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Title...

It has been commonly believed that marriage is the point in a woman's life where who she is as a human is defined and validated. Once this idealized milestone is reached, she then begins to define herself through marital expectations such as bearing children, creating and maintaining a home, and living up to the preset standards that a woman should; women have upheld this role for centuries and have been seemingly accepting while doing so. The problem with this traditional belief is that orienting a life around marriage—without experiencing the joys that exploring individuality brings beforehand and just as importantly during marriage—will only result in a psychological downfall. Marriage becomes oppressive and renders disappointment and un-fulfillment in all that it entails, leaving a woman bereft of both metaphorical and physical life. Louise Mallard—the main character in *The Story of an Hour*—loses both as a result of her tender heart and unwanted marriage. In *The Story of an Hour*, author Kate Chopin uses irony and repetition to illustrate that the confinements of marriage can rob a woman of individuality and happiness.

An individual's reaction to their spouse's death can vary depending on their personality and opinion on their deceased loved one. If they thought highly of him or her, then their reaction would most likely be one of hysterical disbelief and prolonged heartache. In *the story of an hour*, Mrs. Mallard reacts much differently when the news of her husband's morbid death is revealed to her; she wept wildly, but once the fleeting "storm of grief had spent itself she went away to her room alone" which foreshadowed her ultimate response (Line..page?). However, Chopin manipulates this response with Irony by emphasizing that Mr. Mallard was a kind husband who

Comment [C1]: For final draft, I need to double check what the FULL appropriate heading is.

Put page number at top

Comment [C2]: Insert a title.

Comment [C3]: Most of my intro is really WORDY. I need to make it more concise and also add more background about "The Story of an Hour"

Comment [C4]: Precise examples of this.

Comment [C5]: Since it is a short work, I need to put the title in quotes when mentioned.

Comment [C6]: Repetition is not really that supportive of a device. For my next draft I need to focus more on irony.

Comment [C7]: For my next working thesis I need to get rid of the CAN, and commit to an idea. I also need a more concise thesis.

Comment [C8]: Introducing my body paragraphs with an idea about irony, rather than just being VAGUE and FACTUAL will help.

Comment [C9]: Since it is an online text, I don't have to cite.

did not physically mistreat Mrs. Mallard. The way that Mrs. Mallard responded would be fitting for a woman who had endured years of abuse and a loveless marriage; Mr. Mallard did look at her lovingly, but because of her unhappiness towards her restricting marriage his kindness was irrelevant. His benevolent behavior did not negate that she felt stifled by an unwanted marriage that withheld her from living a life solely for herself. She could never make a decision without the burden of a traditional marriage's expectations weighing her down, nor could she explore her personal dreams. The use of irony in this instance, at a glance, may make Mrs. Mallard seemingly cold-hearted; however the nature of her marriage and its ability to deteriorate her personal happiness illustrates the severity that an unwanted marriage can have on a woman's soul and is what constituted her reaction of relief. Chopin's use of irony in this story accents the **unfortunate results** that a depriving marriage reaps.

Comment [C10]: More precise.

In addition to many other women during her time, living out dreams and learning how to live as an individual human being before marriage was not an option to Mrs. Mallard. Because of this injustice, she did not greet marriage whole-heartedly but with unhappiness and regret. In the story of an hour, the duration of the Mallard's marriage is not identified, but the depth of her sadness suggests that time has nothing to do with it. However, during their marriage Mrs. Mallard was unable to experience the liberating joy that living for ones' self brings which is why she reacted to the news with such unquenchable thirst. The realization of her new life brought her sensations that she had never experienced and she "breathed a quick prayer that life might be long. It was only yesterday she had thought with a shudder that life might be long" (Chopin...) Thoughts of her new life brought back something as monumental as her desire to live. It is ironic that such a sudden shift in mindset was just as quickly snatched away by something as permanent and unfair as death. Kate Chopin incorporates Mrs. Mallard's demise to ironically illustrate the

Comment [C11]: Insert better topic sentences that are less factual.

Comment [C12]: No citations.

fact that after the one time in her life that she felt the genuine happiness that her confining marriage had stolen, her freedom as a woman was swallowed up by death. The only time in Mrs. Mallard's life that she truly felt free and determined to live was in the short hour before her death. Chopin creates this ironic truth to illustrate that, before her death, Mrs. Mallard never felt individualized because of the expectations that she had to fulfill as a wife. Insert a stronger concluding sentence here....

Comment [C13]: Use correct tense. "Seems to FEEL"

Allowing the pre-set standards of how one should live their life has the ability to weigh down a human's spirit both mentally and physically. Being forced to ignore dreams and living a life that does not feel wanted is what resulted in Mrs. Mallard's exhausting unhappiness. Throughout the story, Kate Chopin emphasizes that her happiness has been replaced with the exhaustion that maintaining a restricting marriage promises through repetition. Mrs. Mallard's physical state was accentuated as she "sank pressed down by a physical exhaustion that haunted her body and seemed to reach into her soul" numerous times (Chopin...). In addition to her exhaustion, her worn down heart was also emphasized to illustrate the long-term effects of a stifling marriage. Because of her marriage, Mrs. Mallard had to suppress the thoughts of anything that brought her happiness to the point that she became numb and physically ill. Her critical state and lack of joy towards life are portrayed through Chopin's use of repetitive language to show the severity of her internal suffering. Being unhappy was not only a detriment to Mrs. Mallard's outlook on life but it was also inscribed on her physical state. (Note: should I shorten everything I have so far to add another paragraph on repetition so my explanation is equal on both devices?) Conclude.

Comment [C14]: Although I am trying to support my theme, I need to get rid of repetition and focus on irony.

When a woman loses sight of what makes her happy as an individual because of an unwanted marriage, a slow downfall will always follow. Her life can best be deemed a tragedy

when living becomes a mere chore as opposed to an exploration of self. Mrs. Mallard's unhappiness was the epitome of her woe and ultimate demise. The fact that her part in marriage was a necessary expectation rather than a choice is what made its supposed end a form of short-lived rebirth for Mrs. Mallard. Author Kate Chopin incorporates irony to put an unexpected spin on marriage and death to firmly prove what happens when a woman is robbed of her happiness and individuality. She also manipulates repetition to emphasize the toll that unhappiness can take on the human spirit. The prolonged depression and suffering that Mrs. Mallard endured in order to uphold her role as a married woman is illustrated throughout the story in ways that make the injustices that women face extremely real. Mrs. Mallard entered her marriage viewing it as a trap rather than an opportunity to grow which, unfortunately, is something she had no control over.

Comment [C15]: End essay with more of a thought provoking idea. This is bland.

Comment [C16]: FOR NEXT DRAFT:

- Isolate examples of irony
- Explain how/why they are ironic
- Tie the particular irony to theme
- Focus on what point they are making about marriage to help with next thesis.