, but she looks...free. Those yellow stains cover her. Her face, her dress, her hands. Jennie pushes past John to enter and see the madness. The Woman grunts and screams when she catches her eye.

JENNIE
What on earth are you--

The Woman lunges for Jennie, grabbing at her and tackling her to the floor. John is useless, holding the baby and unable to help, he cries out for them to stop. When the Woman removes herself from Jennie, the steak knife is sticking out of Jennie's heart, blood staining her chest and quickly pooling on the floor around them.

The Woman's eyes are cold when she looks at John for a split second. But she looks away, picking pieces of the paper out of the blood puddle on the floor.

JOHN
What is the matter with you! For
God's sake Jane, stop this! What are
you doing??

She pauses her search, and looks at him over her shoulder. Screams her speech.

WOMAN
I've got out at last, in spite of you
and Jane! And I've pulled off most of
the paper, so you can't put me back!

John gets a dazed look in his eye, overwhelmed by all that is happening, his face turns green and pallid. The baby is crying now. The Woman jumps up, sprinting forward and grabs the bundle from his arms before retreating back to the floor, sat up on her knees. John's eyes roll back and he faints, hitting the floor with a loud thud.

The Woman crawls over him, holding the crying bundle. She exits the room, leaving an unconscious John and dead Jennie behind.

CUT TO:

INT. FOYER

A handful of people are crowded at the bottom of the stairs. Henry, Julia, the couple from town. Looking concerned from all the shouting they've heard. They all look on in horror as the mess of the Woman descends the stairs. Her head is up, proudly, clutching the bundle close to her chest. The people get a full view of her cut up face, yellow smudges, bloody hands and dress, the blood now staining the baby's blanket.

Reaching the bottom of the stairs, she pushes through the crowd, who part for her, scared to even brush shoulders with the Woman. She reaches the door and opens it, walking out.

Descending the manor's front stoop and rocking her baby, she leaves the mansion. Her frame gets smaller and smaller as she follows along the dirt road, away from the wallpaper and the people who can no longer confine her.

THE END.