

Main message of a pair of silk stockings story

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Chopin and Pat Moras Attitudes

In *A pair of silk stockings* by Chopin, a mother temporarily escapes from the daily worries and fatigue of the lower class to enjoy luxuries only available to the affluent upon the chance possession of a large sum of money. Pat Moras *Now and Then, America* on the other hand, is a short poem depicting a fiery will to be free, different, and sane amid those who succumb to the confines of society's fashion, clothes, and behavior. Although both authors wrote about freedom, identity, and individuality, their attitudes toward these themes are very distinct.

A pair of silk stockings carries a rather gloomy mood. The main character belongs to the lower class, and as a mother of quite a few children she must constantly budget and calculate where the money is spent. She, Mrs. Sommers, is so consumed by her family's needs that she often forgets to consider her own. Upon the possession of a large sum of money, Mrs. Sommers is at first judicious in planning where the sum should be spent; however, her pragmatism and sense are lost when she accidentally brushed against a silk stocking. Overwhelmed by a sudden urge to indulge, she bought the stockings, and then proceeded to buy dainty gloves, boots, magazines, and expensive appetizers in a dreamy state. It is as though the stress and weary from her daily life pent up finally broke through her reasoning capabilities. She bought one thing after another without really seeming to realize what she was doing. This escape provided Mrs. Sommers a taste of better days she had once known, but it was only temporary. In the end, she could only wistfully wish that the day would never end and the

dream would never shatter. The author uses images of Mrs. Sommers preposterous and unreasonable cheap gloves to the beautiful, delicate gloves she bought as a way to contrast the lives of the poor and wealthy. While Mrs. Sommers physically fit in with the high class after buying expensive clothes, she could never really be a part of that society. Mrs. Sommers represented the yearning for freedom and individuality along with a sort of hopelessness. She could attain a short reprieve from her life, burden, and responsibilities, but she could never be really freed.

Now and Then, America is the complete opposite of Chopins short story. Pat Mora uses lively language and images to portray a sense of defiance and audacity. She writes about how she refuses to rot through life in suits and bows that refined women are supposed to wear. Rather, she wishes to be wild and carefree, to wear her hair down and risk her individuality. It is poem full of passion and energy. By using images of limp, plastic roses and to green flesh cactuses, she contrasts what society accepts and confines in a persons individualism to what she loves with passion. The poem is hopeful and happy, the antithesis of Chopins short story.

Mrs. Sommers was able to escape from her normal life, but it was only a short fling. Her short freedom paints an accurate picture of reality and societys oppressing confines. Pat Moras poem is a far more innocent depiction of individual hopes for freedom and identity. Both authors wrote about escape and freedom, but Chopins attitude toward these themes is darkened by reality while Pat Moras attitude is lifted by hope and passion.