

1917

Trifles

Susan Glaspell

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Summary

- Characters
- Synopsis
- Notes



Characters

- Sheriff (Mr. Peters)
- County Attorney (Mr. Henderson)
- Mr. Hale
- Mrs. Peters
- Mrs. Hale
- John Wright
- Minnie Foster (Mrs. Wright)

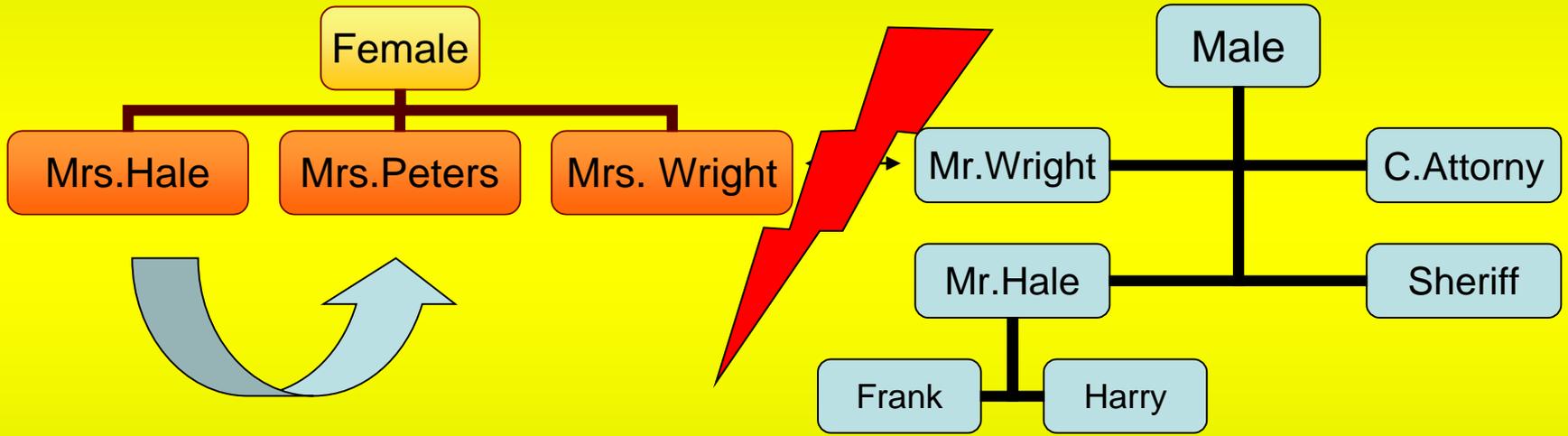
Trifles

house



bleak

Gloomy kitchen

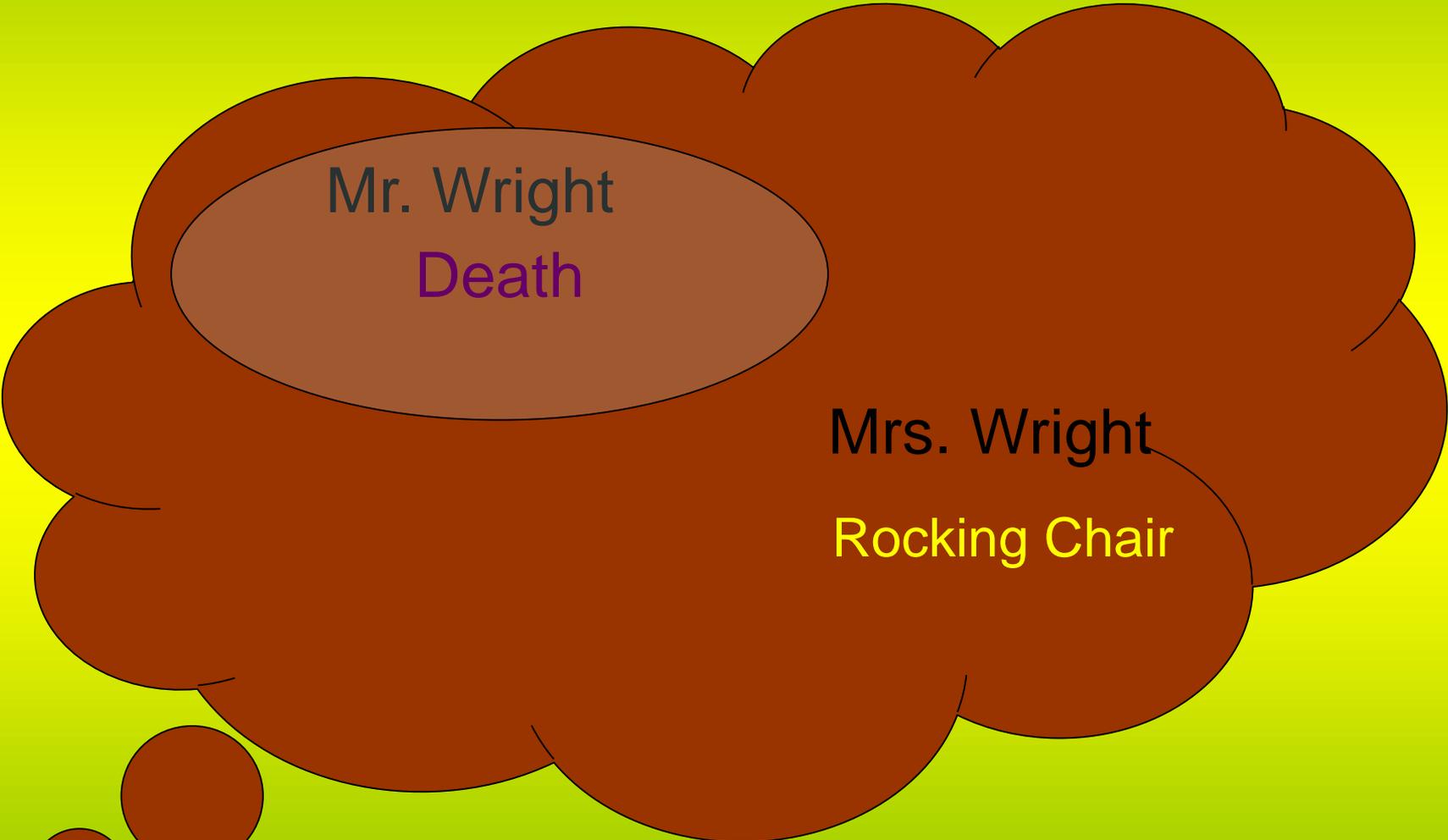


Mrs. Peters: Laws

Dialogue

“Though I said to Harry that I didn’t know as what his wife wanted made much different to John” Mr.Hale

“Well, women are used to worrying over trifles” Mr.Hale



Mr. Wright
Death

Mrs. Wright
Rocking Chair

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graph TD; A([Mr.Hale, Sheriff, C.Attorney]) --> B([Mrs.Hale, Mrs.Peters]);
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Mr.Hale, Sheriff, C.Attorney

Mrs.Hale, Mrs.Peters

Men

2nd floor

Cherries

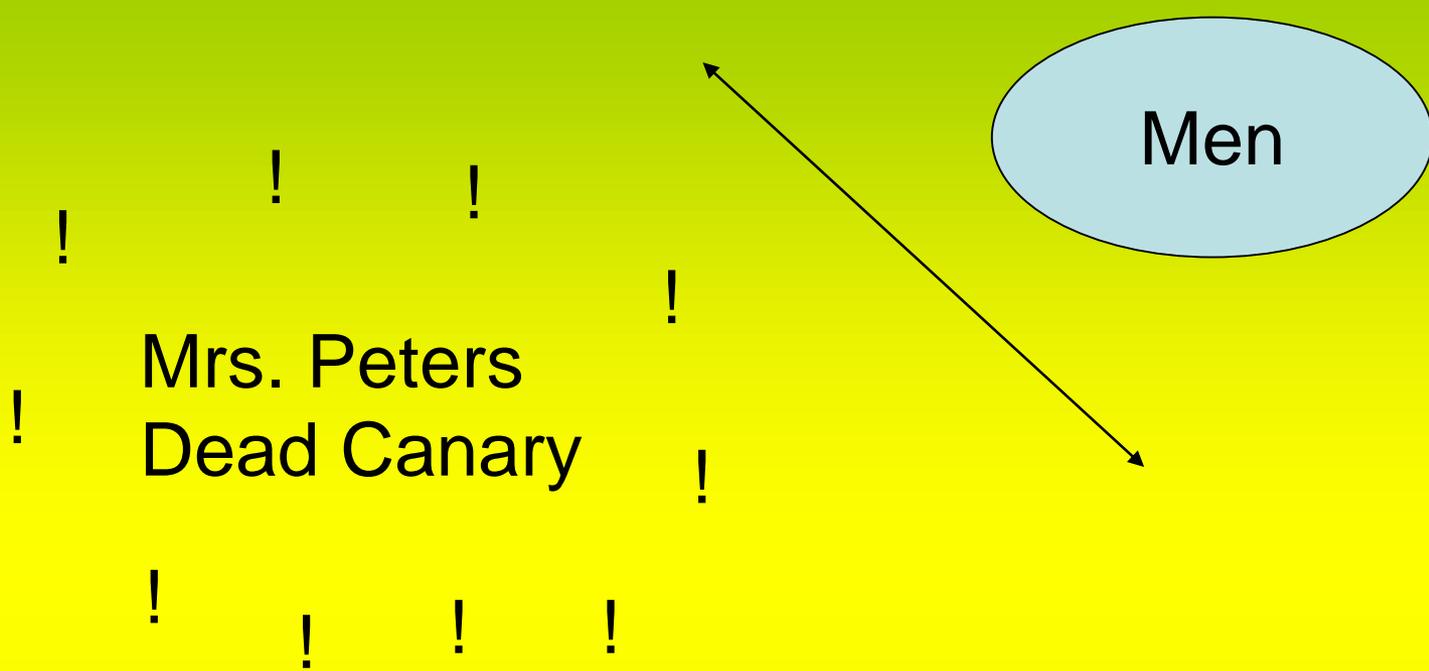
Untidy kitchen

Dead Canary!

Cage!

Log Cabin!

Women



They call it---knot it.

Mrs.Hale
Box

Trifles

Outside – Below Zero

Kitchen- Untidy

Hale, Sheriff, C.Attorney- CSI

Mrs.Hale, Mrs.Peters- stand close together

Mr. Hale tells about what he just saw
yesterday

- Party telephone

- Mr. Wright dead

- Mrs. Wright rocking the chair – her
reaction

- C.A. looks on the shelf
- the frozen fruit
- Men's reaction to women's trifles



- Mrs. Hale and the towels

“There’s a great deal of work to be done on farm”

“Loyal to your sex”

“ But I don’t think a place’d be any cheerfuller for John Wright’s being in it.”



- Mrs. Peters take some clothes for Minnie

Mrs. Hale: “I’d hate to have men...snooping around and criticizing”

Mrs. Peters: “Of course it’s no more than their duty.”

Mrs. Hale & Mrs. Peters found:

- Breadbox
- Cherries
- Clothes

Mrs. Hale and the rocking chair

“...With a slow look at it, steps back.”

Mrs. Hale: Minnie Foster as a choir member

Mrs. Peters: apron and shawl/ Dirty v.s.
natural

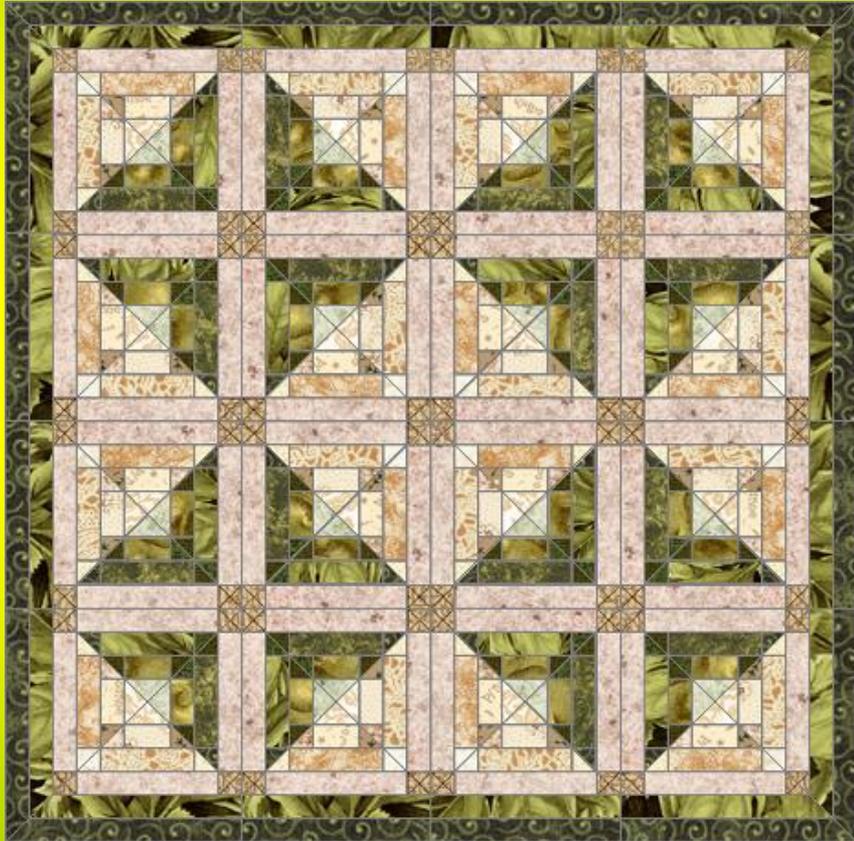
“Do you think she did it?”

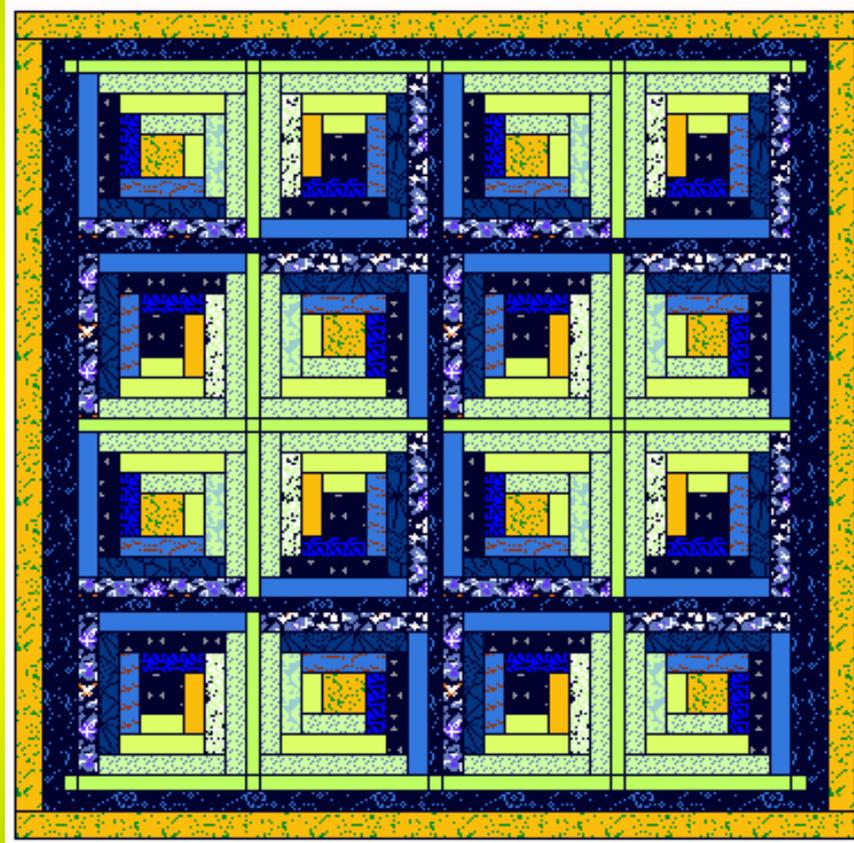
“Oh, I don’t know”

- Mrs. Peters: “Mr. Henderson said coming out that what was needed for the case was a motive...”
- Found “log cabin” quilt

“I wonder if she was going to quilt it or just knot it?”- trifles







Mrs. Hale - pulled at a knot and ripped the sewing

Mrs. Peters – to find strings in a cupboard

Found : Birdcage, one hinge is pulled apart



Mrs. Hale and Mr. Wright characteristics

- He paid his debts, he didn't drink, kept his word

Mrs. Hale and Minnie characteristics

- she was kind of a bird herself, pretty, sweet, timid, fluttery

Found: The dead
canary in the box –
broken neck...

Mrs. Hale and Peters
discover the truth

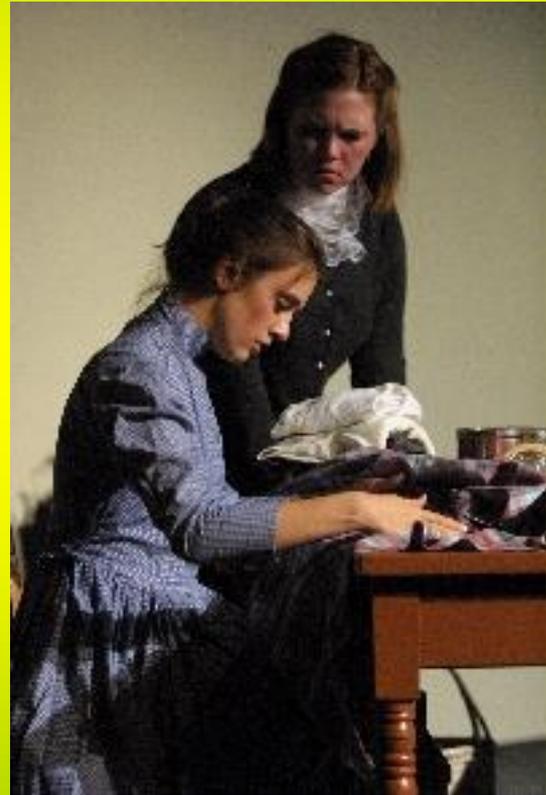


Mrs. Peters

- her stillness, her first baby died after he was two years old.
- her kitten, a boy and a hatchet

Women hides the evidence

“We call it – knot it, Mr.Henderson”



The End...

Theme

- What is the theme of the story?

Symbolism

Dead Canary

???

Cage

Wright

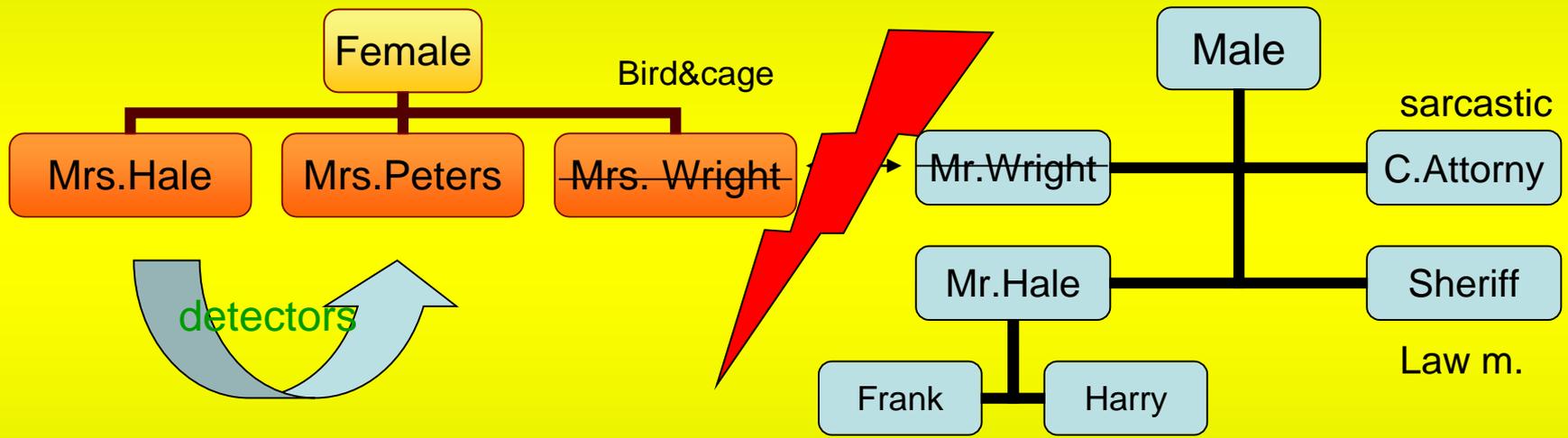
Party telephone

Knot it

Incompleted quilt

kitchen

Barn
2nd floor



Frozen Fruit
Incompleted quilt
Cage
Dead bird

cold

Knot it?

Mrs. Hale

Questions

- How does the physical location of the characters help develop the theme?
- Who are more fully developed, the two women or the three men?
- Indicate several ways Susan Glaspell conditions the audience to accept the final decision.

- Explain the use of symbols in Trifles
- What is the hidden meaning of Mrs. Hale's last reply?
- Women are pitted against their husbands and other men. How are the men and women portrayed?
- Mythic elements, do these elements lift the play, from its regionalism and give it a universal importance.

Notes

- Discovering a secret that binds them, the two must realize painful truths in their own lives, become aware of all they have in common with Minnie Wright, and gradually resolve to side with the accused against the men.