Name of Student

Name of Professor

Name of Class

Day Month Year

**Reader Response Essay**

The Story of an Hour by Kate Chopin highlights the tale of a woman who strives for her identity and is pleased after the death of her husband. It raises several questions and leaves them unanswered till the very conclusion of the story. The story takes a twist after the death of the woman’s husband which is not expected by the reader. The author permits the reader to shape the personal interpretation of how a woman may react to the report of a husband's unavoidable destiny. Furthermore, there exists instance where tensions rapidly fall before the resolution. All these keen insights shed light on the cultural beliefs of the time when the story was published in the nineteenth century.

To begin, the illness of Mrs. Mallard is the protagonist of the story. She possesses an ambiguous nature and suffers from heart disease. The fundamental idea and the theme nurtured is the nourishment of the protagonist is her will to be independent, experience freedom and have a personal source of income(*The Story of an Hour*). This idea may have resonated with a wide range of women and feminists. The news of her husband’s death shocked her at once but she recovered immediately and rather unexpectedly. It is critical to observe the time of publication of the story. The author has portrayed Mrs. Mallard as a completely changed woman than those present in that century. She was adamant to confront the challenge of staying independent and not conforming to the norms of society. For instance, she is depicted as entering her room alone after the death of the husband. In that time, it was deemed detrimental for the women to enter the rooms alone as it is likely to invigorate the intentions of independent thoughts.

In addition, the story significantly highlights the freedom inherited in the window. The story takes mystical turns. The very essence of the theme lies at the very heart of the abrupt and radical thought process of Mrs. Mallard based on different circumstances. After the death of her husband, she experiences a distorted state of emotions. The author sparks the interest by making the reader wonder whether Mrs. Mallard is able to handle the conflicting and complex emotions inculcated in her after the advent of widowhood. She is possessed by monstrous emotions that overwhelm her(*Host\_text\_219.Pdf*). The varied assumptions and comprehension of distinct readers make the story further interesting to read. Personally, I believe she was possessed by a monster after the death of her husband. The monster was freedom and independence.

Furthermore, the monster of freedom introduces a complete shift in the nature of Mrs. Mallard(“The Story of an Hour, Kate Chopin, Characters, Setting”). She shifts from being a submissive woman to a powerful woman in complete charge of her life. Again, several schools of thoughts may her state to be contrasting as per their views and comprehension of the story. The author set an example that was rare in the late nineteenth century. It is one of the most noteworthy aspects of the story regarding which most of the readers are uninformed. The woman of that era was potentially submissive to their husbands and mournful after their death. This aspect attracted me the most among other deliberated instances. In the latter part of the story, Mrs. Mallard is pictured as an unhappy woman trapped in a cage that gets free. For instance, a bird is portrayed sitting outside the window of the protagonist and she is associated with that bird.

After reading the story, a critical appraisal of the theme reveals that both women and men inflict their wills on others. The author desired to challenge the norms of the era. Marriage was the prominent subject throughout the events and instances of the story. Chopin, the author, suggests both men and women ought to understand one another instead of smashing and bashing marriage. The story raises unaddressed questions after critical pondering. For instance, has she traversed to the point of no return in the glorification of her freedom? She bears no regret after losing her care and husband. The criticism can be made that the author went way too far to strengthen the feminist view and completely neglected the other side of the story. However, it may have been the primary intention of the author and thus such criticism may hold no water.

To conclude, the author challenges and questions the lack of freedom of women in the framework of marriage. The story was published in the late nineteenth century and is an explicit illustration of the unheard desires and aspirations of the women. It further reflects her to be selfish women keeping in view the aspirations of ignoring the death of her husband. Besides, the most striking element of the story is the struggle of readers to comprehend the next plot and event of the story. The other engaging aspect is the value of the freedom and independence, especially destined for the women. Chopin critically emphasizes the radical and submissive norms of the nineteenth century that undermined the freedom and the voice of the women in marriage. The bottom line is that the ironic death of the protagonist’s husband shifts the story and creates a scintillating twist to keep the reader interested.

Works Cited

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