

Story of an hourpsychology flashcard



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

The protagonist character Louise Mallard in Kate Chopin's *The Story of an Hour* portrays a wife's unexpected response to her husband's death. The narrator divulges to the reader modest but convincing hints of Mrs. Mallard's newly discovered freedom. This newly discovered freedom would be short-lived for Mrs. Mallard. Mrs. Mallard, who suffers from heart disease, was portrayed as an average wife who breaks down into a fit of distress from the fateful news of her husband's death. She retreats to her room to come to grips with the tragedy but finds instead something unexpected in herself. The tears and emotions soon turned to confusion as Mrs. Mallard came to realize the reality that she was not necessarily crying over the loss of her husband but of his death. Mrs. Mallard admits that Mr. Mallard is a good husband but that she detests the bondage of being husband and wife and she no longer wants the will of another forced upon her. The time of her new found freedom was revealed when she begins to whisper free over and over to denote that she is no longer under the will of another person. The depth of Louise's bondage known as marriage was more than she could stand and she was wishing for a short-lived life just the day before the accident. With her husband's death she was wishing for a long life to enjoy her new found freedom. Mr. Mallard is not the tyrant who holds Louise in this bondage but instead it was the institution of marriage itself that entraps her.

The imagery in the story helps set her character's new found freedom from the trees aquiver with new life denoting her new found life to the cloud's shadow representing her married life casting shadows on her happiness. The conflict that Louise Mallard feels is not with her husband or herself but that of the cultural institution of marriage. This conflict was so

profoundly ingrained in Louise that when she discovers that her husband was not dead and she was not free, death was the only escape from the internal conflict of personal freedom. The conflict in The Story of An Hour was centered on Mrs. Mallard's lost personal freedom when she married her husband and became obedient to his stronger will. This personal conflict is prevalent in most married people but is not normally an overbearing conflict as was encountered within Mrs. Mallard.

Book Reports